



**DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES**
South Puget Sound Region
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Proposed boundary expansion for Woodard Bay Conservation Area

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is proposing to expand the boundary of Woodard Bay Natural Resources Conservation Area (NRCA). A map and information about the proposed boundary expansion can be found at this [link](#) to DNR's website.

Why expand the boundary?

NRCAs like Woodard Bay protect outstanding examples of native ecosystems, habitat for threatened and endangered plants and animals, and scenic landscapes. DNR permanently protects these landscapes by purchasing land from willing sellers, restoring its natural functions, and then maintaining its ecological health. Expanding an NRCA boundary allows our staff to pursue land transactions within that larger boundary.

The proposed Woodard Bay NRCA boundary expansion would extend protection to include important wetlands, mature conifer forests, grasslands with native prairie species, and intact shoreline and salt marsh ecosystems that lie outside of the current NRCA boundary. The expansion would also increase DNR's ability to protect features within the current boundary by improving hydrologic influences on streams, wetlands, and bays, expanding terrestrial-aquatic linkages, and improving connectivity of forest habitats.

What is the boundary expansion process?

DNR will be scheduling a public meeting to discuss this proposal with the community sometime this summer. Community notices and letters to Woodard Bay NRCA-adjacent landowners will announce the date and location of the meeting. Following this initial discussion, DNR then will host a public hearing later this year to receive formal comments on the proposed boundary. Public comments are incorporated into a final boundary expansion recommendation for the Commissioner of Public Lands to consider.

An NRCA boundary does not give DNR any regulatory or other land use authority over private property. The purpose of the boundary designation is to delineate an area within which DNR staff may discuss with landowners the potential purchase of their property. An NRCA boundary represents an opportunity for sale, not an expectation that landowners will sell their land to DNR. No lands within the boundary are considered to be part of the NRCA unless they are either acquired by DNR or voluntarily registered as such by the landowner. Once a boundary is designated, DNR can work with willing sellers to acquire land at market value as determined by an independent, third-party appraisal.

Who is the project lead for questions?

If you have any questions or concerns about the proposal, please contact DNR's South Puget Sound Region natural areas manager, Michele Zuckerberg. She can be reached by email at michele.zuckerberg@dnr.wa.gov or phone at (360) 790-9770.