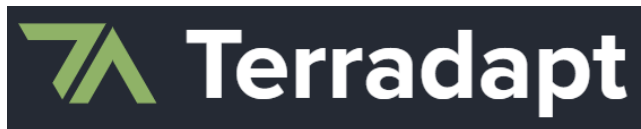


# Connecting Habitat for Washington's Wildlife

Developing the Washington Habitat Connectivity Action Plan



Washington  
Department of  
**FISH and  
WILDLIFE**

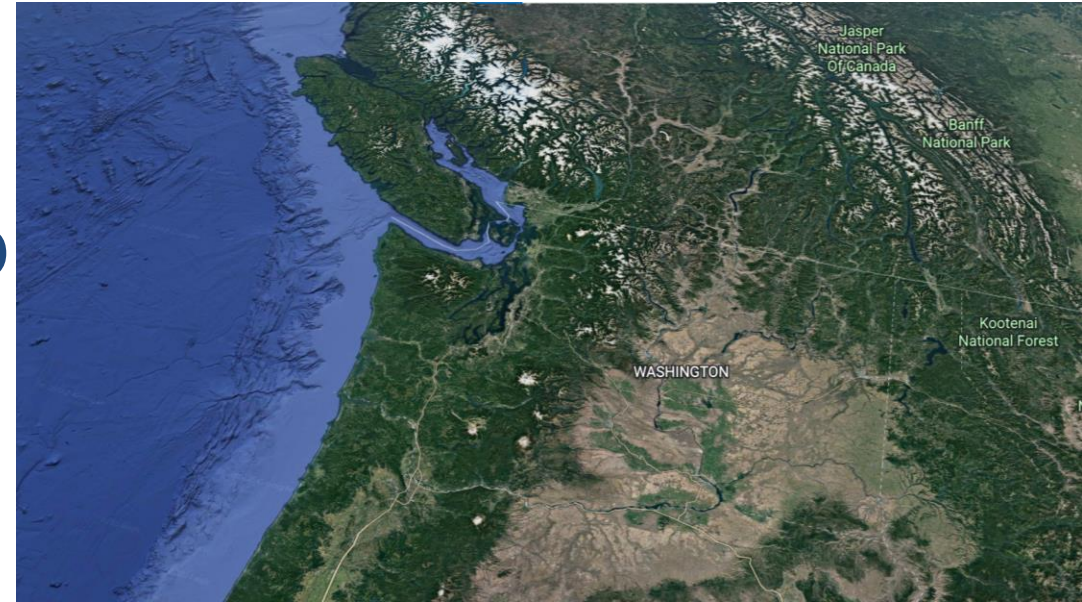


The Wildlife  
Connectivity  
Institute



# Washington Habitat Connectivity Action Plan

Collaborative partnership to  
prioritize **places and projects** to  
**protect and enhance** habitat  
connectivity statewide.



Providing spatial data and technical assistance to help planners *designate* and *protect* critical fish and wildlife habitat including

Biodiversity Areas and Corridors







Harriet Morgan  
Climate Change  
Coordinator



Steph DeMay  
Climate Change  
Research Scientist



Zaneta Kaszta  
PHS Connectivity  
Biologist



Jeff Azerrad  
PHS and Landscape  
Conservation



# Transportation Workshop Objectives

- Describe the changes and updates made to the landscape prioritization layer.
- Describe changes to the transportation analysis and prioritization layers.
- Share the updated – and FINAL – statewide priority products which include:
  - A map of the statewide highway system with every 1-mile segment assigned an ecological and safety score.
  - A long list of ~ 156 priority locations for road mitigation to improve habitat connectivity at the statewide scale.
  - A short list of 38 priority locations that are the highest priorities for large-scale projects.



# Agenda

## Part 1: Presentations

### 1) Julia Michalak, WDFW (20 min presentation)

- WAHCAP overview.
- Changes and updates to the ecological prioritization layer.

### 2) Glen Kalisz, WSDOT (60 min presentation)

- Transportation analysis methods updates.
- Review updated priority locations.
- Understand final Transportation priority products.

### 3) Q&A



# Agenda

## Part 2:

### Break-out groups

- 1) How would you use these transportation priority products to inform your conservation work?
- 2) What programs, plans, partnerships, and funding opportunities do you work with that could support connectivity conservation for these priority transportation areas?
- 3) What other information would be helpful to prioritize and implement these transportation priorities?

### Large group share out

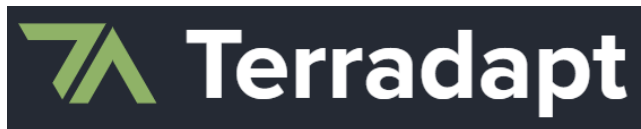
### Wrap up and next steps





# Connecting Habitat for Washington's Wildlife

Developing the Washington Habitat Connectivity Action Plan



Washington  
Department of  
**FISH and  
WILDLIFE**



The Wildlife  
Connectivity  
Institute



# Guiding principles

Both road crossings and landscape connectivity.

Focus on terrestrial connectivity.

Build from what we have.

Support and amplify existing connectivity work.

Focus on action not analysis.



# Tribal engagement

June 2023 – Tribal Briefing Webinar

Feb 2024 – Email invitation first to Tribal Chairs, next to Natural Resource staff

- Provided survey on
  - Preferred options for engagement.
  - Data priorities.
  - Sensitivities around mapping Tribal lands.
- Offered to meet 1:1 with WDFW about tribal data and priorities.
- Offered Advisory Group participation.

April 2024 – hosted a booth and presented at ATNI Tribal Climate Summit

Sept 2024 – Washington Habitat Connectivity Action Plan Tribal Webinar – Data review

Feb 2025 - Washington Habitat Connectivity Action Plan Tribal Webinar – Priorities review

April 9, 2025 – Tribal Strategies Workshop





# Technical Advisory Group

- Developing and reviewing new models
- Species data deep dive
- Prioritization metrics
- How to combine/weight data
- Trouble shooting results

Information about Tribal participation and engagement is available upon request.



# Implementation Advisory Group

- What connectivity work do you do?
- What are limitations of existing data we can improve on?
- How do we prioritize locations?
- What data format or displays do you need?

Information about Tribal participation and engagement is available upon request.



Department of Fish and Wildlife



Washington  
Department of  
**FISH &  
WILDLIFE**



Washington State  
Conservation  
Commission



**Washington State  
Department of Transportation**



Audubon



CCLC



**King County**



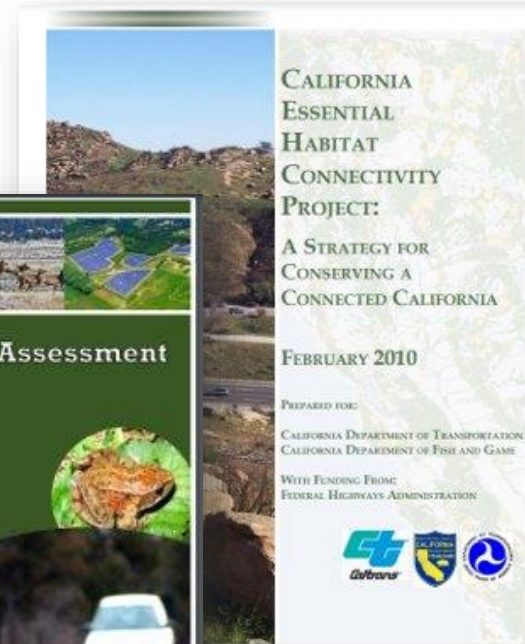
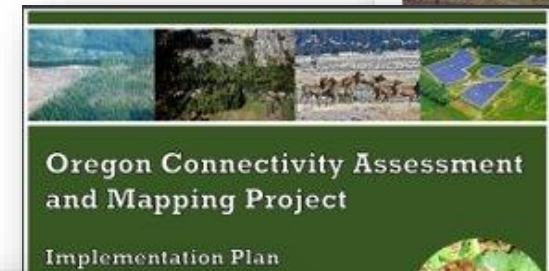
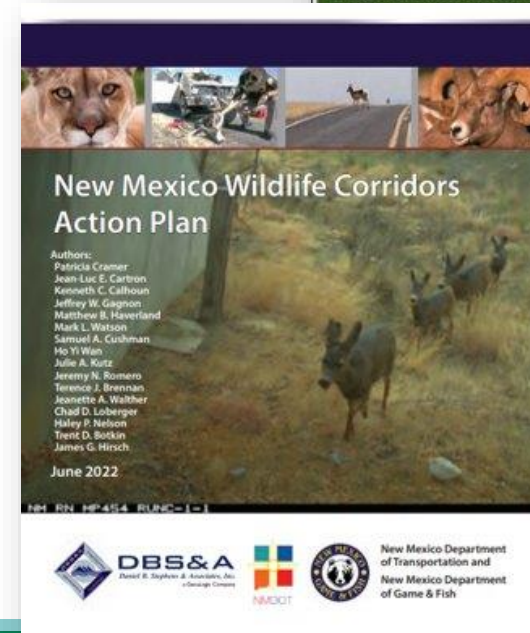


# State Connectivity Action Plans

Maps showing *where* connectivity is.

*Priorities* for taking action.

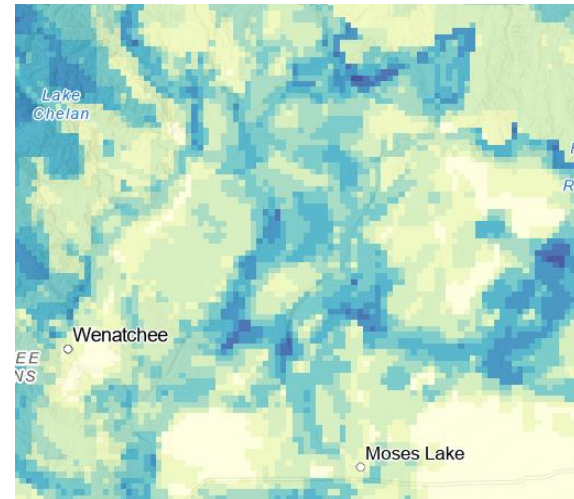
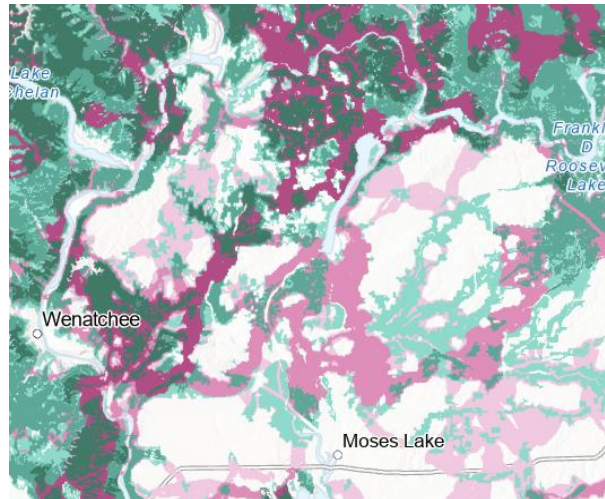
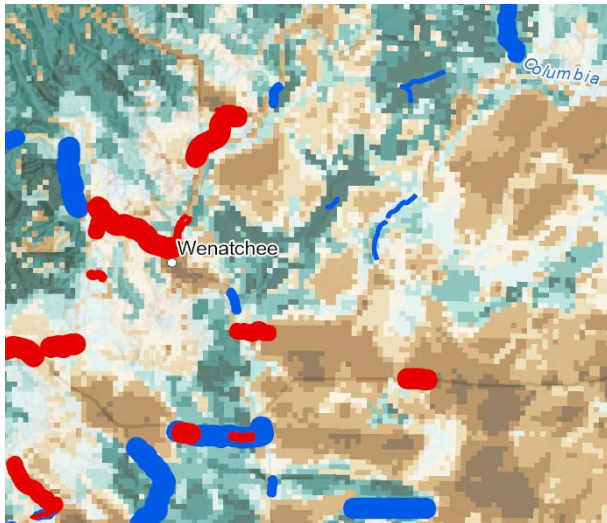
Strategies for coordinated *implementation*.



# Goal 1: Provide spatial data to inform connectivity conservation at multiple scales

Objective 1: Avoid negative impacts to biodiversity functions and values through planning.

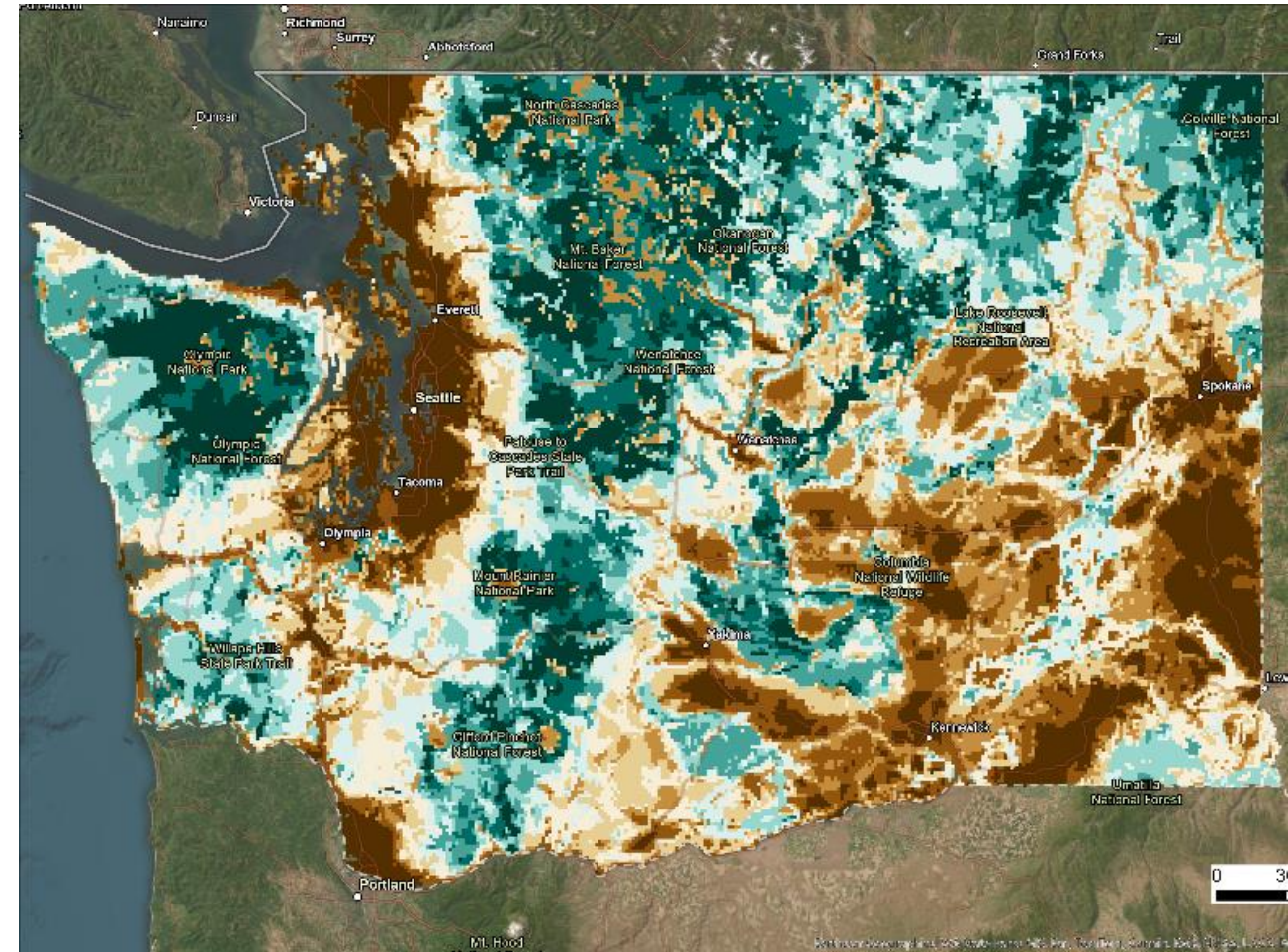
Objective 2: Direct conservation actions to the highest value locations.





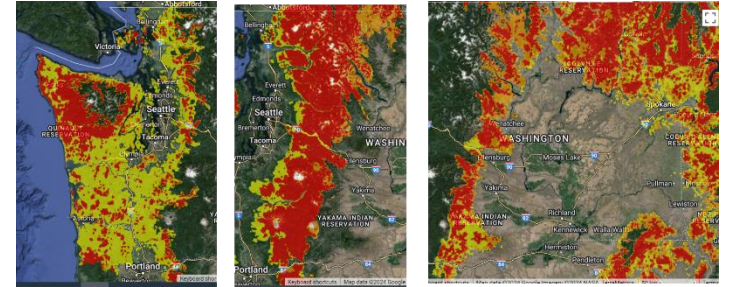
# Goal 2: Identify priority locations

- Critical to statewide connectivity.
- High conservation value based on multiple connectivity values.
- Urgently threatened with loss or degradation.
- Different priorities for different actions, funding opportunities, and scales.

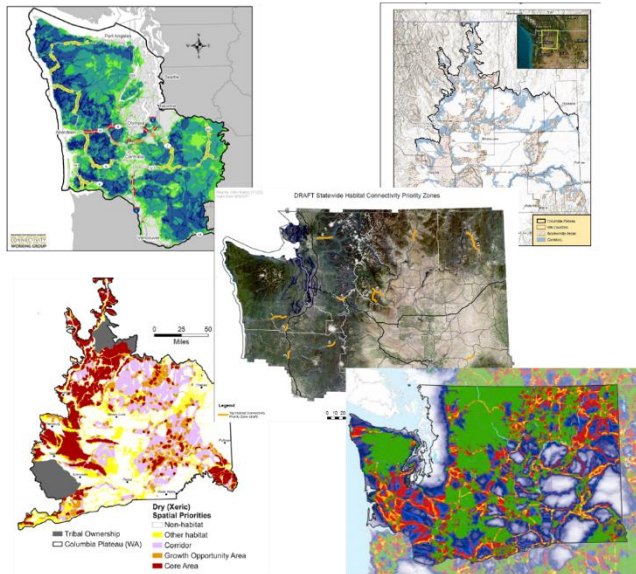


Review Compare Understand

New Data



Existing data and priorities



WAHCAP  
synthesis

WAHCAP  
Maps and  
Priority  
Locations

Select  
Prioritize  
Revise

Review and revise in future years

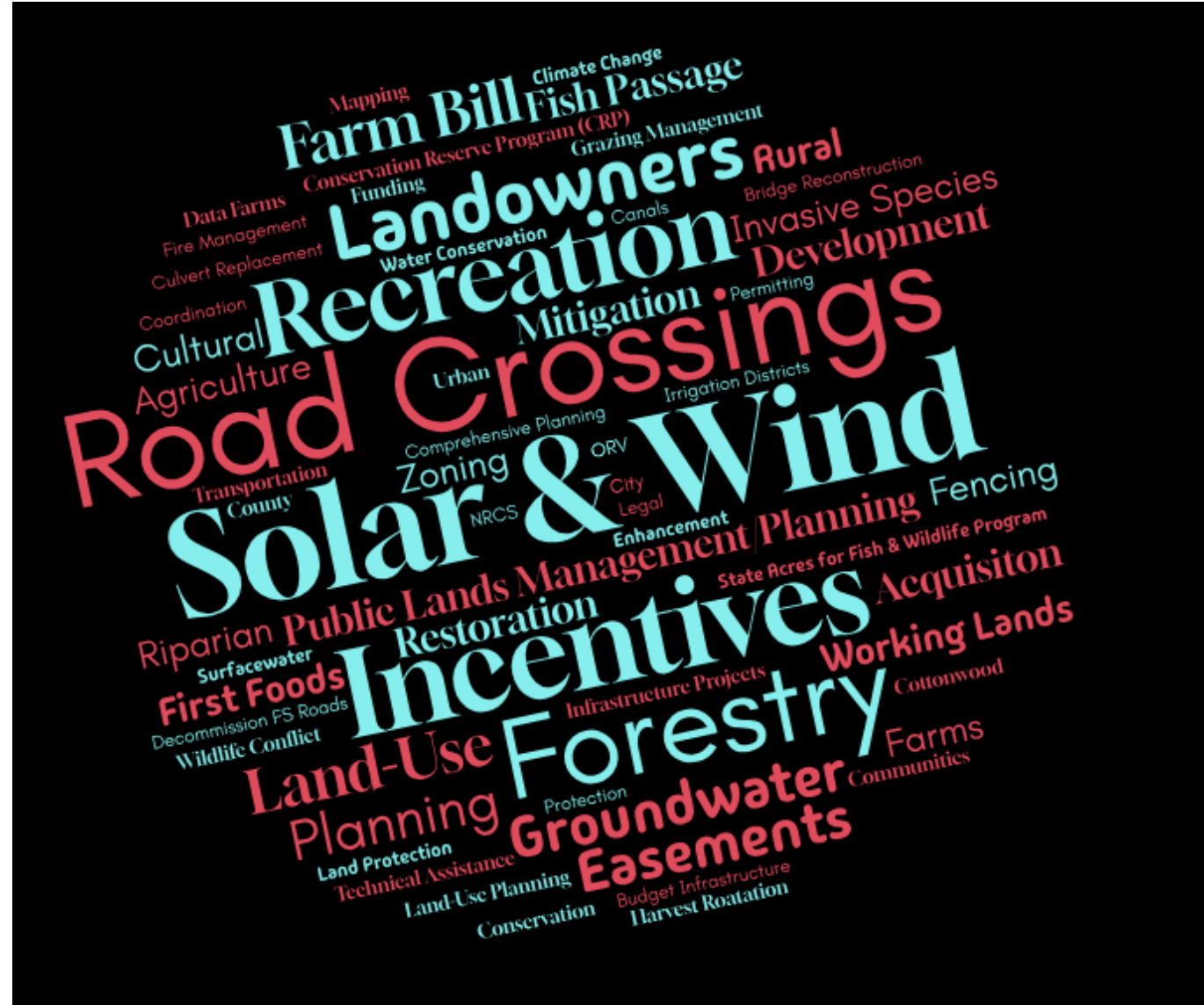
Goal 3: Develop an  
adaptive process





## Goal 4: Mainstream connectivity conservation

- Identify priority implementation actions for habitat connectivity.
- Help existing plans, policies, programs, and funding opportunities support connectivity priorities.
- Identify regional needs and opportunities for improved connectivity implementation.
- Clarify how WDFW, WSDOT, and WAHCAP partners can support these efforts.

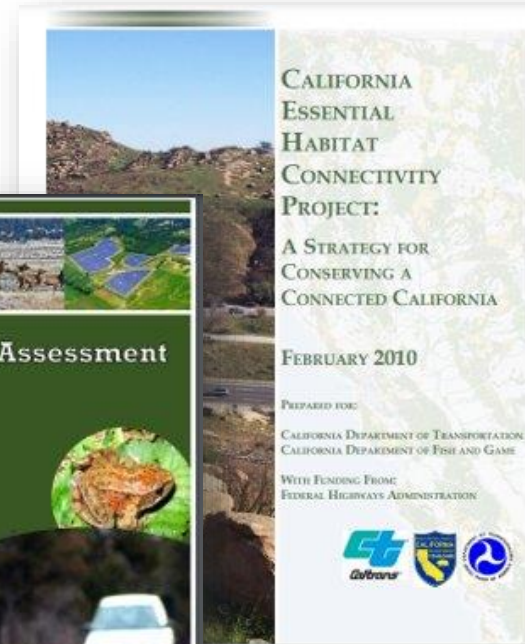
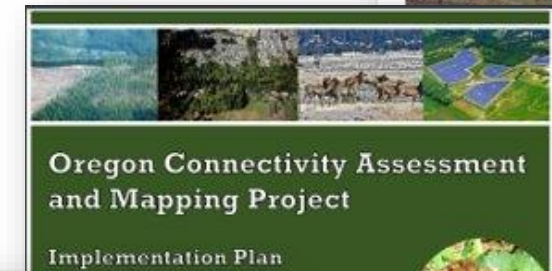
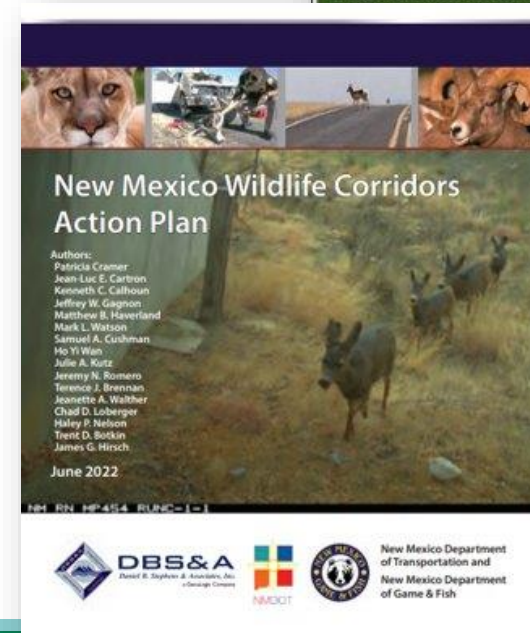


# State Connectivity Action Plans

Maps showing *where* connectivity is.

*Priorities* for taking action.

Strategies for coordinated *implementation*.





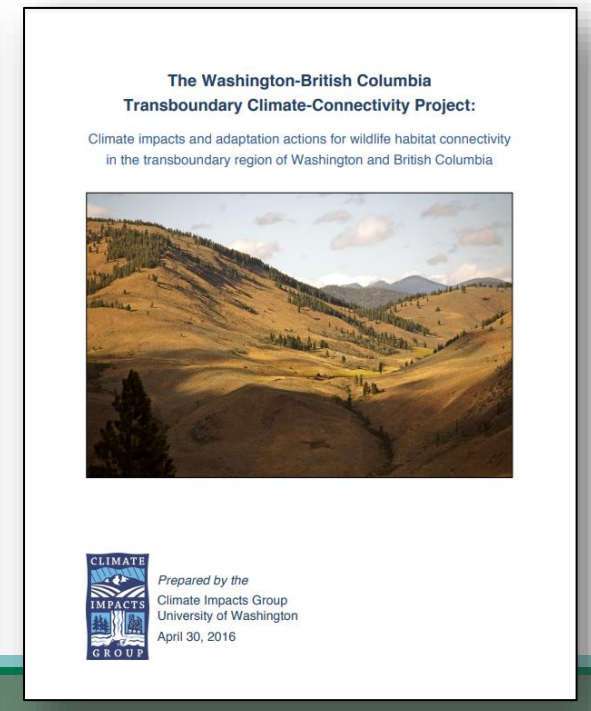
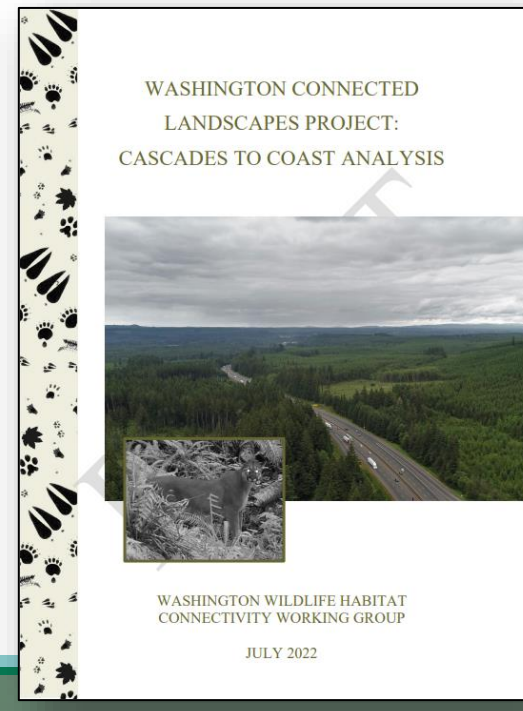
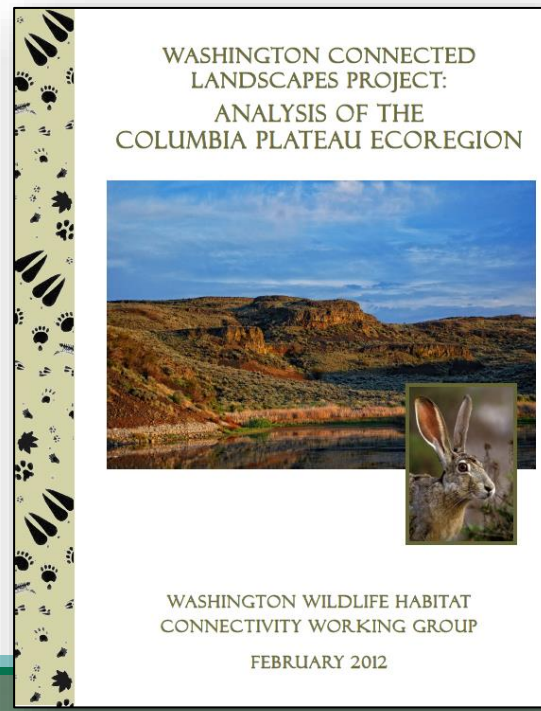
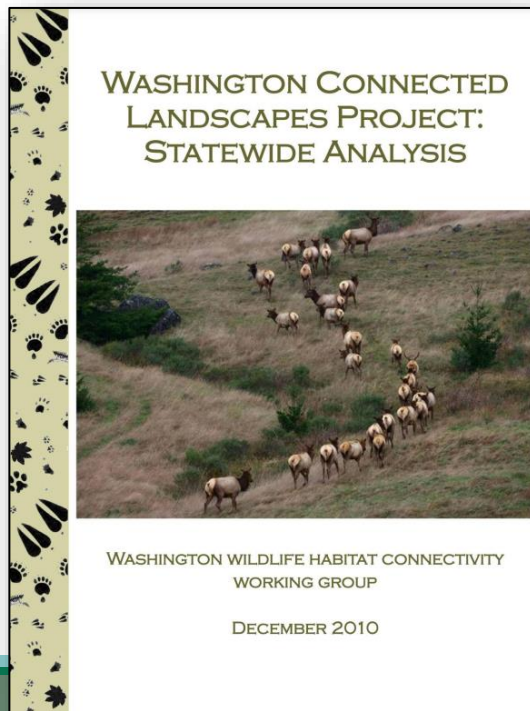
# Existing work...

Washington Connected Landscapes Project: Statewide Analysis

Columbia Plateau Ecoregional Analysis

Cascades To Coast Analysis

The Washington-British Columbia Transboundary Climate-connectivity Project

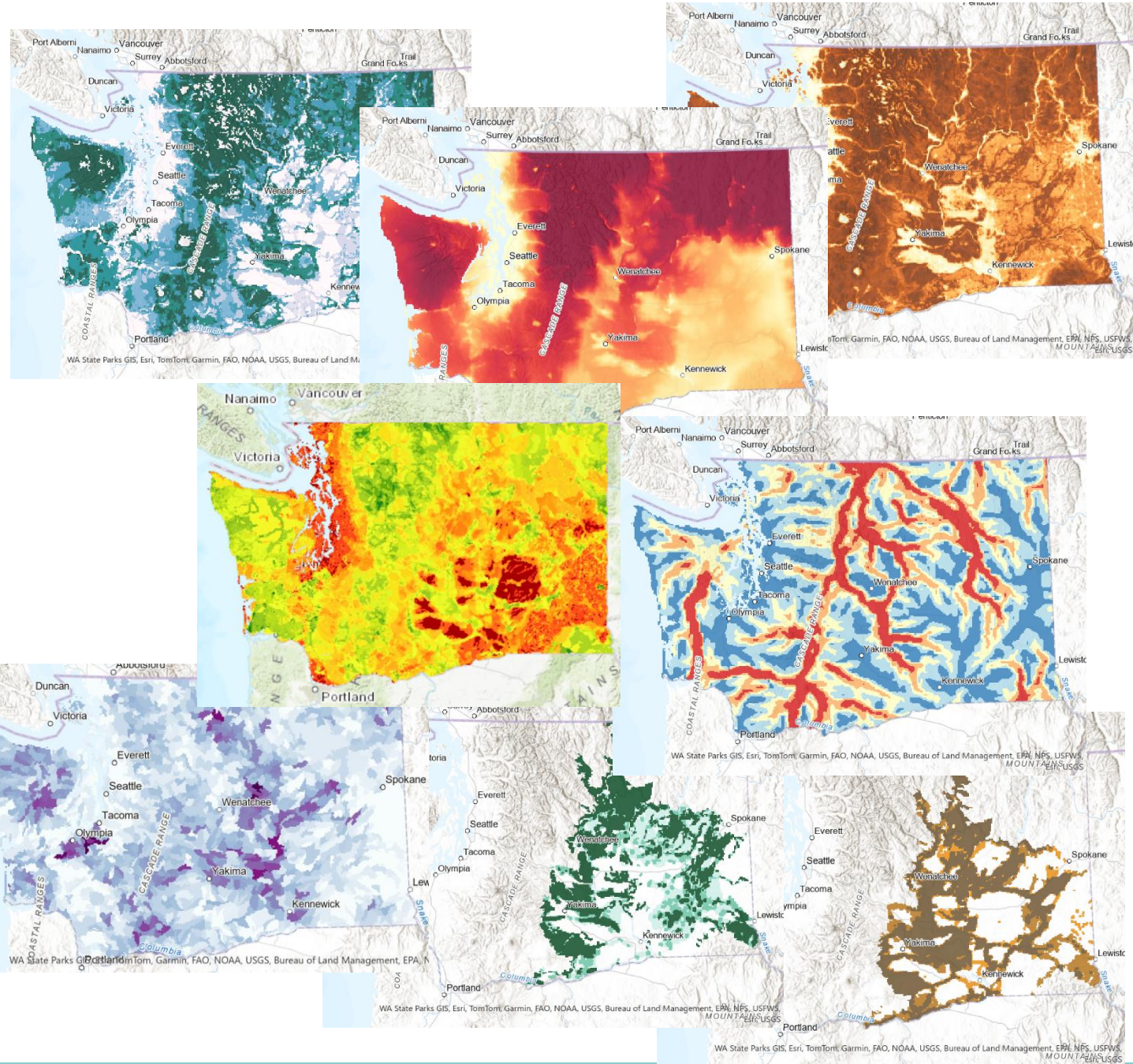




# WAHCAP

## Connectivity values

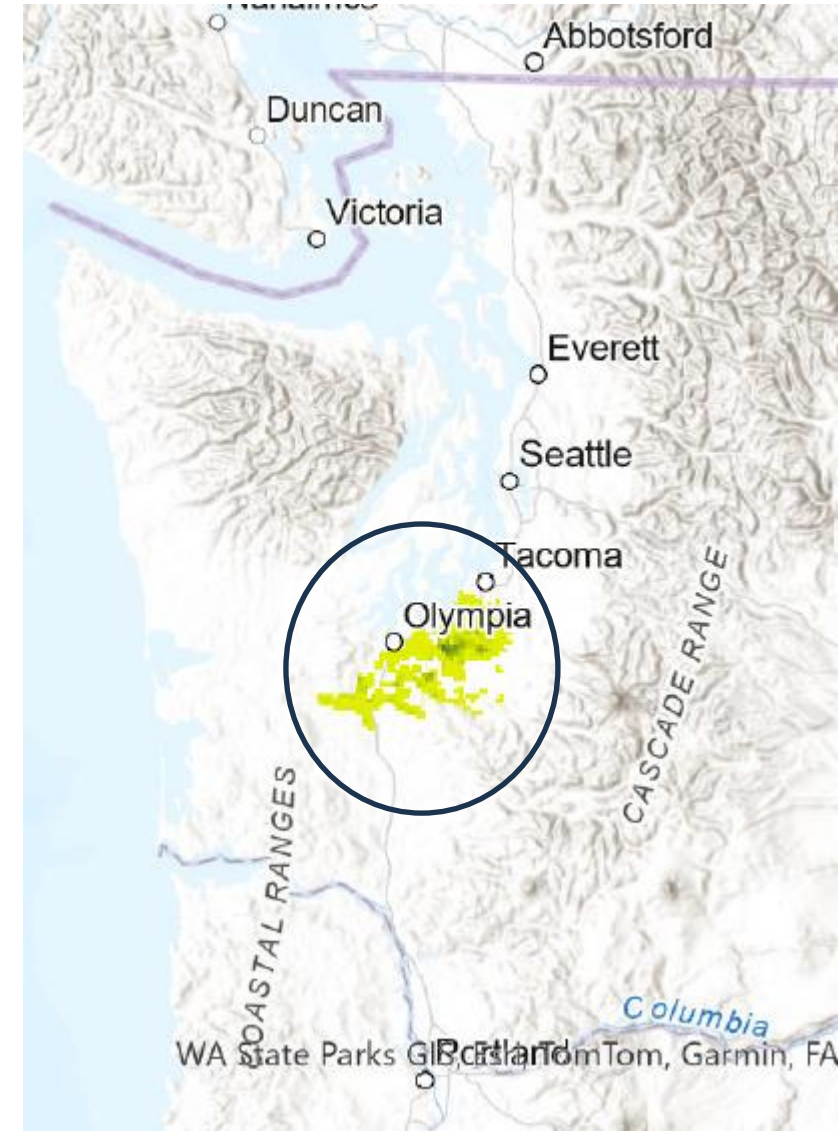
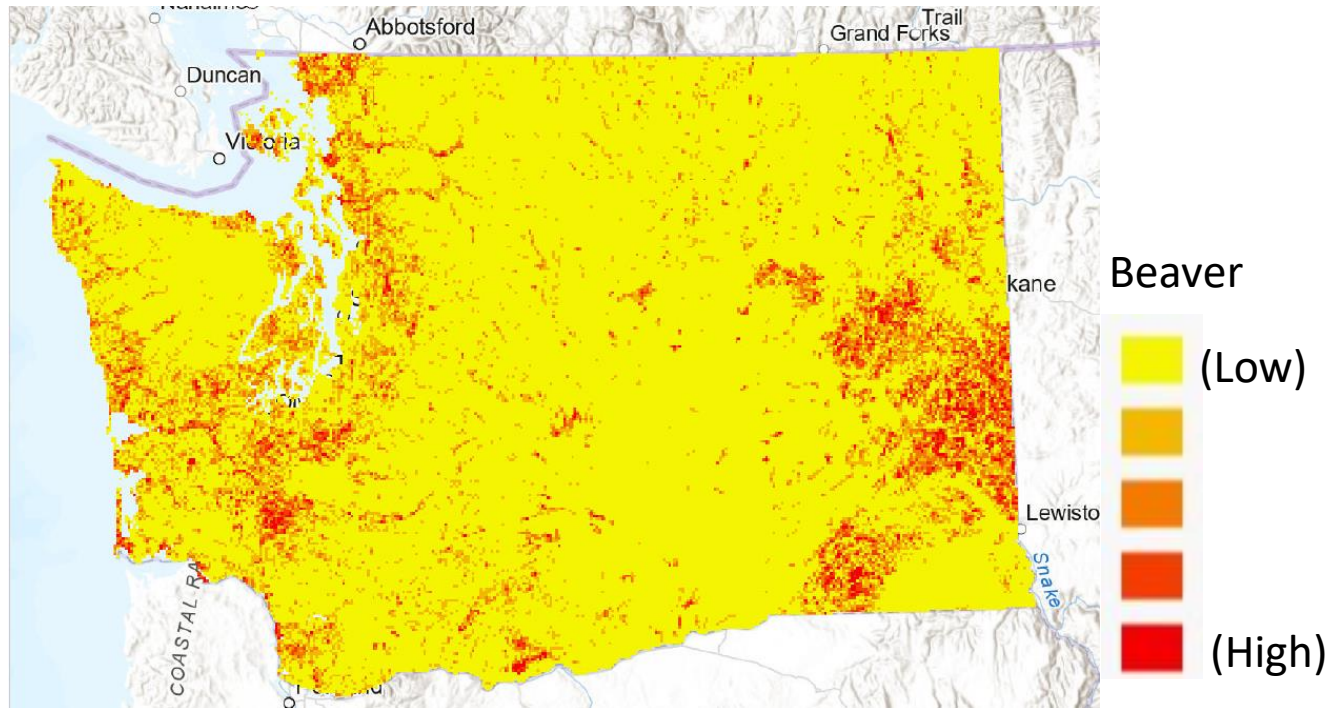
1. Ecosystem (structural) connectivity
2. Network importance
3. Local landscape permeability
4. Focal species models
5. Existing prioritizations – ALI-BAC
6. Existing prioritizations - WSRRI
7. Species of greatest conservation need
8. Climate connectivity





# WAHCAP Connectivity Values Additions and Changes

- Westside prairie soils
- Beaver Potential Habitat (added to Focal Species)
- Made some corrections to the SGCN layer
- Weighted Focal Species by model confidence

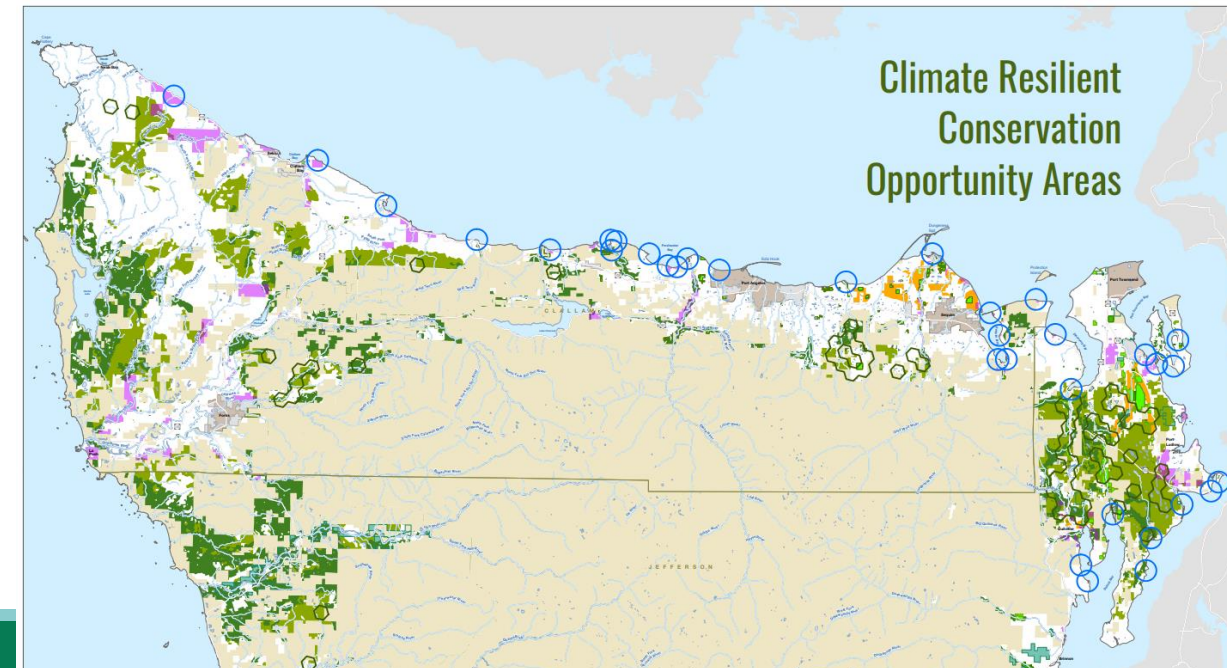
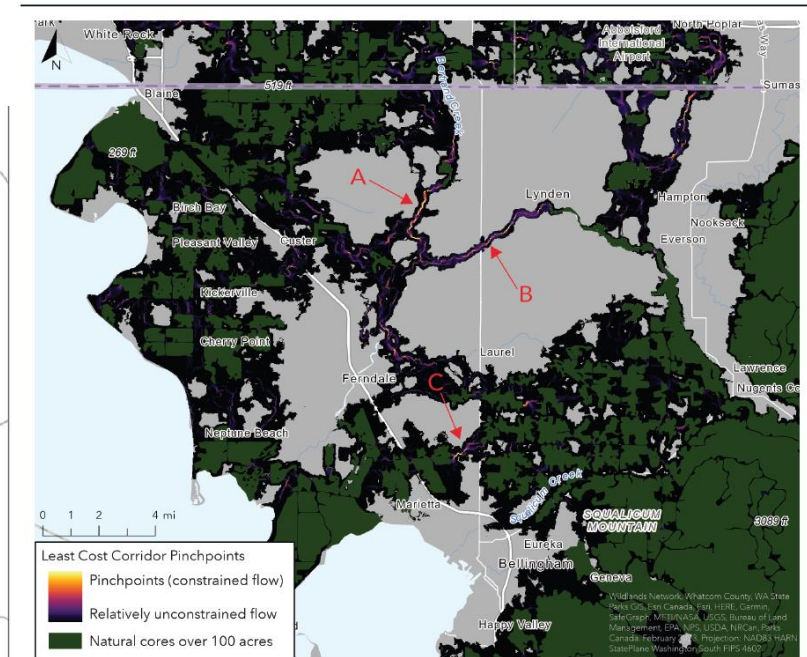
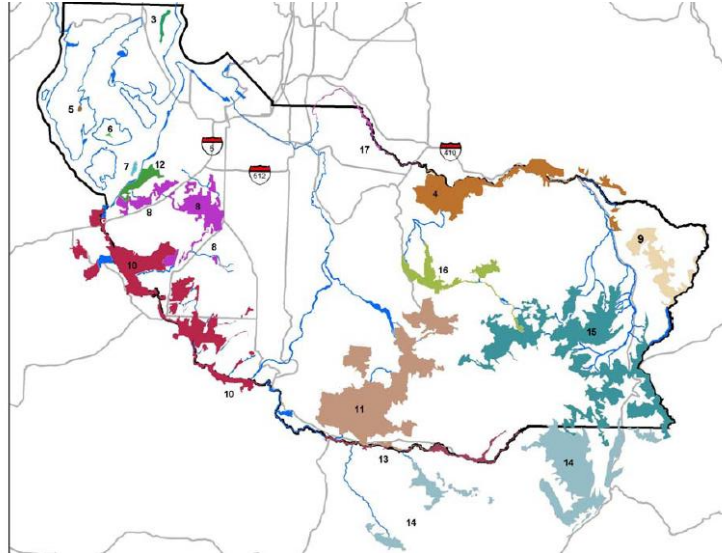




# Recognizing and connecting with local plans

- Whatcom County
- City of Bellingham
- Jefferson Land Trust
- Pierce County
- ???

Not included in the spatial analysis – will be referenced in the report.



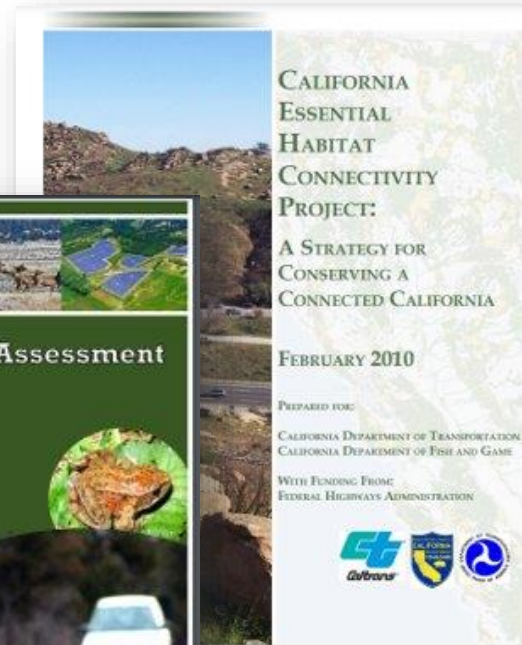
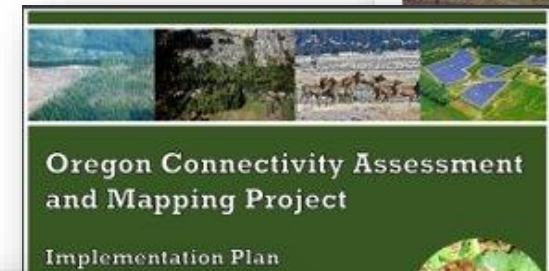
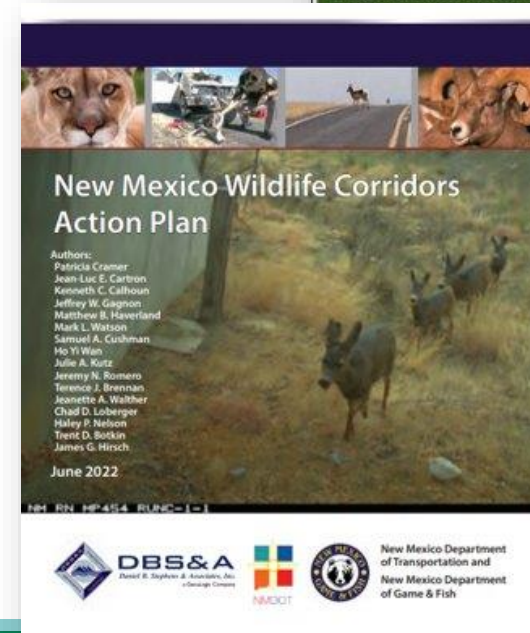


# State Connectivity Action Plans

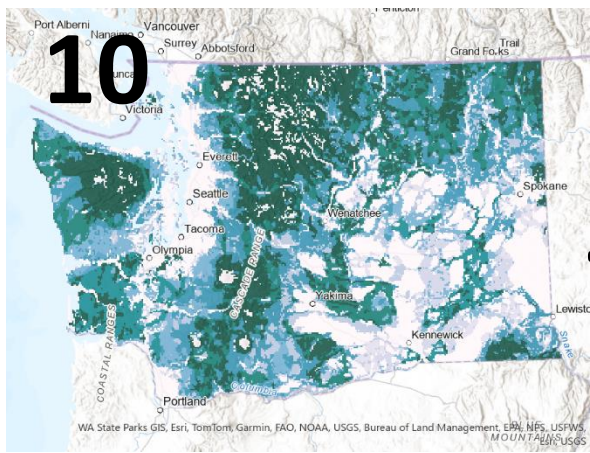
Maps showing *where* connectivity is.

*Priorities* for taking action.

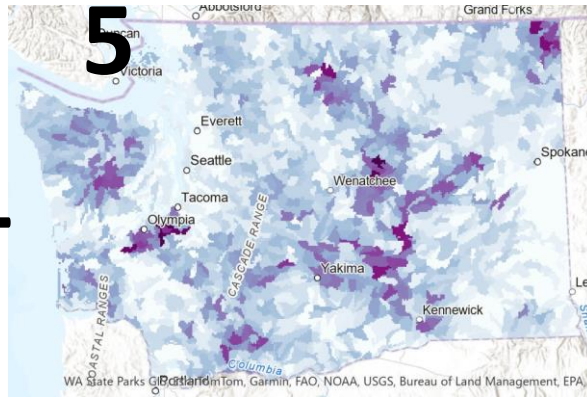
Strategies for coordinated *implementation*.



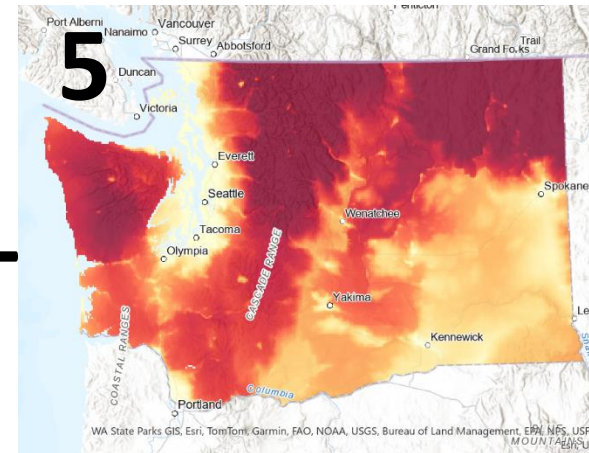




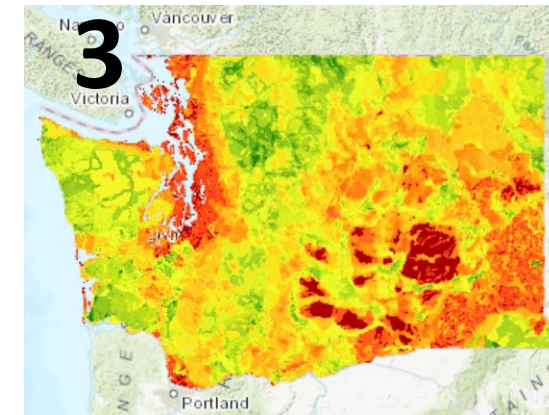
Rescaled ecosystem tiers (+ Prairie)



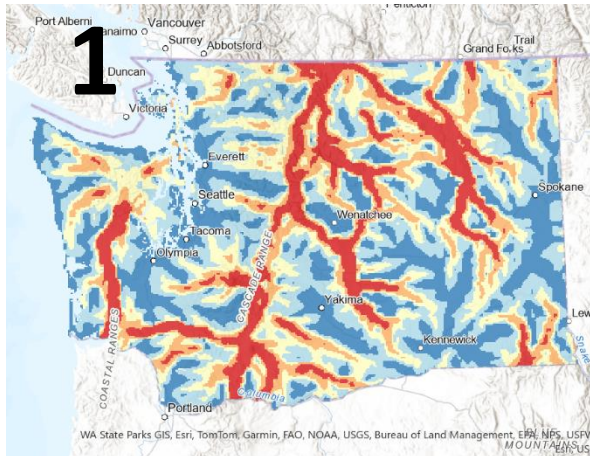
Species of Greatest Conservation Need



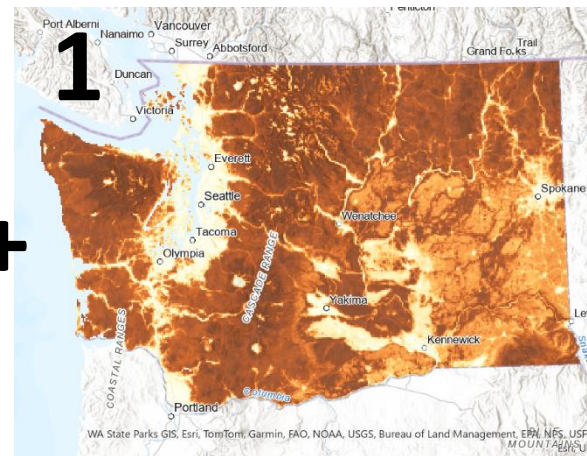
Network importance



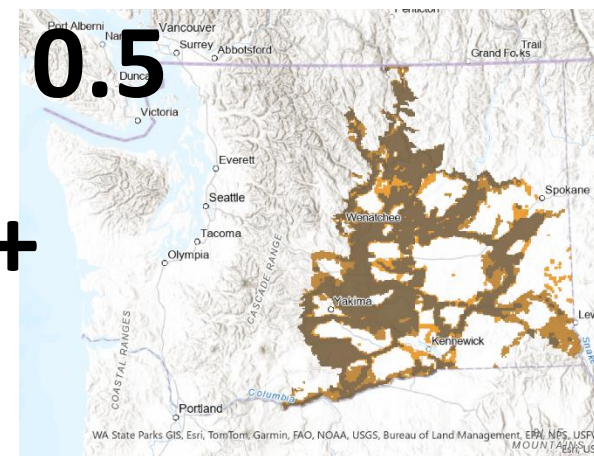
Rescaled focal species (+ Beaver)



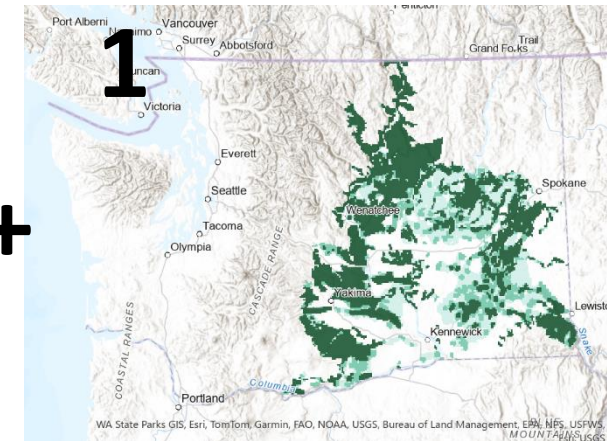
Climate path corridors



Permeability



ALI-BAC

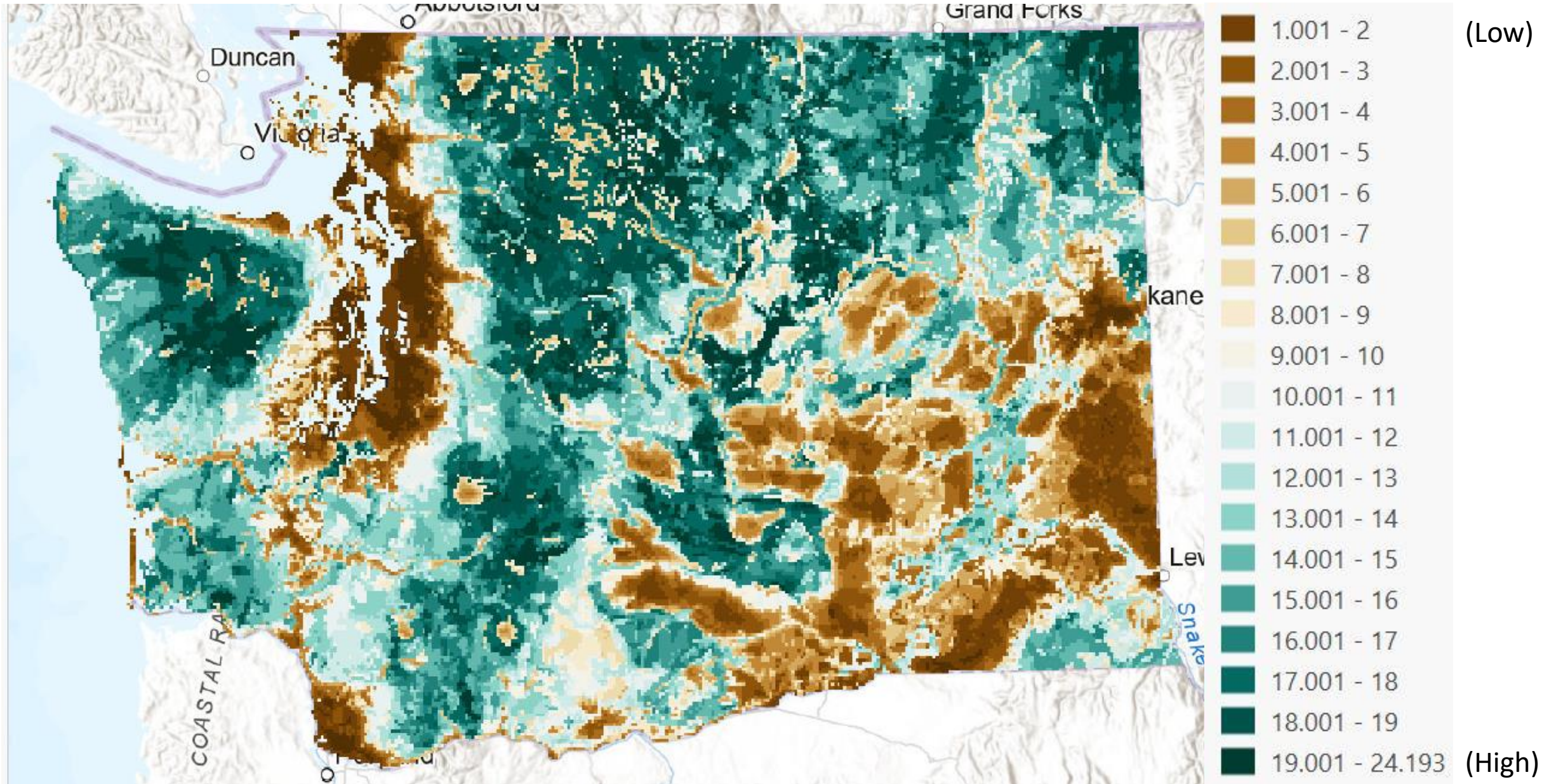


WSRRI



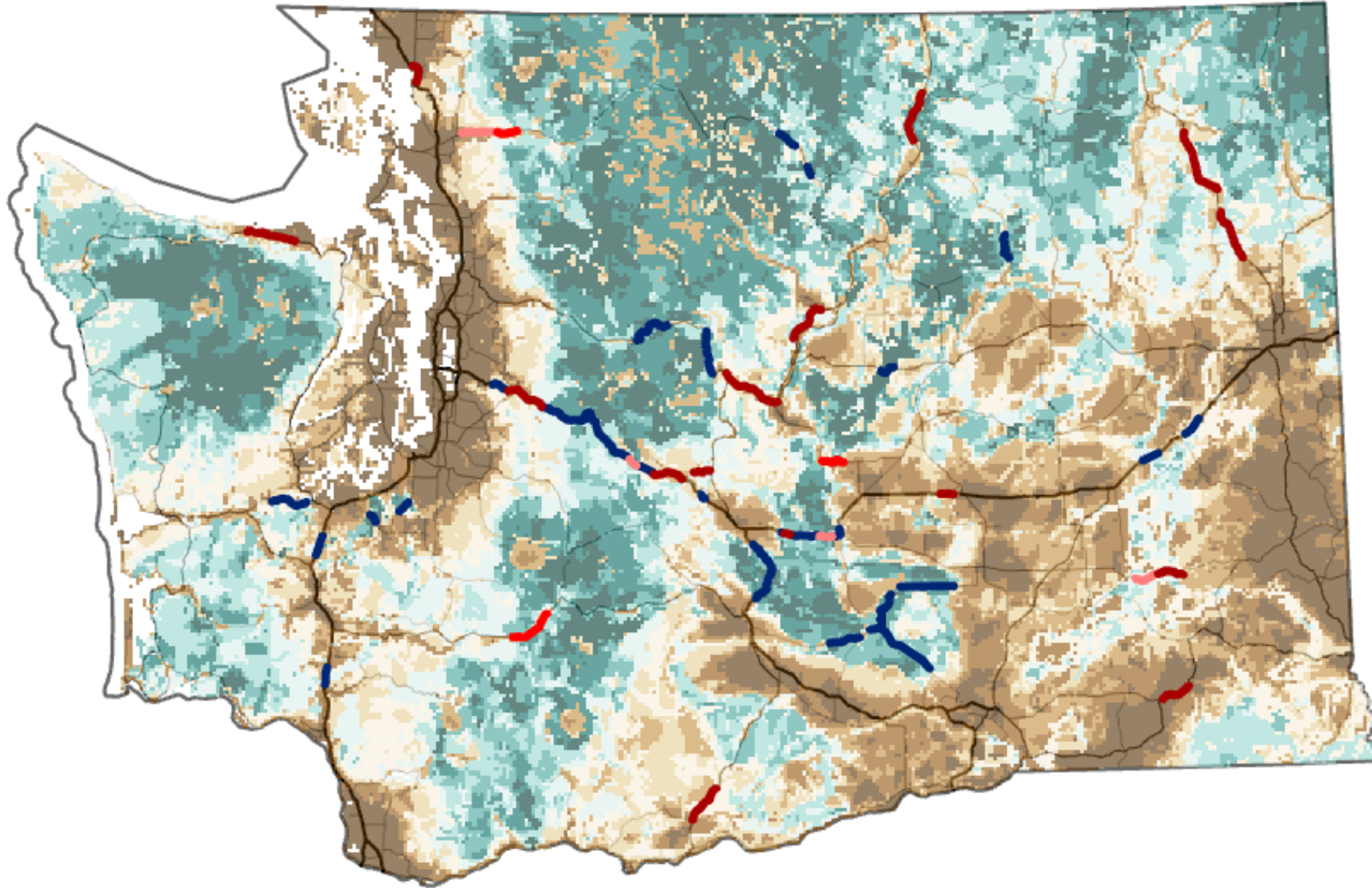


# Landscape connectivity value





# Identify priority locations - Transportation









## Wrap-up and next steps

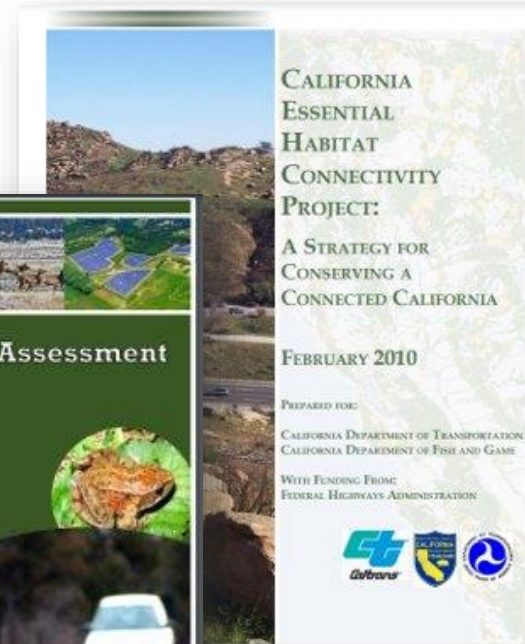
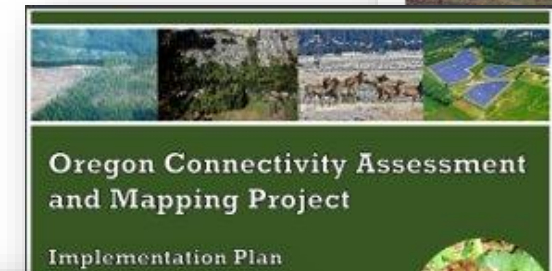
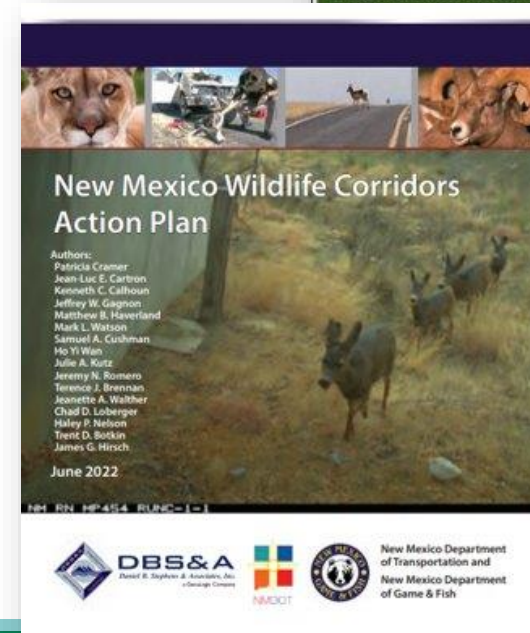


# State Connectivity Action Plans

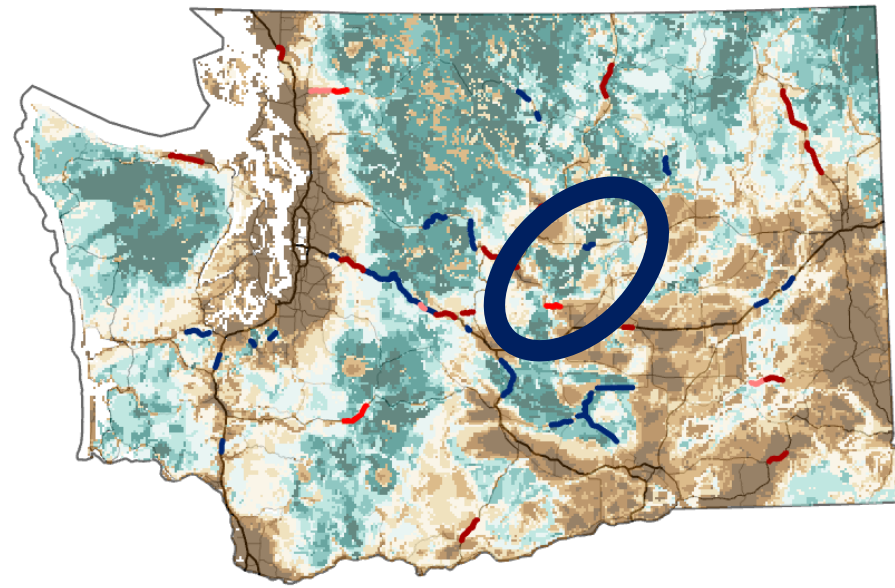
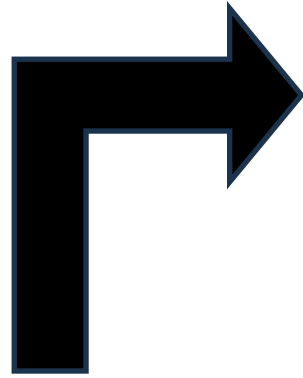
Maps showing *where* connectivity is.

*Priorities* for taking action.

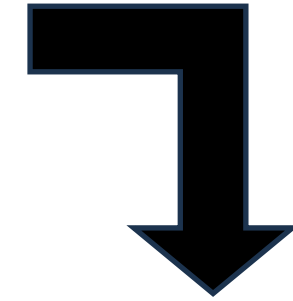
Strategies for coordinated *implementation*.



2. Synthesize

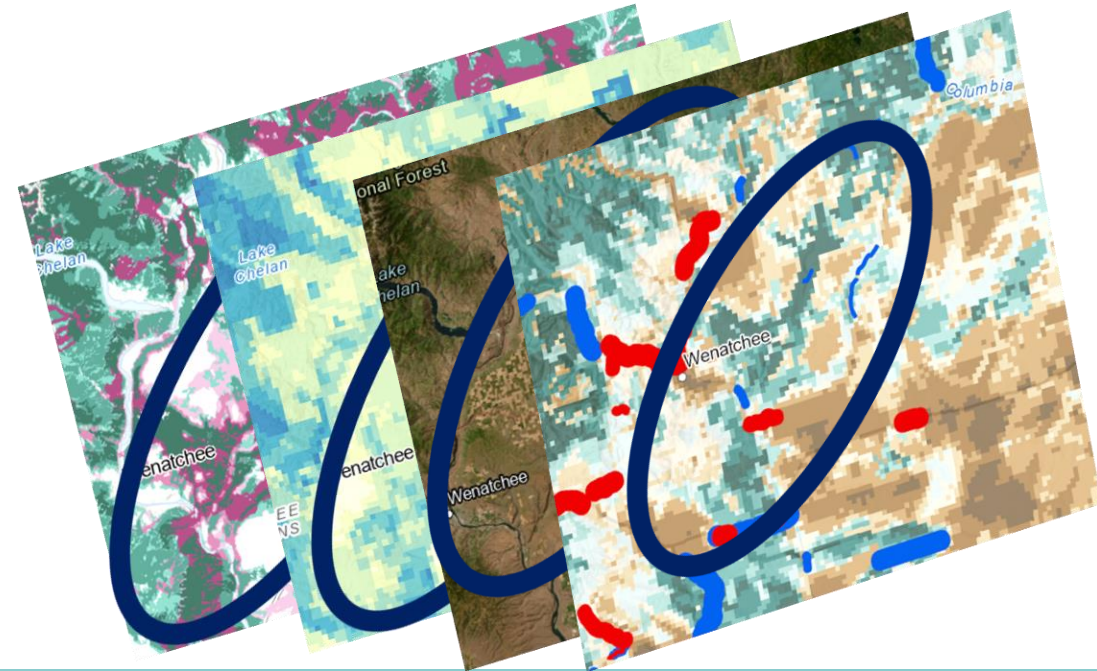
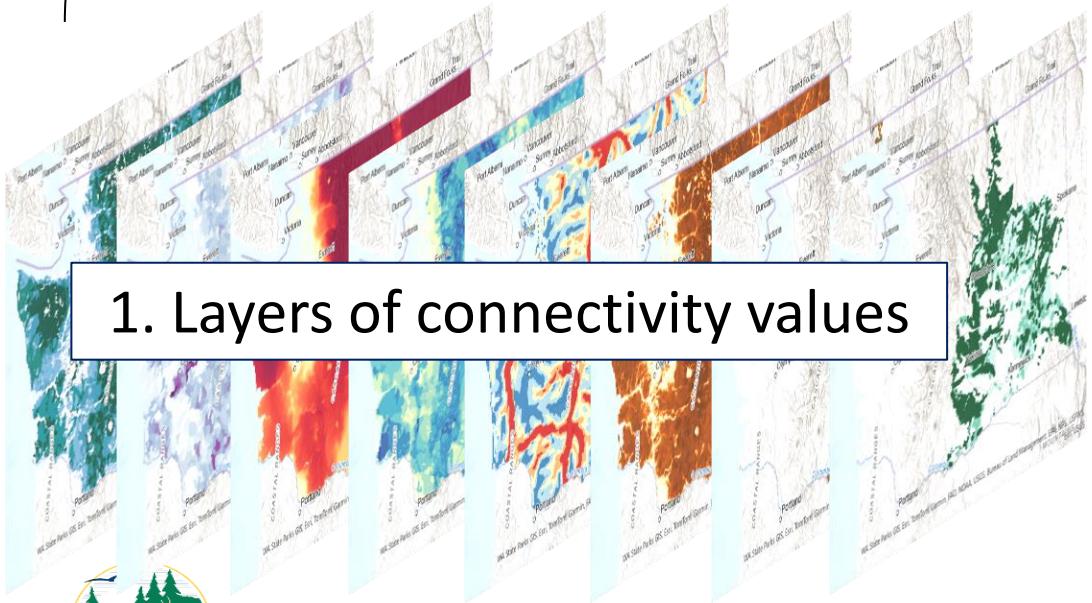


2. Identify priorities



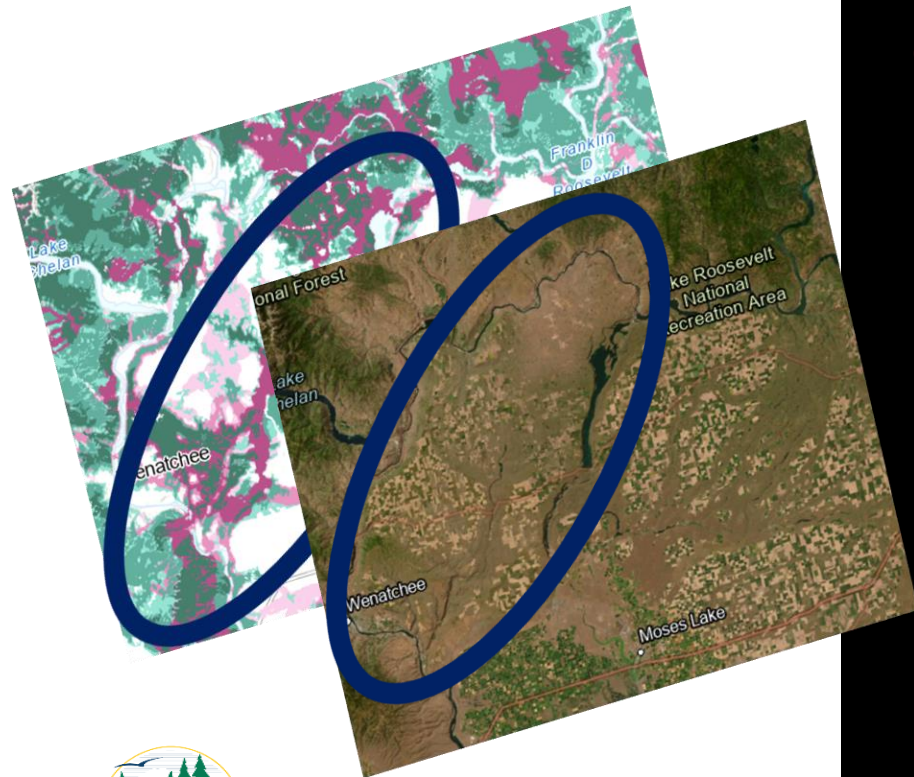
3. Use fine-scaled data to plan and implement

1. Layers of connectivity values





## 4. Identify priority implementation actions.



Mapping  
Climate Change  
Farm Bill  
Fish Passage  
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)  
Grazing Management  
Funding  
Data Farms  
Fire Management  
Culvert Replacement  
Coordination  
Cultural  
Agriculture  
Transportation  
County  
Rural  
Bridge Reconstruction  
Invasive Species  
Development  
Permitting  
Irrigation Districts  
Urban  
Mitigation  
Comprehensive Planning  
Zoning  
ORV  
City  
Legal  
Enhancement  
Fencing  
State Acres for Fish & Wildlife Program  
Acquisition  
Working Lands  
Cottonwood  
Farms  
Communities  
Budget Infrastructure  
Harvest Rotation  
Conservation  
Land-Use Planning  
Technical Assistance  
Land Protection  
Protection  
Infrastructure Projects  
Restoration  
Public Lands Management  
Surfacewater  
First Foods  
Decommission FS Roads  
Wildlife Conflict  
Solar & Wind  
Road Crossings  
Recreation  
Landowners  
Crossings  
Incentives  
Forestry  
Groundwater  
Easements  
Planning



# Next steps

**Emailed comments are welcome any time. Our last formal comment period will be May 1-23 on the full report.**

## **April 1-10, 2025:**

- **Land Use Planning**, Tuesday, April 1, 1-4pm
- **Public Lands Management**, Wednesday, April 9, 9am-12pm
- **Voluntary Conservation Incentives**, Thursday, April 10, 9am-12pm
- **Dedicated Tribal Workshop**, Wednesday, April 9, 1-4pm

***May 1-23, 2025: Final comment period on draft report.***

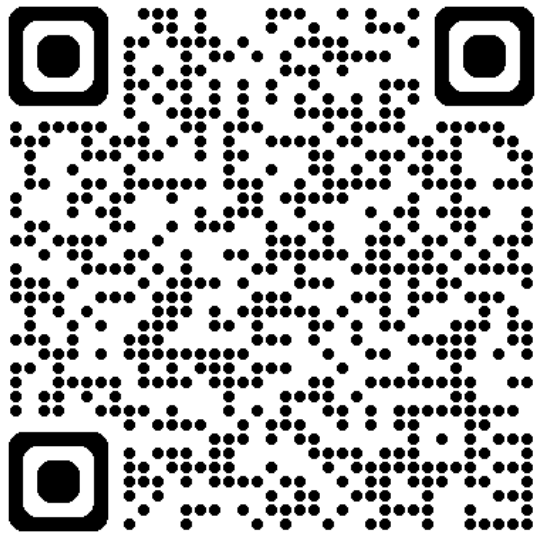
**June 30, 2025: Final report.**





# Thank you!

[Julia.Michalak@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:Julia.Michalak@dfw.wa.gov)



<https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/habitat-recovery/connectivity/action-plan>



## Washington Habitat Connectivity Action Plan Mailing List



# Tribal engagement

- **June 2023: Project introduction to Tribal networks. September 2023: Email follow-up with Tribes.**
- **February 2024: WDFW sent formal letters to Chairpersons of Washington's federally-recognized Tribes.**
  - WDFW receiving responses from 8 Tribes.
  - WDFW hosted four one-on-one meetings with representatives from 5 Tribes who had requested conversations.
  - From these conversations, Tribal staff from five Tribes expressed interest in participating on the Technical Advisory Group (TAG).
  - From these conversations, Tribal staff from two Tribes expressed interest in participating on the Implementation Advisory Group (IAG).
- **April 2024: ATNI Tribal Climate Summit. September 2024: WAHCAP Data Review Tribal Webinar.**
- **February 2025: WAHCAP Priorities, Dedicated Tribal Workshop.**

