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COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS

**The State of Washington has a rich natural heritage. Our beautiful state contains a wide diversity of landscapes that support an array of ecosystems, and for 50 years, DNR's Natural Areas Program has protected these for present and future generations.**

**Now, as the Evergreen State faces unprecedented pressures from climate change and development, the margin of error for protecting this incredible diversity is smaller than ever.**

## **CONTACT**

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# State of Washington Natural Heritage Plan

## **A road map to protecting our unique landscapes for future generations in the face of climate change, development pressures, and more**

Maintaining biodiversity is critical to our economic, environmental, and social wellbeing. But increasing development, climate change, and invasive species threaten these precious landscapes – and the plants and animals that call them home. Given these threats, it is important to protect these areas for future generations, using thoughtful policy built on science to reduce the loss of biodiversity.

The State of Washington [Natural Heritage Plan](#) is designed to **guide land use decisions by providing a list of species and ecosystems that may require conservation**, and shape the selection of new [natural areas](#) to ensure those species and ecosystems are protected statewide.

In the 50 years since the Natural Area Preserves Act was passed, DNR has partnered with other state and federal agencies and private conservation groups to build an impressive statewide network of natural areas. The Plan highlights the accomplishments of these existing partnerships and the value they bring to improve our knowledge about what is already protected, and bolster the effectiveness and efficiency of conservation.

## **The 2022 edition of the Plan implements new approaches to address new threats to biodiversity, helping DNR and our partners to focus our efforts on the flora and fauna that most need conservation.**

The Plan is used for numerous Recreation and Conservation Office grants, including three categories of the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, and it also guides federal, state, and local conservation actions throughout Washington.

