Washington Habitat Connectivity Action Plan (WAHCAP)

Conservation incentives workshop

WSDOT

Terradapt

Washington Department of FISH and WILDLIFE

Conservation Biology Institute

The Wildlife Connectivity Institute

Conservation Northwest
Keeping the Northwest Wild

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

Conservation Incentives Workshop Objectives

- Provide an overview of and update on the WAHCAP project.
- Share examples of conservation incentive programs.
- Identify implementation actions associated with voluntary incentives.
- Review and discuss implementation options for specific regions, locations and organizations.

Duration	Description	Lead
1:00-1:10	Welcome and brief overview of agenda	Julia Michalak, WDFW
1:10-1:30	WAHCAP overview: 1) Project introduction, overview, and updates 2) Landscape connectivity values and maps	
1:30-1:50	Transportation analysis and priority list: 1) Safety and ecological priorities analyses 2) Priority locations a. Full state highway ranking map b. Long list of transportation priorities c. Short list of transportation priorities	Glen Kalisz, WSDOT
1:50-2:05	Q & A	Jessica Shafer, Shafer Consulting
2:05-2:15	Break	

10:15-10:35	**Overview of conservation incentive programs and habitat connectivity**	**Jeff Azerrad, WDFW**
10:35-10:45	WAHCAP map applications	Julia Michalak, WDFW
10:45-11:30	Breakout Group Discussion: 1) What conservation incentive programs are working well to support habitat connectivity conservation? 2) How could conservation incentive programs be improved to better to support landowners and habitat connectivity goals? 3) What recommended strategies or action items do you have to improve implementation of conservation incentive programs to support habitat connectivity conservation?	Small groups facilitated by WAHCAP Core Team
11:30-11:50	Group share-outs	Jessica Shafer, Shafer Consulting
11:50-12:00	Next Steps	Julia Michalak, WDFW

Connecting Habitat for Washington's Wildlife

Developing the Washington Habitat Connectivity Action Plan

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CONSERVATION BIOLOGY INSTITUTE

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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.

State Connectivity Action Plans

Maps showing ***where*** connectivity is.

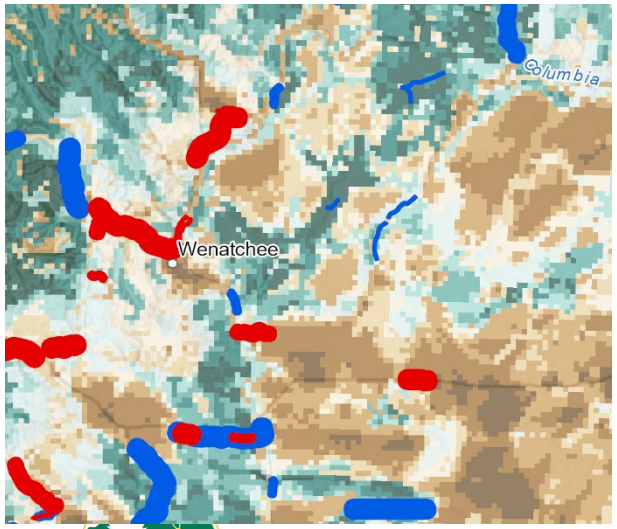
Priorities for taking action.

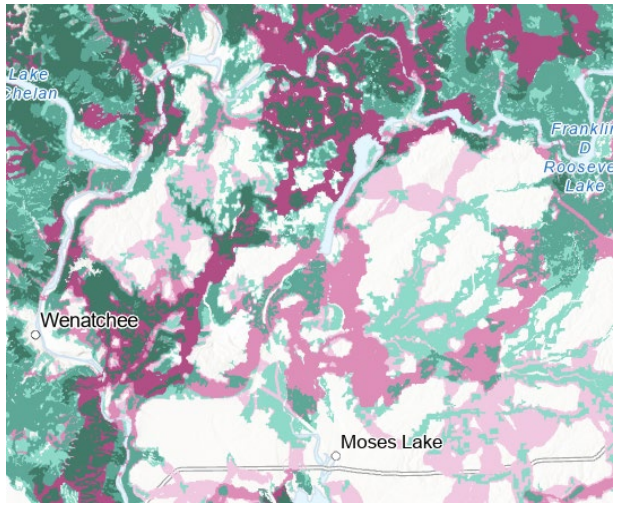
Strategies for coordinated ***implementation***.

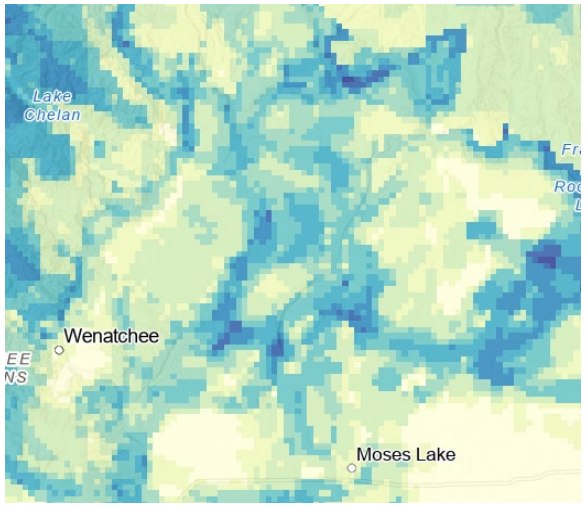
Goal 1: Provide spatial data to inform connectivity conservation at multiple scales

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

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

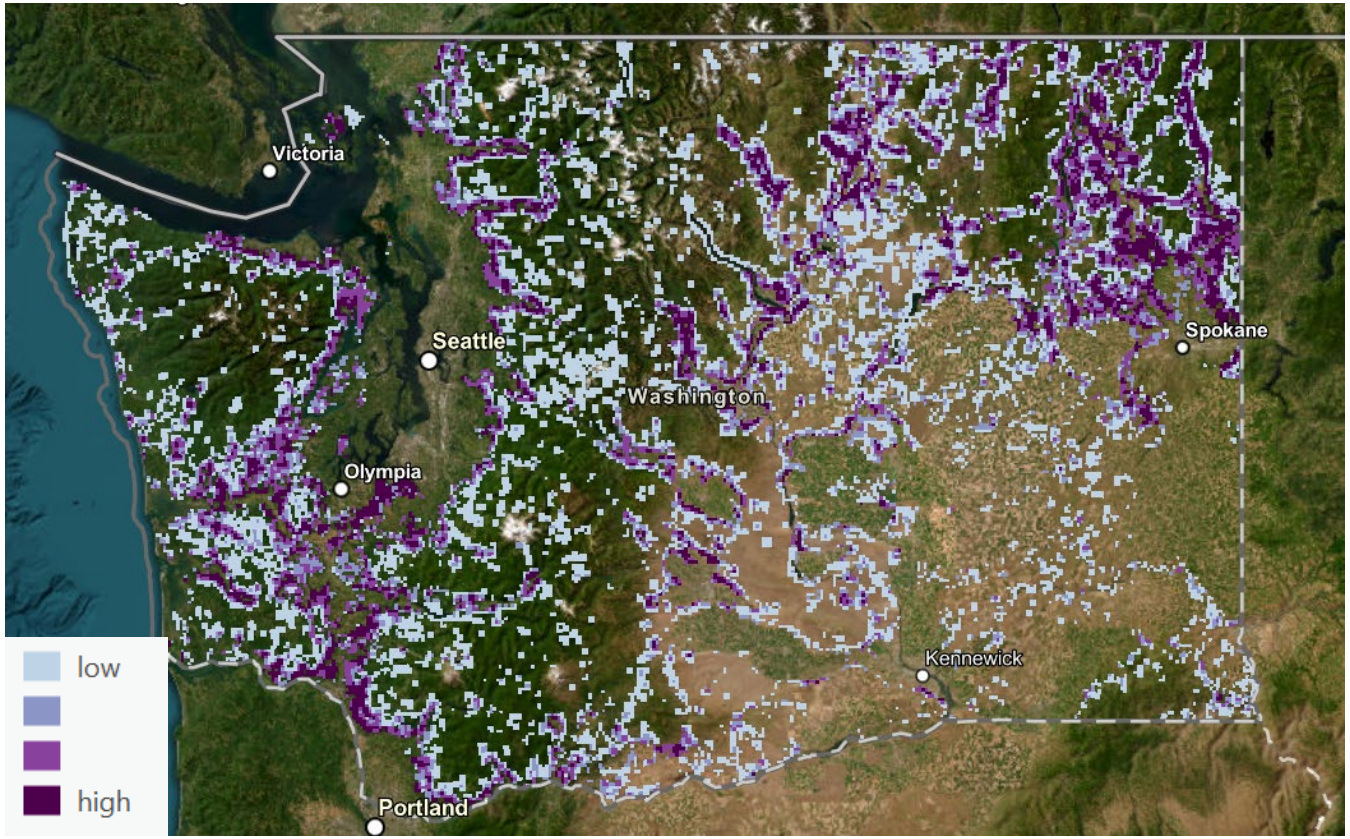






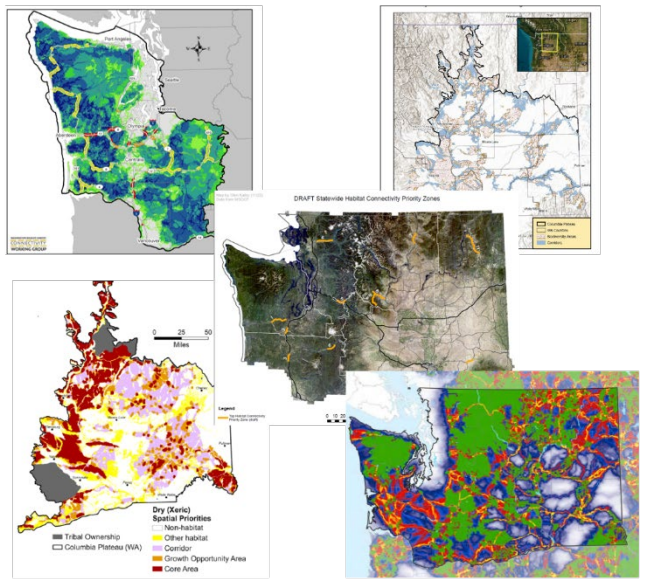
Goal 2: Identify priority locations

- 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

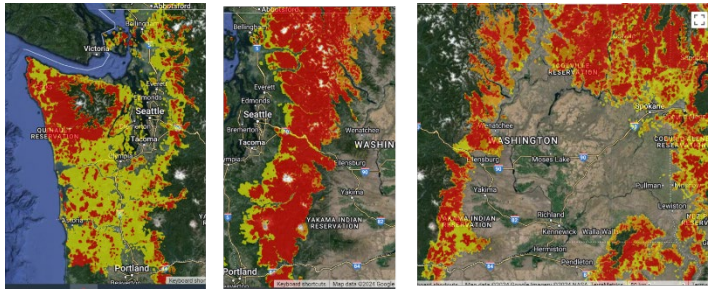
Existing data and priorities



WAHCAP synthesis

WAHCAP Maps and Priority Locations

New Data



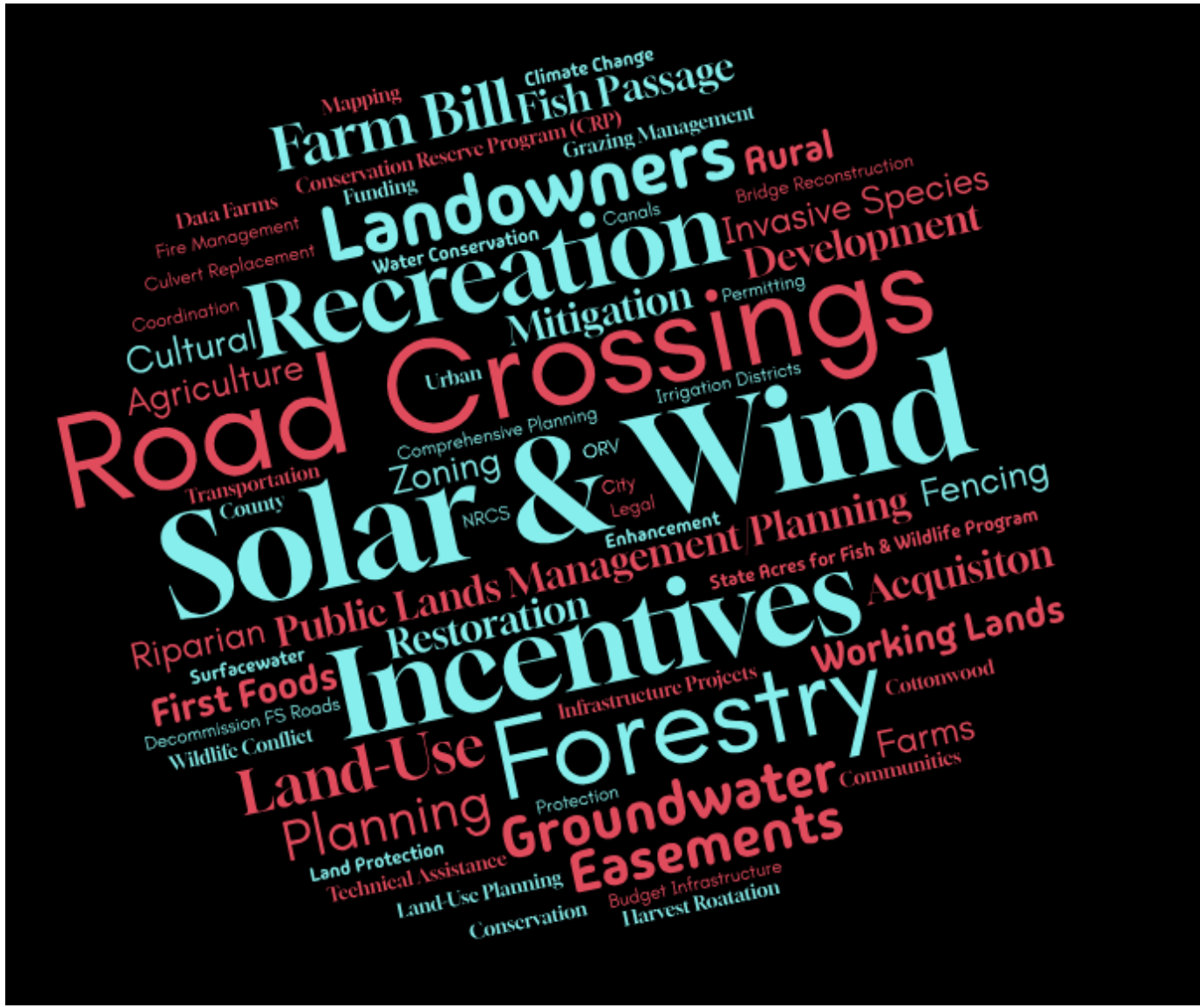
Select
Prioritize
Revise

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.

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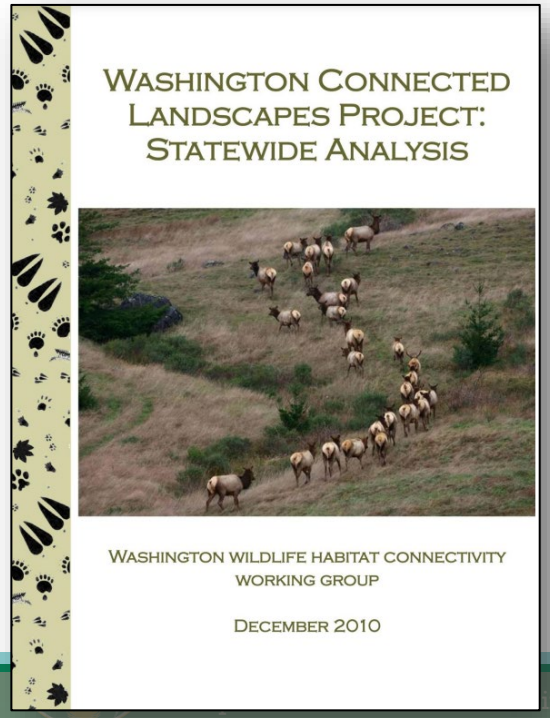
Existing work…

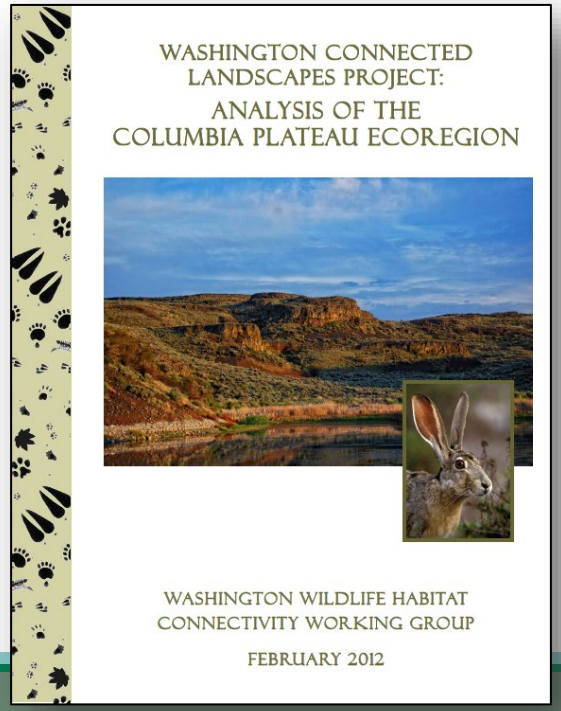
Washington Connected Landscapes Project: Statewide Analysis

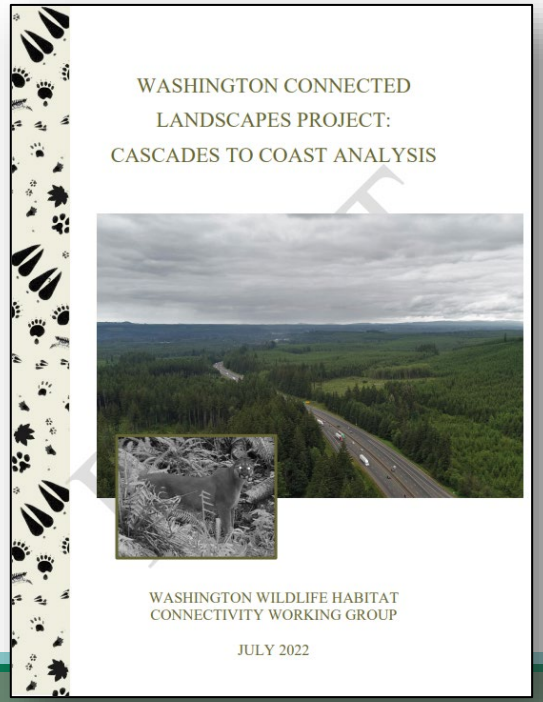
Columbia Plateau Ecoregional Analysis

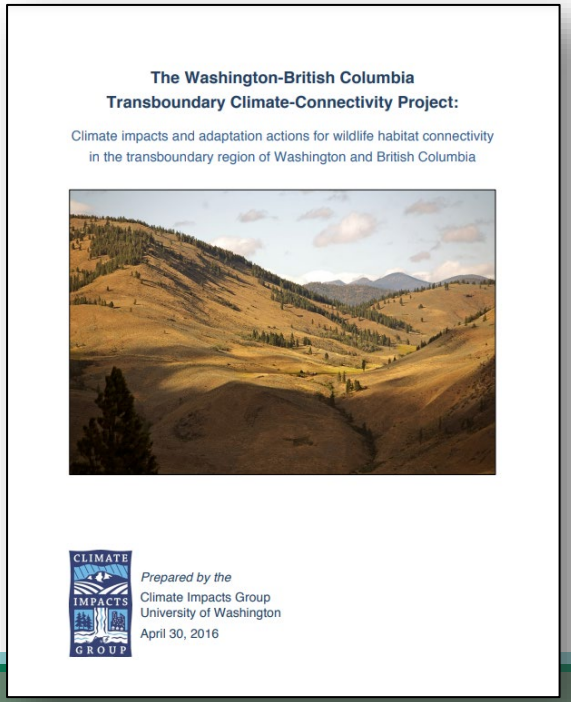
Cascades To Coast Analysis

The Washington-British Columbia Transboundary Climate-connectivity Project





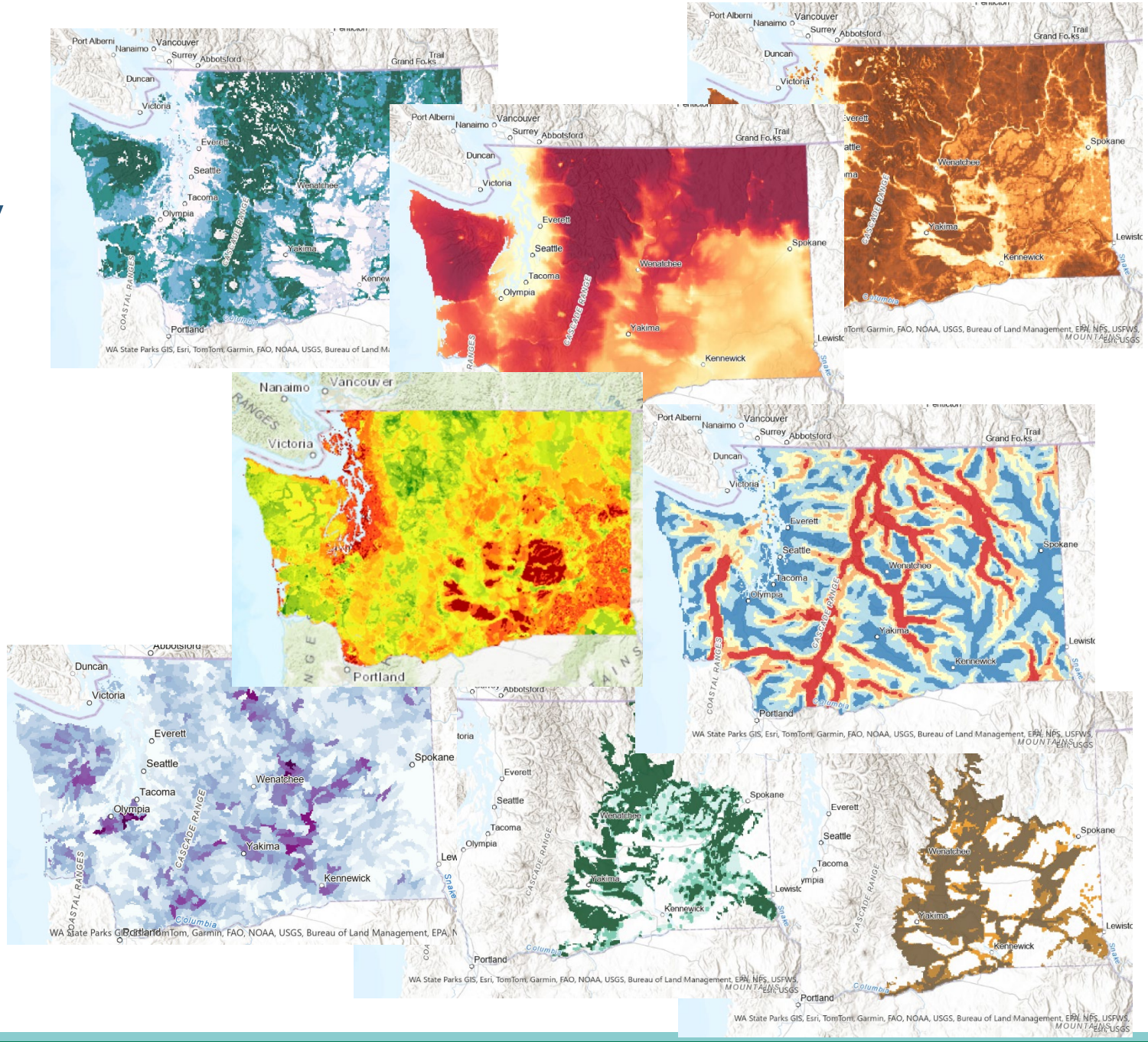




WAHCAP

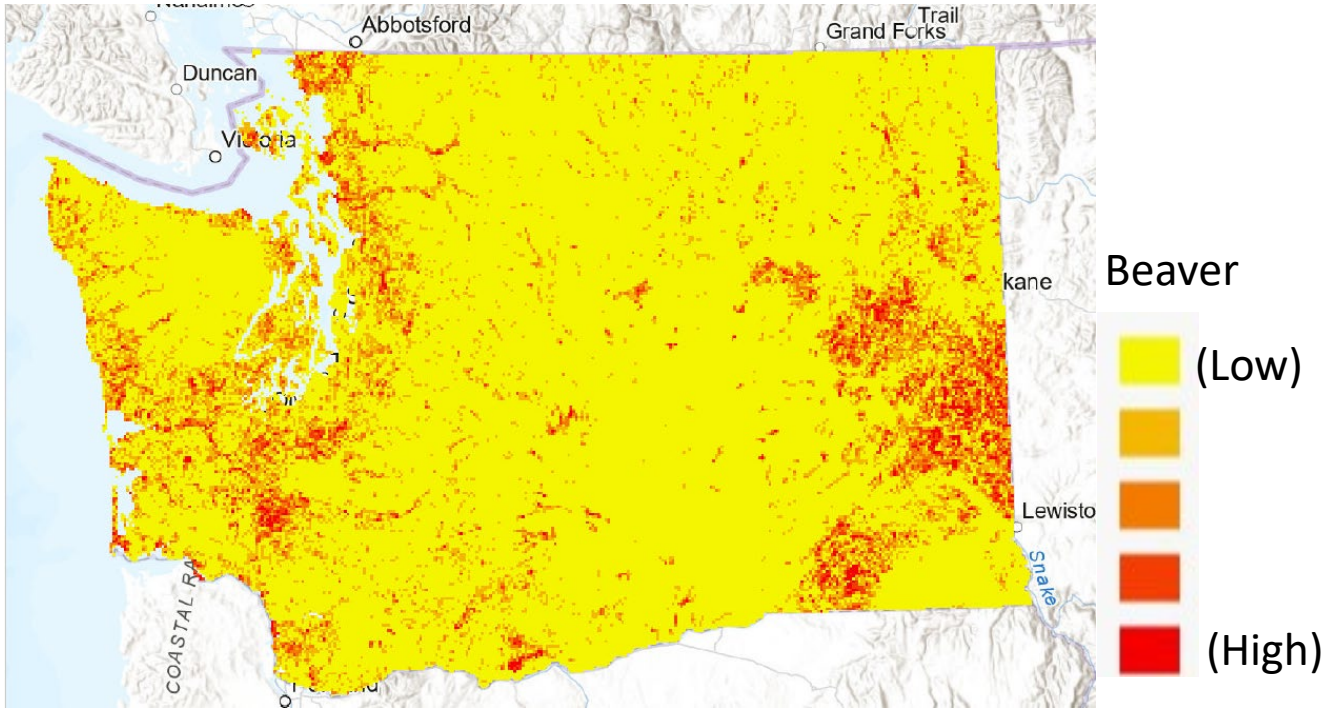
Connectivity values

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

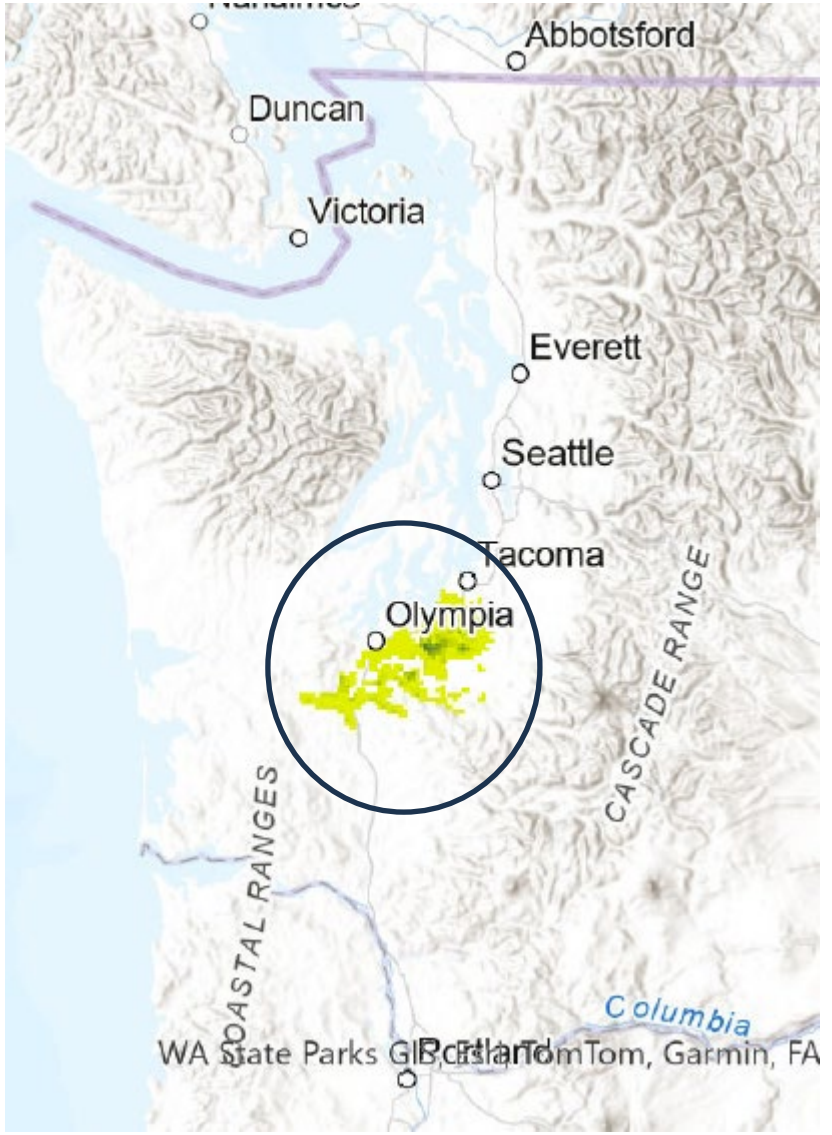
- Westside prairie soils
- Beaver Potential Habitat (added to Focal Species)
- Made some corrections to the SGCN layer
- Weighted Focal Species by model confidence



Beaver

(Low)

(High)



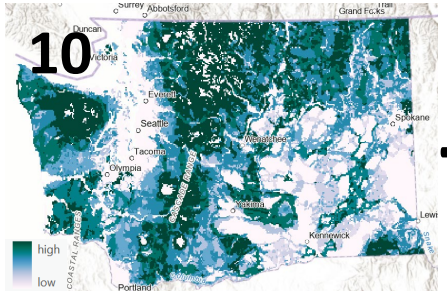
State Connectivity Action Plans

Maps showing ***where*** connectivity is.

Priorities for taking action.

Strategies for coordinated ***implementation***.

Combining all layers



Locally rescaled ecosystem services

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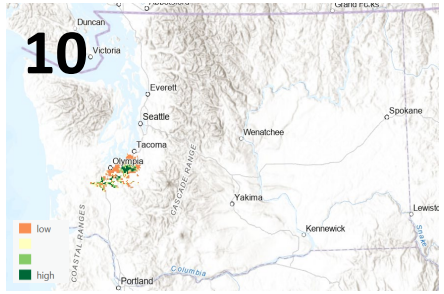

Prairies

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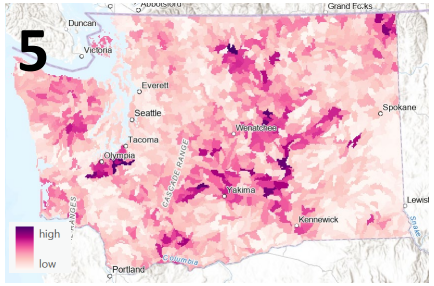

Species of Greatest Conservation Need

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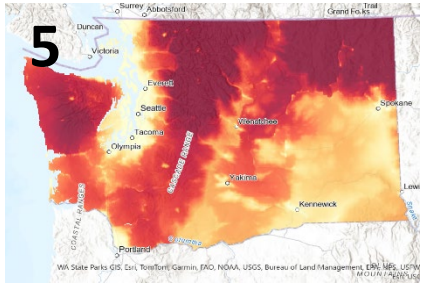

Network importance

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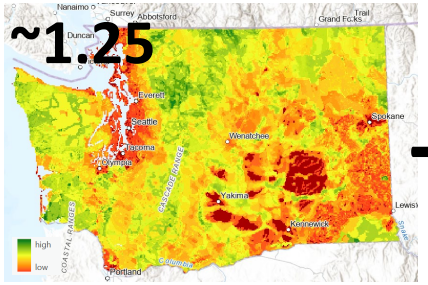

Locally rescaled focal species

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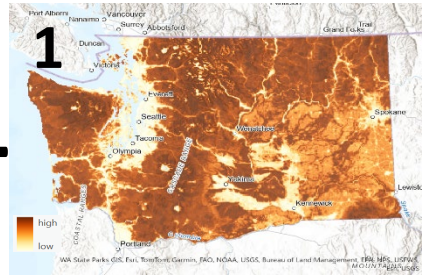

Permeability

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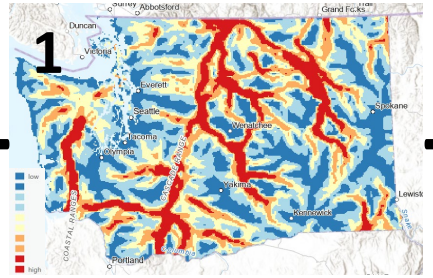

Climate path corridors

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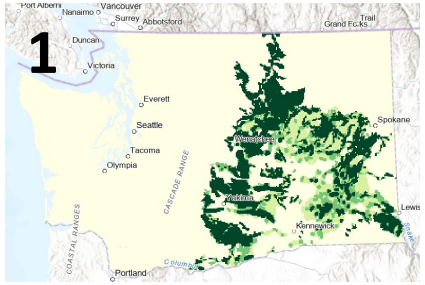

WSRRI

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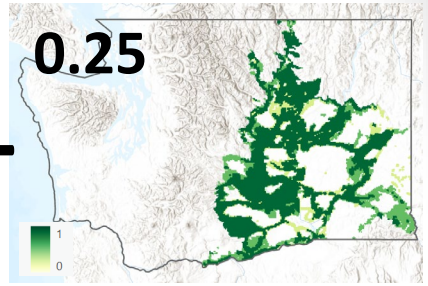
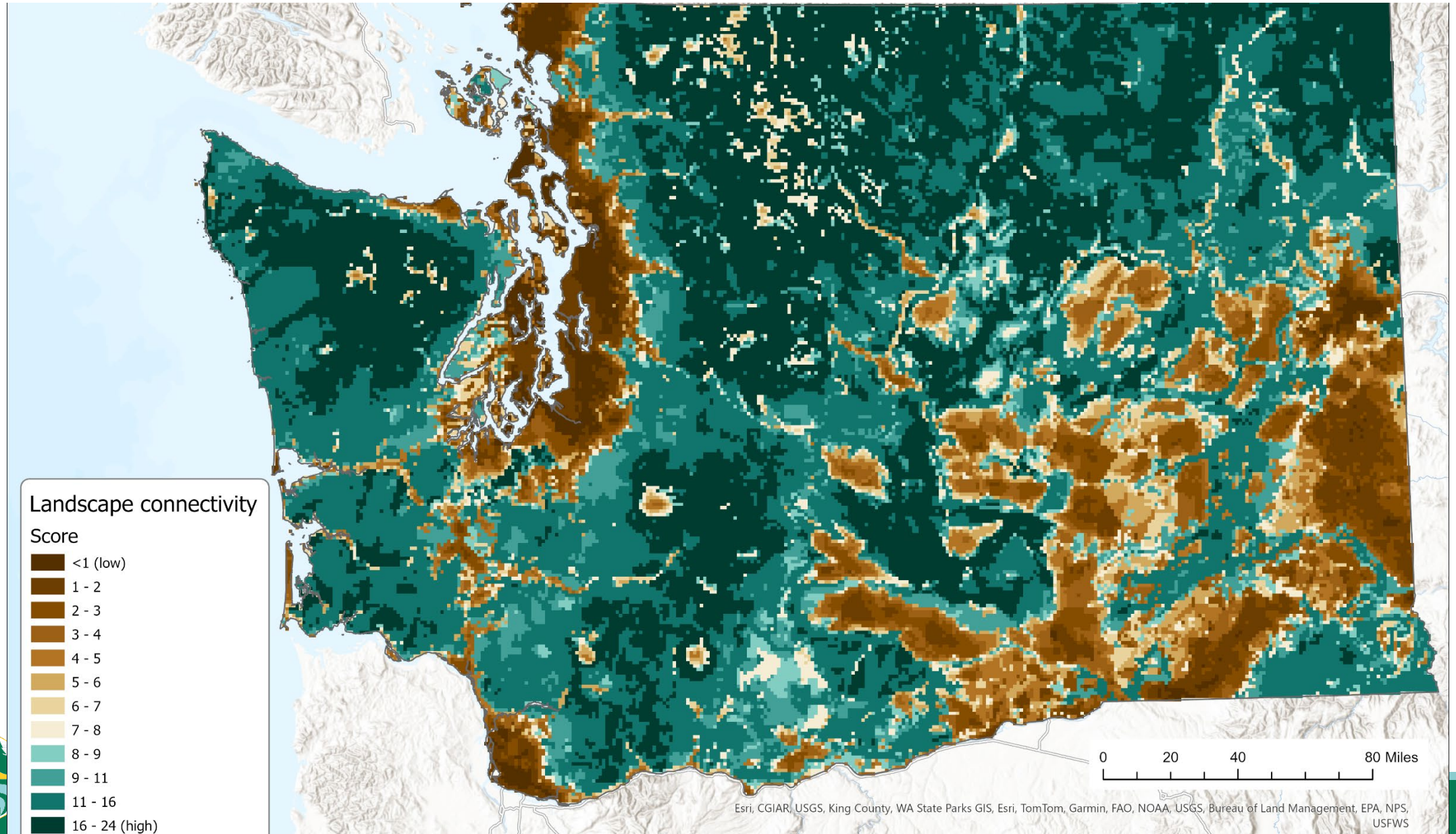
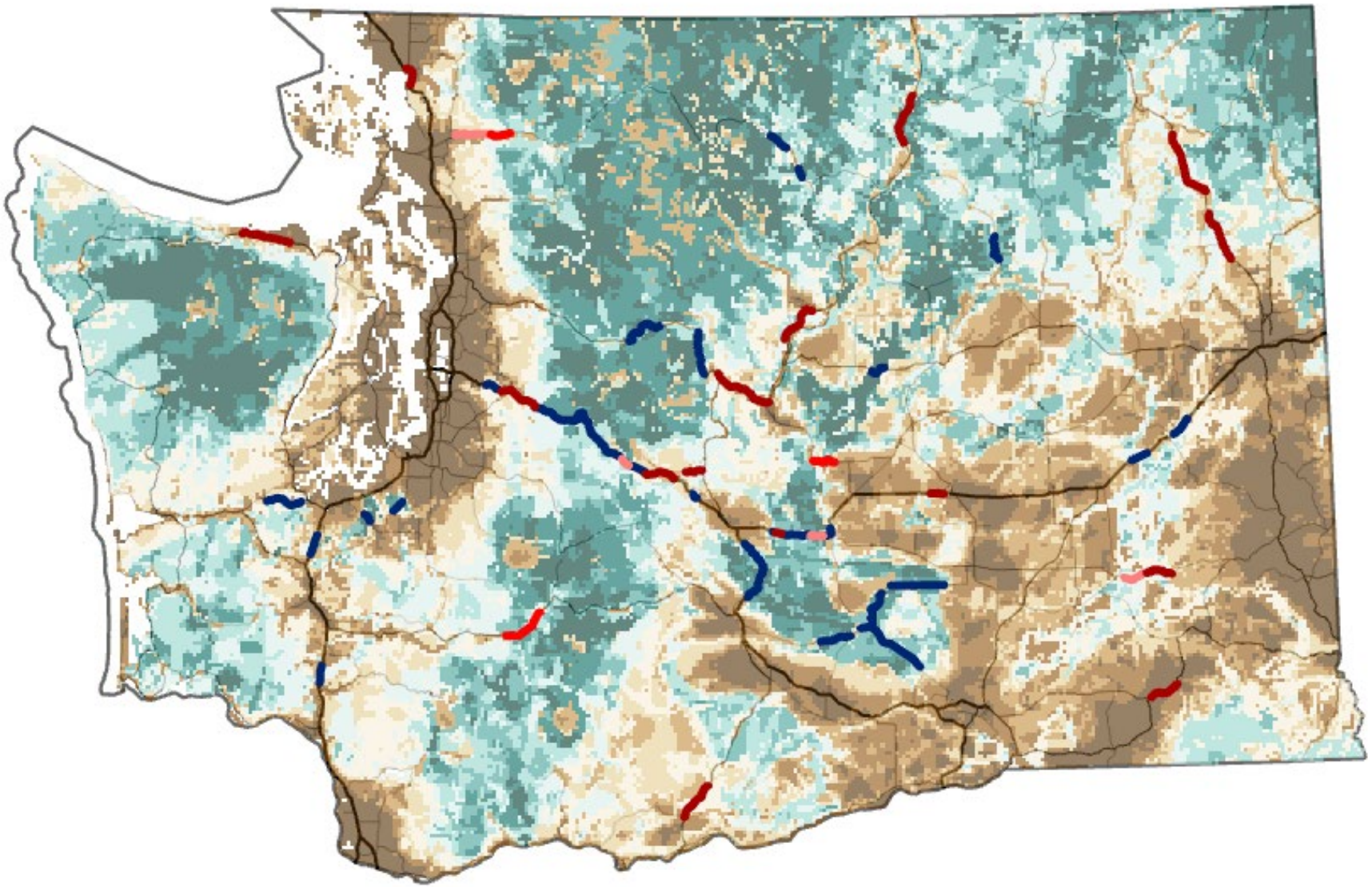


ALI-BAC

Synthesized landscape connectivity values

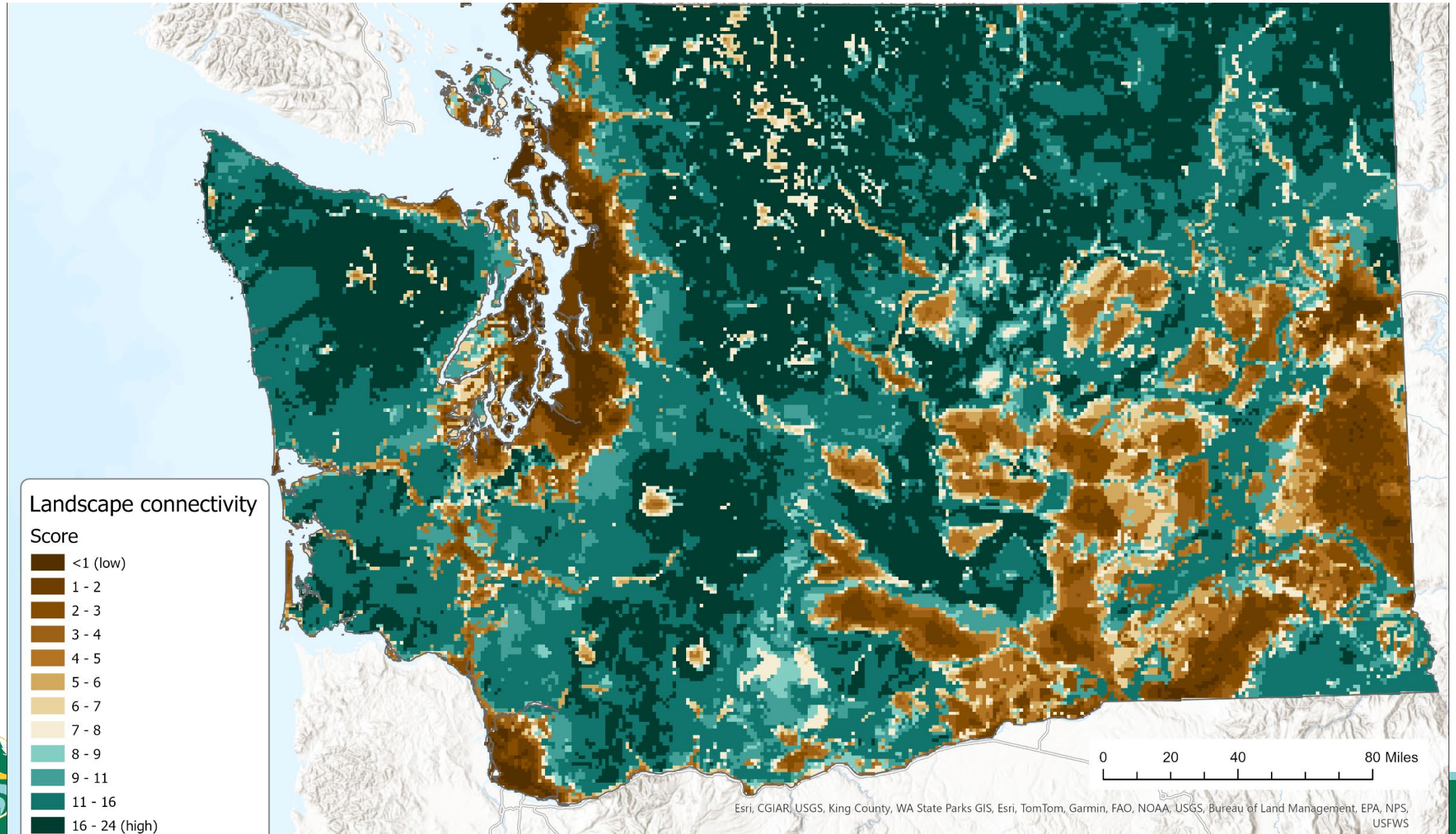


Identify priority locations - Transportation



WAHCAP applications for conservation incentives

Synthesized landscape connectivity values

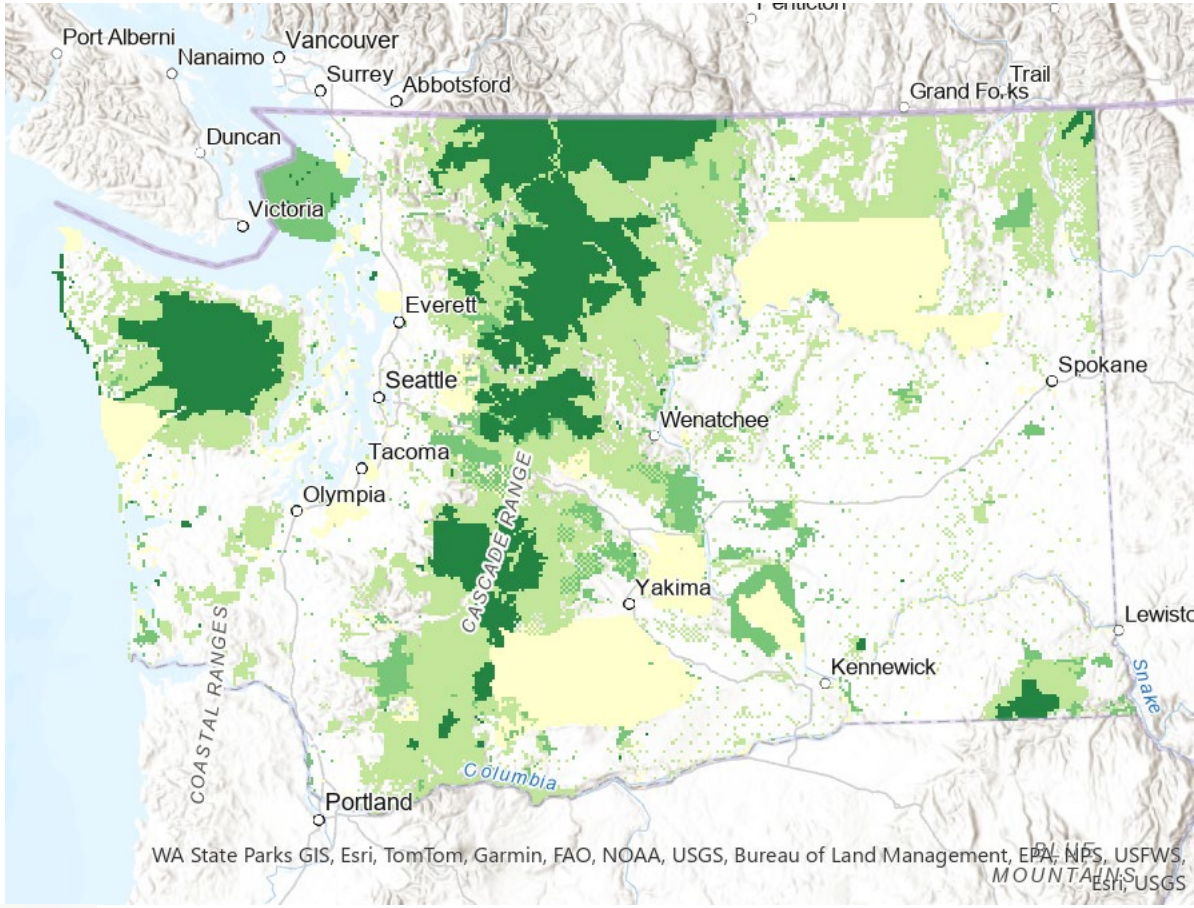


Public and private lands

Both critically important.

Both need conservation attention.

Conservation actions, approaches, funding, and opportunities are very different.



GAP 1: Managed for biodiversity – natural disturbance allowed

GAP 2: Managed for biodiversity – natural disturbance suppressed

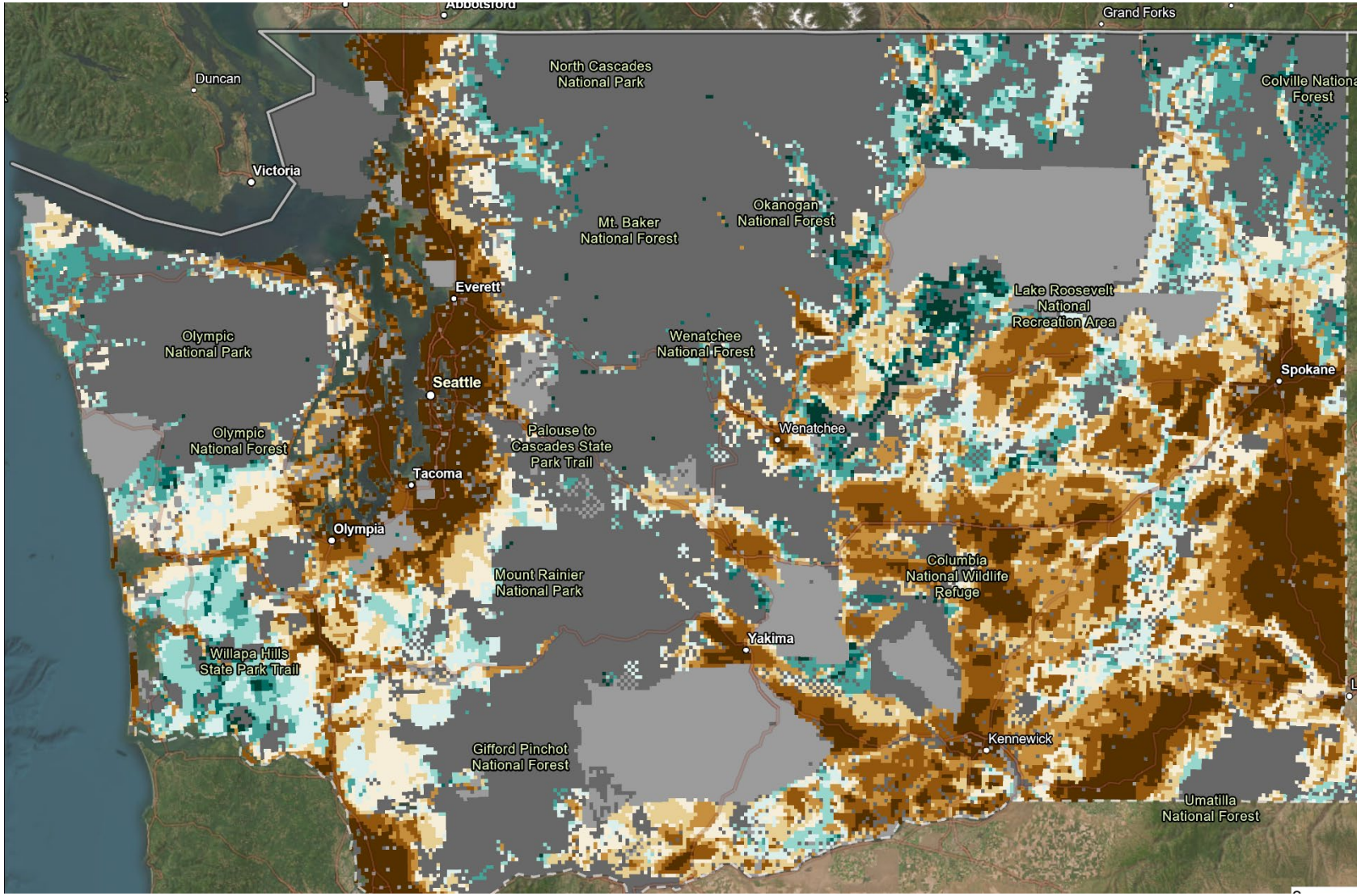
GAP 3: No conversion, extraction permitted

GAP 4: No protection mandate

Private lands and connectivity conservation

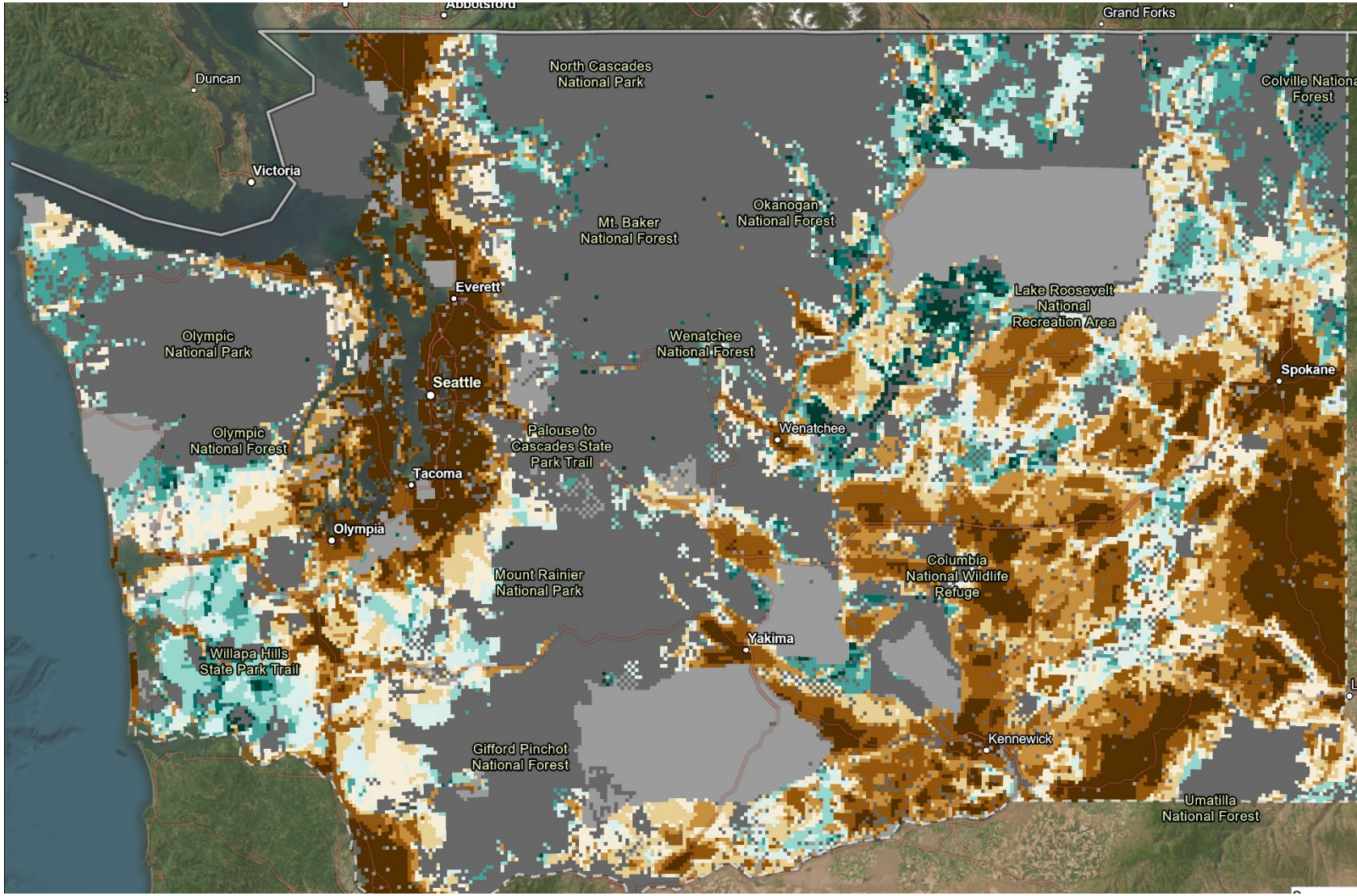
- Connect existing protected lands.
- “Buffer” impacts from activities adjacent to public lands.

NOTE: Reservation lands are grayed out but not assumed to be protected or unprotected

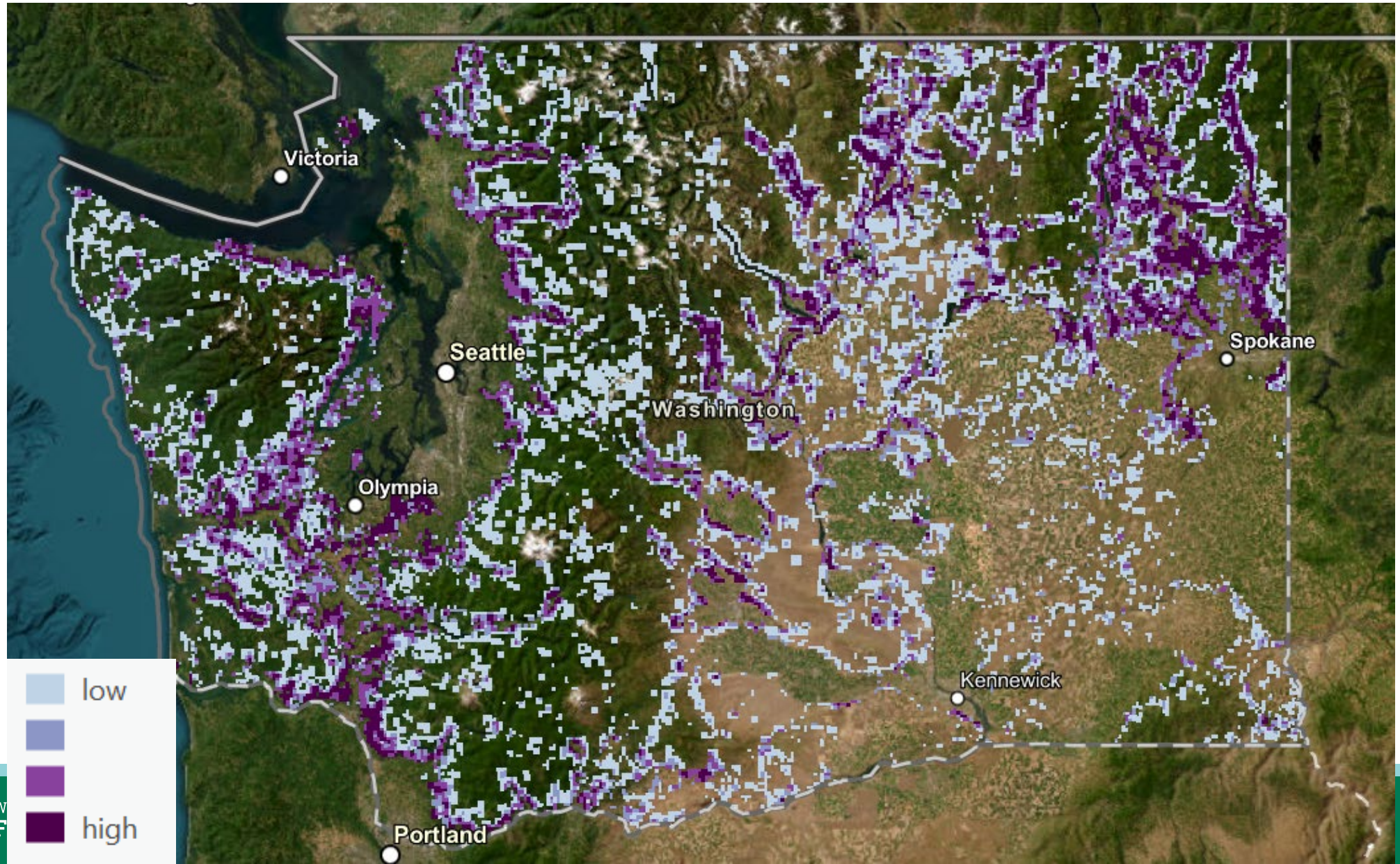


Private lands and connectivity conservation

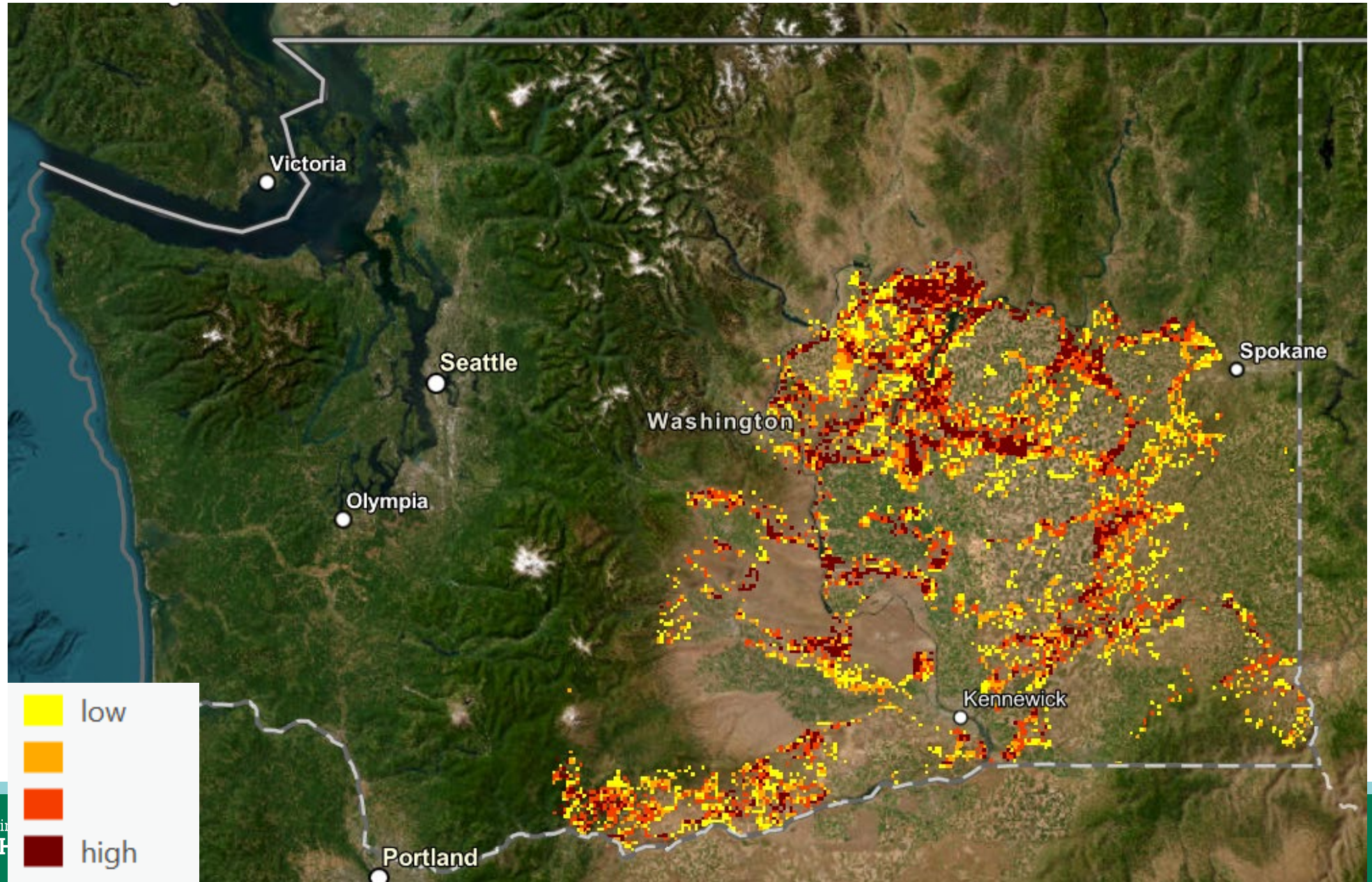
- Opportunities for strong co-benefits between working lands and connectivity functions.
- Forestry and agriculture are permeable to many species.
- Implementing agricultural and forestry Best Management Practices can improve permeability.



High value connectivity and high development pressure



High value connectivity and high solar development pressure



Wrap-up and next steps

Next steps

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

Strategy workshops are complete – recordings and slides are or will be available on our website (google Washington Habitat Connectivity Action Plan)
https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/habitat-recovery/connectivity/action-plan

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

June 30, 2025: Final report.

Thank you!

Julia.Michalak@dfw.wa.gov

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