



Conservation Northwest Overview

Main Webpages:

- **Home:** www.conservationnw.org
- **About Us:** www.conservationnw.org/about-us
- **Our Work:** www.conservationnw.org/our-work

Our Mission:

We protect, connect and restore wildlands and wildlife from the Washington Coast to the British Columbia Rockies.

What We Do:

“Keeping the Northwest wild” since 1989, we protect old-growth forests and other wildlands, connect large landscapes and vital habitats, and restore native wildlife. Our M.O. is simple: connect the big landscapes, restore iconic wildlife and protect our natural heritage for future generations. From the Washington Coast to the British Columbia Rockies, we’re your voice for conserving wildlands and wildlife.

We recognize that for long-term progress, conservation must go hand-in-hand with healthy communities. We’re restoring wildlife, forests and wild places by working with diverse stakeholders. Through dialogue, we find common ground and collaborative solutions for challenging issues including wilderness conservation, endangered species recovery and sustainable natural resource use across our region.

Conservationists, farmers, Indigenous and First Nations peoples, hikers and climbers, hunters and anglers—we all share a love for wildness, wild animals and careful stewardship of the natural legacy we leave for generations to come. We know by working together, we’re building a stronger, wilder future in the Pacific Northwest!

Who We Are (About Us):

Founded in Bellingham in 1989, from the Washington Coast to the British Columbia Rockies, we’re your voice for conserving wildlands and native wildlife.

Bold, innovative and effective, we’ve protected hundreds of thousands of acres of wildlands, supported the recovery of threatened species from wolves to fishers, and touched thousands of lives throughout the greater Northwest. Our successful campaigns and groundbreaking collaborations help define our effective approach to conservation. Elected leaders, government agencies and conservationists know us for being science-based and tenacious, yet pragmatic.

As a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, all donations to Conservation Northwest are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Our non-profit federal tax-exempt number is 94-3091547 and our

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Washington state UBI # is 601 135 446. We are rated 4 out of 4 stars by Charity Navigator, are a Better Business Bureau Accredited Charity, and are a 1% For the Planet Non-Profit Partner. More on our legal and financial status, including annual reports, is available at: www.conservationnw.org/finances.

Our approximately 20 staffers and half a dozen regular contractors represent 4,000 dues-paying members in Washington, British Columbia and beyond. Our conservation community also includes more than ten thousand activists, supporters and online followers.

Our staff work across Washington state and into British Columbia, including a main office in Seattle and field offices in Bellingham and Twisp. Conservation Northwest field staff and contractors also live and work in Olympia, Omak, Chewelah, Ellensburg, Deer Park and Whistler, D'Arcy and Pemberton, British Columbia among other areas across the Pacific Northwest. View a map of staff and contractors at: <https://goo.gl/YpvXAx>

Our Board of Directors and Board of Advisers govern and advise our organization, bringing leadership and expertise from a wide variety of Northwest business, conservation, scientific, technology, philanthropy, tribal and First Nation governance, and other sectors. For more about our boards, please visit: www.conservationnw.org/about-us/board-of-directors

Collaboration is a vital tactic for creating durable conservation progress. We are proud to be a part of numerous ground-breaking coalitions that address issues crucial to wildlife, wildlands and people. For a full list of coalitions and collaboratives we're involved with, please visit: www.conservationnw.org/coalitions

We are also the Washington state Affiliate Organization of the National Wildlife Federation, America's oldest and largest conservation organization. This partnership supports our advocacy and work in Washington, D.C. and beyond. Since 1936, the National Wildlife Federation has worked across the country to unite Americans from all walks of life in giving wildlife a voice.

Learn more about our history and accomplishments at: www.conservationnw.org/about-us

Our Work and Current Programs:

Under our current 2017-2022 Strategic Plan, Conservation Northwest's program work is broken down into the following three areas: Protecting Wildlands, Connecting Habitat and Restoring Wildlife.

Protecting Wildlands

Healthy forests, thriving grasslands and clean watersheds go hand-in-hand with healthy, prosperous communities and abundant wildlife. Large blocks of forest and wildland are the cornerstone of ecological resilience and provide core habitat that is essential for the long-term survival and recovery of imperiled wildlife. Our wild public lands also offer cherished places to hike, camp, climb, ski, wildlife watch, fish, hunt and otherwise enjoy the Pacific Northwest's rich natural heritage.

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Conservation Northwest was one of the first groups to recognize the power of community collaboration and landscape-scale forest restoration. Through our Forest Field Program and other efforts, these tools help restore and protect forests, parks and other wildlands. We also promote sustainable forestry, responsible outdoor recreation and conservation of ecologically critical private land—working to support thriving, local communities and future generations of conservationists.

In addition to our primary programs under this area of work listed below, to safeguard the ecological function of core wild areas, we have an ongoing focus on:

- a) Maintaining the Northwest Forest Plan’s regional scope and substance, and factoring in habitat connectivity and climate;
- b) Doing our part to defeat attacks on public land, including attempts at land transfer or seizure;
- c) Defending the sanctity of the federal *Roadless Area Protection Rule*;
- d) Protecting and restoring old forest habitat, watershed function and fire ecology;
- e) Seeking permanent protection for crown jewels, including the Kettle Crest, through our **Columbia Highlands Initiative**, as well as the **Methow Headwaters, Loomis State Forest, Blanchard Mountain, Lake Whatcom Park** and other key areas;
- f) Pursuing policy to limit access of ATV/ORV’s and other vehicles from sensitive wildlands, including prohibiting mountain bikes from designated wilderness; and
- g) Seeking opportunities to expand public land in strategic locations, including near large populations to provide nearby recreation and take pressure off backcountry.

Forest Field Program: A flagship program since our founding, we advance the use of the latest scientific research and engage collaboratively with other stakeholders to promote landscape-scale restoration of forests and watersheds. We apply our field experience to shape national and regional policies through lobbying, media exposure, court rulings and public support and involvement. **Currently, we maintain forest staffers for the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie, Okanogan-Wenatchee and Colville national forests.**

In addition to informing forestry projects from conception, we’re among the few regional groups that track forestry projects to completion on-the-ground through our **Forest Watch field work**, including:

- Verifying riparian widths and timber sale unit boundaries;
- Checking markings on old trees and verifying snag tree protections; and
- Ensuring thorough logging road closures as appropriate.

We also work closely with the Washington State Department of Natural Resources, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), forestry companies and other organizations to promote ecological management and resilience on state forest lands, including State Trust Lands and special places such as the Loomis State Forest, Blanchard Mountain and Lake Whatcom.

State Trust Lands Reform: We believe the Washington State Constitution directs the state to manage its lands with a balance of benefits to both the public and beneficiaries. We pursue opportunities to both uphold this principle on-the-ground and establish it in law and policy. We expect state trust lands to benefit the public’s interest in clean water and biodiversity, including



the needs of endangered wildlife species such as marbled murrelets and spotted owls, as well as trust beneficiaries.

Connecting Habitat

Animals need room to roam. Providing a connected network of habitats to allow for the safe movement of wildlife is called habitat connectivity. Wildlife make daily movements to find food and mates, seasonal migrations as conditions change, and generational shifts claiming new territory to call home. Habitat connectivity becomes even more important as the climate changes and animals move to adapt to a changing environment.

Restoring habitat connectivity has been a cornerstone of Conservation Northwest's work since our founding in 1989. By focusing on connecting the big landscapes, we've successfully protected vital wildlife corridors and reconnected habitat between Washington's North and South Cascades, from the British Columbia Coast and Chilcotin Ranges to the North Cascades, from the Cascades to the Kettle River Range and Greater Rocky Mountains, and more.

We provide regional leadership on both sides of the U.S.-Canada border to protect the connection between habitat patches and even large landscapes through the following programs:

Linking the Cascades to the Rockies:

Working for Wildlife Initiative: After decades spent protecting, connecting and restoring lands in the Cascades Mountains and Kettle River Mountain Range, in 2014 we began a new collaborative effort focused on the vital connection between these two landscapes where it crosses through the Okanogan Valley. Funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and coordinated by Conservation Northwest, the Working for Wildlife Initiative is a coalition of state, federal, tribal and nongovernmental interests working together to protect wildlife habitat, working lands and natural heritage in the diverse landscape where the habitat corridor crosses the Okanogan Valley and Kettle River Mountain Range.

Okanogan Wildlife Crossing Campaign: As a key part of the Working for Wildlife Initiative, we aim to secure safe passage for wildlife across a stretch of Highway 97 in central Okanogan County, bisecting the migration route of Washington's largest herd of mule deer and dividing critical habitat for Canada lynx and other species. This stretch of highway has among the state's highest rate of auto/deer collisions, presenting a huge safety hazard. In 2018-2020, we aim to address this impediment to habitat connectivity through the donation to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) of sufficient funds to purchase a wildlife crossing to be installed under Highway 97 near the Carter Mountain Wildlife Area. Our hope is this will catalyze the state legislature to fund WSDOT's broader plans for the site, likely totaling four underpasses plus fencing, in its 2019 Transportation Budget Bill.

Linking the North and South Cascades:

I-90 Wildlife Corridor Campaign: Since 2000, through The Cascades Conservation Partnership and the I-90 Wildlife Bridges Coalition, we have led efforts to reconnect

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Washington's North and South Cascades by protecting and restoring wildlife corridor habitat and establishing safe wildlife crossings under and over I-90. These two coalitions represent only part of Conservation Northwest's involvement in this area, which is organized internally under our I-90 Wildlife Corridor Campaign. This larger campaign includes our role administering coalitions as well as on-the-ground habitat restoration around the new wildlife crossings through volunteer and staff revegetation work, continued forest restoration in the watersheds of the Central Cascades, and wildlife monitoring and snow-tracking through our Citizen Wildlife Monitoring Project to document wildlife movement. In 2017, we co-produced the 30 minute *Cascade Crossroads* documentary (www.conservationnw.org/cascade-crossroads-film) to further tell the story of collaborative public-private habitat connectivity work in this landscape.

I-90 Wildlife Watch: A project of Conservation Northwest with support from state and federal agencies and other partners, I-90 Wildlife Watch is a collaborative information sharing website (www.i90wildlifewatch.org) serving dual purposes:

1. Collecting reports of live and dead wildlife sightings along I-90 between North Bend and Easton in the Snoqualmie Pass region of Washington state. The data motorists provide will allow public agencies and conservation groups information about the movement of wildlife within the I-90 corridor.
2. Sharing the results from multi-party fish and wildlife monitoring in the I-90 Snoqualmie Pass East Project area and surrounding habitat through our blog, photo galleries, Facebook, Flickr and other mediums.

Central Cascades Watersheds Restoration: As our I-90 Wildlife Corridor Campaign sunsets, we are increasing our focus on forest and watershed restoration in this larger landscape between the Alpine Lakes Wilderness and Mount Rainier National Park. The program is a focused complement to our ongoing Forest Field Program that will work in watersheds spanning both sides of the Cascade Crest. Our Forest Field Program has a much longer history in the watersheds east of the Cascades, while this program is in the early phase of building relationships in the Puget Sound region west of the crest.

Other Connecting Habitat Programs:

Sagelands Heritage Program: This new program works to maintain, restore and connect shrub-steppe landscapes from British Columbia's Okanagan Valley to south-central Washington's Horse Heaven Hills for the good of both wildlife and people. Priority species include sage grouse, bighorn sheep, badgers, sharp-tailed grouse, mule deer and pygmy rabbits. Our work will also benefit pronghorn antelope as they are reintroduced to this landscape, as well as raptors, owls, Rocky Mountain elk and other species. The main focus of our work is a "Connected Backbone" of important habitat linkages that runs north-south east of the Cascade Mountains, including places such as Okanagan Mountain, the Tunk Valley, the Waterville Plateau, Moses Coulee, the Colockum, Wenas and other state wildlife areas, and lands on the Colville and Yakama nations.

Coast to Cascades Grizzly Bear Initiative: This is a collaborative effort with stakeholders in southwestern British Columbia to stem the ongoing loss of grizzly bear range and to promote grizzly bear recovery in the transboundary ecosystems of southwest British Columbia and

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northwest Washington (www.coasttocascades.org). Partners include the St'at'imc Chiefs Council, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (BC Chapter), Sierra Club BC, BC Nature, Pemberton Wildlife Association, BC Spaces for Nature, AWARE, Whistler Naturalists and Lillooet Naturalist Society. The Okanogan Nation Alliance, Squamish Nation and many local governments and municipalities in British Columbia have also passed resolutions supporting grizzly bear recovery. We're actively working to reduce grizzly bear mortality and protect habitat through natural resource road closures in core grizzly habitat, public outreach and other tactics.

WildLinks Conference: Led by Conservation Northwest and the Cascadia Partner Forum, WildLinks is our annual conference and science briefing that brings together researchers, conservationists, land managers, agency officials, tribal and First Nations leaders and other experts from Washington and British Columbia. The goal is to share ideas and better coordinate keeping our region's wildlands and wildlife populations healthy and connected.

Other Habitat Connectivity: It is essential to enable wildlife to cross highways along key corridors at locations like Highway 2 near Stevens Pass, Highway 12 near Randle, Highway 97 near Blewett Pass and I-90 near Vantage. We aim to establish a state funding source within the transportation budget and political will within WSDOT to prioritize this issue.

Cascades to Olympics: A new program expected to ramp up in 2019. Habitat connections to the Olympics are an urgent need given development trends and the distances between core wildlife populations. An opportunity presents to dovetail off Chehalis watershed improvements and other efforts to cost-effectively provide means for wolves, elk and other wildlife to cross I-5 and Highway 12. There may also be opportunities to promote old forest habitat in the corridor. We will add objectives as information improves.

Restoring Wildlife:

Diverse animal species make our region rich and vibrant, and thriving wildlife populations signal healthy forests, grasslands and watersheds. As we work to protect Northwest wildlands and to connect core habitats and large landscapes, we also champion the return of key animal species while building greater social tolerance to safeguard their long-term recovery.

We work with government agencies to restore threatened species, and in some cases seek accountable implementation of laws that safeguard imperiled species. Our wildlife advocacy and Citizen Wildlife Monitoring Project are at the core of our work for a wilder Northwest.

Key wildlife programs include:

Wolf Recovery: Since 2006, we have pursued the goal of Washington being the state where wolf recovery is done right, focusing on both state policy and field modelling of ways to reduce conflict with livestock through our **Range Rider Pilot Project** (www.conservaionnw.org/range-rider-pilot-project). We are committed to the goal of long-term recovery and public acceptance of wolves alongside thriving rural communities. But to achieve these goals, it will take hard work, respect and collaboration from stakeholders on all sides. Today, we are on-the-ground from Colville and Twisp to the Teanaway and Olympia supporting gray wolf recovery. We directly fund, train and implement non-lethal wolf-livestock conflict avoidance methods. We are working with ranchers and hunters to help increase understanding, reduce conflict and build social tolerance for wolves. With conservation partners, we are lobbying state and community leaders

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for wolf recovery and sustainable wolf management. Finally, we are protecting critical habitat and working with law enforcement to fight poaching.

North Cascades Grizzly Bear Restoration: Restoration of a viable grizzly bear population in the North Cascades has been a priority since our founding; finally, key progress is being made. In 2014, the National Park Service (NPS), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the WDFW began a new multi-year Environmental Impact Statement planning process for restoring a healthy grizzly bear population in Washington's North Cascades ecosystem. We administer an informal coalition of groups and businesses to advocate for restoration (www.northcascadesgrizzly.org). Grizzly bears have been an important part of the North Cascades ecosystem for thousands of years. They play a vital role for the health of the environment and other wildlife species, figure prominently in regional Native American and First Nations' cultures, and contribute to the richness of our natural heritage in the Pacific Northwest. Now is the time to restore a healthy grizzly bear population to the North Cascades. We also support grizzly bear recovery efforts in northeast Washington's Selkirk Mountains and nearby areas.

Fisher Reintroduction: In 2002, we began a partnership with WDFW, NPS and other federal, tribal and non-profit allies to restore fishers to Washington. We have successfully reintroduced fishers to the Olympia Peninsula and Washington's South and Central Cascades! Next up: the North Cascades, with releases expected in the winter of 2018/19.

Mountain Caribou Recovery and Inland Temperate Rainforest: We're a leading organization in the fight to save the critically endangered caribou of the Inland Northwest and the imperiled ecosystem that sustains it. Caribou are tough enough to thrive in the planet's harshest environments, but not tough enough to survive the fragmentation of the old-growth forests on which they depend for food and security. As a member organization of the Mountain Caribou Project (www.wildsight.ca/programs/mountaincaribou/), Conservation Northwest works closely with WildSight and other conservation groups in Canada to protect mountain caribou and their unique forested habitat. Our staff and British Columbian allies support recovery planning and habitat conservation. We also actively communicate about mountain caribou and issues related to their recovery to ensure the public stays informed about these critically-endangered Northwest natives.

Citizen Wildlife Monitoring Project: We engage people tracking wildlife in key areas like the I-90 corridor, Kettle Range and North Cascades, documenting the presence of wolverines, wolves, grizzly bears, lynx, fishers and other species. Now in its 11th year, our Citizen Wildlife Monitoring Project is one of the largest citizen-science efforts in North America, working to extend and enhance the scientific research capacity of our organization and our colleagues. The Project functions as a partnership among our staff and state, federal, tribal and independent biologists to improve knowledge about wildlife presence and distribution that is vital to informing recovery planning and policy. It also helps guide our conservation programs and priorities, and those of state and federal agencies. We harness the power of more than 100 volunteers each year to maintain dozens of remote camera sites in Washington and southern British Columbia, as well as to conduct winter snow-tracking in the I-90 corridor near Snoqualmie Pass to inform wildlife crossing projects.

Reward Fund to Help Stop Poaching: Whether its deer, elk or rare carnivores like wolves, lynx and grizzly bears, poaching is an abuse of our shared natural heritage. No matter how one

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feels about wildlife, poaching is never OK. Through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with WDFW, we offer standing rewards for those who provide information that leads to a poaching conviction in Washington state under the following circumstances:

- Up to \$7,500 for information helping to convict anyone who has illegally killed a wolf in Washington.
- Up to \$5,000 if a protected grizzly bear, wolverine, lynx, pronghorn, caribou or fisher was killed.
- Up to \$3,000 for egregious violations involving deer, elk, moose or other iconic or threatened wildlife, such as spree killing.

We also occasionally offer larger rewards in specific egregious circumstances. Reward funds are provided by our generous members and donors. Rewards will be fulfilled after a conviction is obtained. Those with information on potential poaching should contact the WDFW Law Enforcement division.

Other Wildlife Restoration: We support a variety of iconic native wildlife species through our conservation programs in addition to those specifically listed above, under Restoring Wildlife. Generally, our priority wildlife species include gray wolves, grizzly bears in both the North Cascades and Selkirk Mountains, fishers, Canada lynx, mountain caribou, wolverines, marbled murrelets, sharp-tailed grouse, sage grouse, bighorn sheep, elk and mule deer. Learn more at: www.conservationnw.org/our-work/wildlife

Read more about our work and programs at: www.conservationnw.org/our-work

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