

# Western Gray Squirrel

## 2018 Annual Report to the Board



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# Species Background

- **State Listed as Threatened – November 1993**
- **Inhabits oak woodlands and conifer forests**
- **Nesting:**
  - **Stick nests for resting and sleeping**
  - **Cavity nests for raising young**



# HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS

- **2013 – Administrative and Operational Improvements:**
  - **Note presence of potential WGS or habitat on DNR office checklist.**
  - **Notify WDFW, DNR Foresters, and interested stakeholders of potential FPA “hit” for WGS.**
  - **Note included on FPA Decision page of potential presence and refers applicant to WDFW staff for assistance.**
  - **Annual reporting to the Board on FPA activities related to WGS voluntary protection approach.**
  - **Same process continues to date**



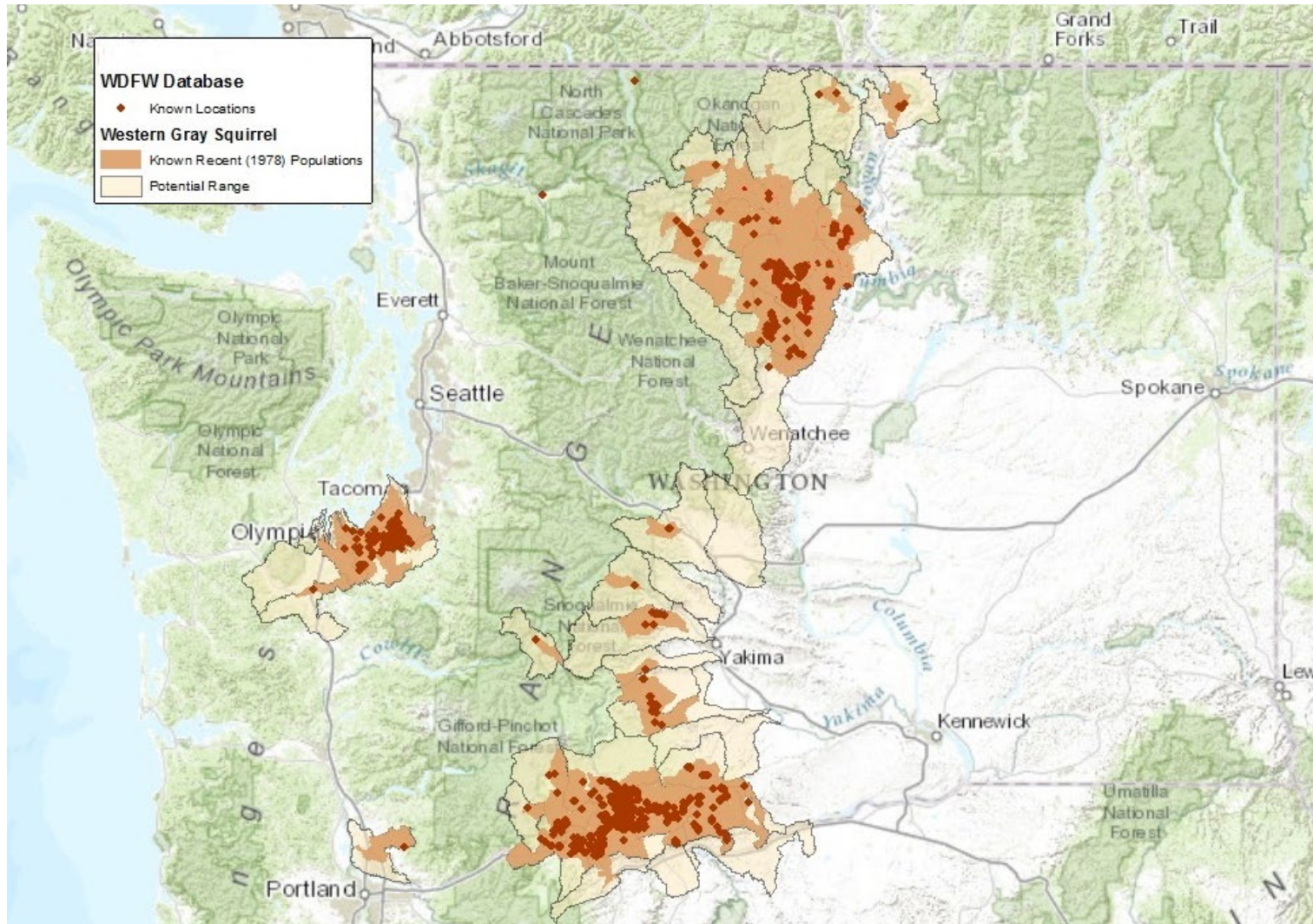
# **FOREST PRACTICES APPLICATIONS/NOTIFICATIONS**

- **FPA/Ns are screened by DNR for potential impacts to WGS using WDFW's data**
  - **WGS presence, nests, and/or potentially suitable habitat**
- **WDFW is notified of potential impacts within 1/4 mile**
- **WDFW completes additional screening; conduct nest surveys using Survey123 mobile app**





# Distribution



# Threats to the Species

- **Habitat loss and fragmentation**
  - **Land conversion**
  - **Logging**
  - **Conversion of oak woodlands to softwood stands through fire suppression**
  - **Fires**
- **Sheep grazing**
- **Disease/mange**



# 2018 WDFW Tracking Data

## FPA/Ns

**112 FPA/Ns with possible WGS hits:**

- **106 Klickitat County**
- **4 Skamania County**
- **1 Yakima County**
- **1 Okanogan County**

**Of 112 FPA/Ns:**

- **37 Large Forest Landowners**
- **75 Small Forest Landowners**



# **2018 WDFW Tracking Data WGS Management Plans**

**Of 112 FPA/Ns with possible WGS hits:**

- **All received further review (confirming presence/absence of WGS or nests)**
- **63 did not require management plans:**
  - **All 63 resulted in no WGS or nests present**





# **2018 WDFW Tracking Data**

## **WGS Site Management Plans (cont.)**

**Of 112 FPA/Ns with possible WGS hits:**

- **49 required implementation of WGS management plans:**
  - **26 Large Forest Landowners**
  - **23 Small Forest Landowners**
  - **Possibly inadequate protection on 1 FPA/N associated w/ a Small Forest Landowners (Klickitat); WDFW denied property access**



# WDFW Periodic Status Review

- **January 2016, WDFW PSR for WGS was presented to the WA Fish & Wildlife Commission**
  - **Species' relatively small population size**
  - **Continuing threats**
  - **Lack of information suggesting that populations have reached down-listing goals or substantially declined since 2005**
  - **Fish & Wildlife Commission took action to keep WGS as State Threatened**



# WDFW Surveys and Research

## WGS Population/Habitat:

- **Statewide hair tube surveys continuing through 2020 to determine distribution & estimate abundance**
- **On-going remote sensing habitat assessment for Klickitat & Okanogan areas**
- **Includes evaluation of wildfire impacts on habitat**
- **Info will be used to inform 2021 PSR & state listing status**



# Moving Forward

## In addition to on-going efforts:

- **Need additional funding/resources for Effectiveness & Compliance Monitoring to better inform success of voluntary protection approach**
- **Economic incentives for Small Forest Landowners**
- **Explore landscape-level conservation opportunities**

