

# Washington Wildlife Action Plan

## From Vision to On-the-Ground Action

The wildlife action plan gave the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife the opportunity to reassess wildlife conservation priorities and set a new direction for the future. Specifically, the action plan process provided the impetus for a thorough re-evaluation of priorities for species and habitat conservation, a transition from statewide to ecoregional conservation, acceleration of the transition from species management to a more ecosystems-based approach, and expanding the emphasis on biodiversity conservation, at the statewide and ecoregional scales.

*Investments in Washington's wildlife action plan today can identify and prevent problems before they threaten other wildlife and affect people.*

### **Working with Partners to Bring Back Wildlife and Natural Areas** **Restoring the Endangered Taylor's Checkerspot Butterfly**

Efforts to restore the endangered Taylor's checkerspot butterfly and its imperiled prairie habitat embody cooperative conservation in Washington's wildlife action

plan. Much of the prairie habitat the butterflies depend upon has been lost to human use, encroaching forest, and non-native plants that replace caterpillar food plants. The first captive-reared butterflies to emerge as adults in the wild flew in the south Puget Sound area in May 2007, a successful start to a cooperative effort to recover this endangered species. More releases

of zoo-reared caterpillars are planned on state land and the Fort Lewis Army Base, where some of Washington's best prairie habitat remains. Butterflies are particularly sensitive to pollution and other environmental disturbances that affect us all. Investments in Washington's wildlife action plan today can identify and prevent problems before they threaten other wildlife and affect people.



Methow Watershed/Scott Fitkin, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

### **Protecting Imperiled Land, Water, and Wildlife**

### **Conserving Vital Habitat for Priority Fish and Wildlife**

Washington's wildlife action plan prioritizes landscapes for conservation purchases to forestall development that destroys critical wildlife habitat. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and several partners purchased three areas that will benefit many wildlife species of greatest conservation need. Acquisition of the Methow River Watershed in the Okanogan Highlands conserves over 20,000 acres for 40 priority species, including the state's largest migratory mule deer herd. Over 60 wildlife species benefit from the



Taylor's checkerspot butterfly/Kelly McAllister, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

38,000-acre I-90 Wildlife Corridor, including the priority species bull trout, northern spotted owl, bald eagle, marbled murrelet, gray wolf, and Canada lynx. The Tieton River Canyon acquisition has become a broad partnership that promotes fire as a restoration tool on dry forests, and conserves nearly 8 miles of the Tieton River and adjacent rare and threatened habitats. As Washington's communities grow, these protected areas will conserve wildlife and their habitat for future generations.

***Proactive Efforts that Benefit Wildlife and People***

**Building Bluebird Boxes**

Washington's wildlife action plan prioritizes public education and involvement in conservation of South Puget Sound prairie, the most endangered habitat in the state. Through Project Bluebird, The Nature Conservancy and Black Hills Audubon bring together students and volunteers to build nesting boxes to increase the number of western bluebirds in prairies and to educate

the public about bird and habitat conservation. The western bluebird's comeback in Washington and across the country has been due to the proliferation of bluebird boxes. In addition, The Nature Conservancy and its partners have removed invasive plants, restored native grasses, and planted oak seedlings on thousands of acres of prairie. This proactive collaboration will conserve the western bluebird and the prairie habitat it depends upon for future generations.

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Project Bluebird kids/Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife



Western bluebird/Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife