



Washington Department of
FISH & WILDLIFE

At-risk species recovery and monitoring at Conboy Lake

A WDFW wildlife diversity grant project

Conboy Lake National Wildlife Refuge supports many Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), including a large Oregon spotted frog population, the majority of breeding greater sandhill cranes in Washington, and a robust mardon skipper population. This project extends recovery actions and develops and implements new monitoring efforts for these three Species of Greatest Conservation Need.



Credit: USFWS

Project name: Implementing Oregon spotted frog recovery actions, greater sandhill crane monitoring, and mardon skipper monitoring at Conboy Lake National Wildlife Refuge

Primary species benefitting: Oregon spotted frog, greater sandhill crane, mardon skipper

Grant total: \$63,000

Grantee & associated entity: Dr. Trevor Sheffels, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

This project is designed to utilize a variety of activities to benefit all three species. The project will support recovery efforts of the federally listed Oregon spotted frog through bullfrog control, egg mass monitoring, and summer surveys. Greater sandhill crane surveys and data collection conducted through this project will contribute to broader efforts to ensure the long-term viability of the state-endangered bird. Researchers engaged on this project will fill knowledge gaps on the state-endangered mardon skipper by conducting presence/absence surveys and habitat monitoring.



Credit: USFWS



Credit (left & right): USFWS

Project goals and outcomes

- Oversight and implementation of a large-scale invasive American bullfrog removal program for the 2025 field seasons
- Implementation of a 2025 Oregon spotted frog egg mass survey
- Creation and implementation of a standard protocol and data collection system for greater sandhill crane monitoring for collaborative use by both USFWS and WDFW
- Implementation of a mardon skipper monitoring effort to assess the current distribution of mardon skipper at Conboy Lake National Wildlife Refuge

Anticipated outcomes include a decrease in the invasive bullfrog population at the Conboy Lake National Wildlife Refuge, leading to continued recovery of the Oregon spotted frog population; joint USFWS-WDFW planning and implementation for greater sandhill crane monitoring, and a mardon skipper presence/absence survey within at least three priority Refuge sites.

Advancing conservation efforts for three key species at Conboy Lake

This project aligns with ongoing statewide efforts to protect and recover these three Species of Greatest Conservation Need, including broader bird monitoring programs, waterfowl conservation strategies, wetland restoration, amphibian conservation, and pollinator conservation initiatives. The project work helps ensure that Conboy Lake National Wildlife Refuge continues to provide excellent habitat and protection for these and many other native species.



Credit: recreation.gov

This project was funded by WDFW through the [Wildlife Diversity Grant Program](#).

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