



# Biodiversity Project Examples: Ridgelines to River

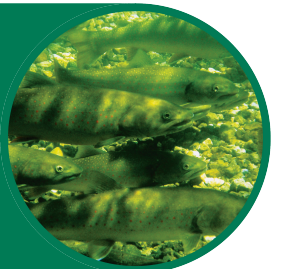
**Biodiversity is the sum of life in all its forms, including plants, animals, and the habitats they depend on.** East of the Cascade range, that includes northern leopard frogs in wetland systems and floodplains, as well as pygmy rabbits, sage grouse, ground squirrels, and badgers in shrubsteppe, and more.

**Key Threats:** habitat loss, invasive species, development, wildfire, drought, decreasing snowpack

WDFW is developing **beaver habitat management guidelines** to provide opportunities for ecological restoration in appropriate locations while reducing landowner conflicts and enabling co-existence of beaver and the human-made landscape.



WDFW scientists are using **innovative eDNA technology** to survey Washington's waterways and gain a more accurate picture of fish species distribution, and fish-habitat relationships statewide. The **Wenatchee River drainage** was one of the first watersheds to be surveyed in the state, and the eDNA data collected will be a critical source of **information on many understudied species** in the Wenatchee drainage, along with many other watersheds in the state as this project progresses.



Washington's **shrubsteppe ecosystem** is filled with many at-risk species, and WDFW and partners are making considerable headway on **survey and monitoring efforts to more accurately assess conservation needs and goals**. These projects include studying the movements and habitat use patterns of white- and black-tailed jackrabbits, surveying sage grouse, and genetic monitoring of pygmy rabbits after reintroductions. And with new biodiversity-funded staff in the field, the agency has discovered additional grouse leks, more northern leopard frogs, and new pygmy rabbit populations.



The agency hired a priority habitat and species (PHS) shrubsteppe specialist, alongside a team of regionally deployed land-use planning leads to help refine and advance **best practices and guidance on protecting and restoring habitat in Eastern Washington**. These positions are improving habitat management recommendations while directly engaging with local governments and landowners to ensure maximum impact of these resources.

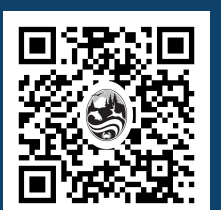


Alongside survey and monitoring efforts, WDFW has also successfully **implemented population augmentations, reintroductions, and other direct actions to help aid in the recovery of imperiled wildlife in the shrubsteppe**. Projects include cross-border translocations of Columbian sharp-tailed grouse to boost WA populations, northern leopard frog reintroductions and site assessment, Columbia Basin pygmy rabbit reintroductions, invasive bullfrog population control to benefit northern leopard frogs, and platform building for ferruginous hawk populations.



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**This handout showcases a fraction of the critical work happening in this region as a result of ongoing biodiversity funding. To learn more, visit: [wdfw.wa.gov/biodiversity](http://wdfw.wa.gov/biodiversity) or scan the QR code.**





## Engaging with and educating the public

Statewide, WDFW has served more than 700 people with biodiversity themed educational materials, events, and workshops. The agency launched an award-winning Washington wildlife lesson, and in just one year, 16% of Washington schools or districts have been exposed to or have adopted all or part of the Wild Washington curriculum. We've also hosted pollinator workshops with housing authorities and Title I schools, helping create school and community pollinator gardens.

The agency developed a public webpage on biodiversity in Washington with helpful information and resources on Washington's biodiversity, wildlife, ecoregions, and how Washingtonians can get involved to help protect and restore biodiversity. WDFW has also produced 23 videos highlighting biodiversity projects and concepts, with more than half a million combined views.

## Wildlife Diversity Grant Program



To support the biodiversity work of partners, WDFW successfully established a Wildlife Diversity Grant program, designed to fund recovery actions for a suite of Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). In the first year alone, this program funded 17 different projects for a total of \$1.1 million.

Eastside projects include:

- Spatial analysis of western grey squirrel habitat
- Distribution surveys of desert striped whipsnakes
- Long-term monitoring of at-risk bumblebees
- A comprehensive population survey of burrowing owls on the Yakama Nation Reservation
- Oregon spotted frog recovery actions and greater Sandhill crane monitoring
- Baseline surveys for shrubsteppe priority species on Hanford Reach National Monument
- Lynx habitat use surveys
- Habitat assessments for Townsend's big-eared bat

**Photo credits (left to right, top to bottom):**

Front page: Chelan Butte Wildlife Area, WDFW; Beaver in Methow Valley, WDFW; Bull trout, WDFW; Black-tailed jackrabbit, George Harrison/USFWS; Sagebrush, WDFW; Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, WDFW

Back page: Wildlife Area, WDFW; Habitat at Home, WDFW; Northern leopard frog release, WDFW; Western gray squirrel, WDFW; Burrowing owl, WDFW; Desert-striped whipsnake, Adrian Slade

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