

OUTDOOR COMMUNITY PROJECTS

WASHINGTON STATE

Our connection to the outdoors is embedded in the culture of the Pacific Northwest. The splendor of our natural environment beckons us, defines us, and sustains us. The outdoors are a fundamental part of our unique identity.



WWRP PROJECT CATEGORIES

Critical Habitat • Farmland Preservation
Forestland Preservation • Local Parks • Natural Areas
Riparian Protection • State Lands Development & Renovation
State Lands Restoration & Enhancement • State Parks
Trails • Urban Wildlife Habitat • Water Access



OVERVIEW

The Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition (WWRC) is a catalyst for conservation and recreation projects across Washington state. For nearly 30 years, it has been the steadfast champion for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP), the state's largest public funding source for outdoor community projects. Since 1989, the WWRP has contributed over \$1.4 billion to more than 1,300 projects statewide, creating not only parks and wildlife habitat, but also jobs, revenue, and increased quality of life throughout the state.

Residents from every corner of our state have felt the direct impact of WWRC's efforts to educate and advocate for the grant program. Because of the Coalition, new parks are created, wildlife habitat is preserved, and working lands are protected. Driven by a commitment to inclusivity and collaboration, the Coalition fuels the visions of local communities. WWRC propels the conservation of the outdoor places that improve the quality of life for all Washingtonians.

To help demonstrate the social, environmental, and economic benefits that outdoor community projects can provide, WWRC partnered with Earth Economics to value the public benefits provided by WWRP funded projects. The projects selected come from various project categories and intend to show the diverse range of benefits that can be realized for local communities throughout Washington.

Earth Economics' work was supported by funding provided by The Bullitt Foundation.

The ecosystem services values in this document are preliminary estimates. They are intended for awareness-building, education, and making the case for a more comprehensive valuation. They should not be cited in litigation, official project evaluations, or policy development.



**EARTH
ECONOMICS**

46.1460° N, -117.2085° W

MOUNTAIN VIEW 4-O RANCH

ASOTIN COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Leveraging WWRP funds, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has acquired over 9,000 acres to date in Asotin County for protection of critical habitat. Located within the Grande Ronde Watershed, these acquisitions connect and complement current US Forest Service lands.



Acquisitions protect large amounts of ponderosa pine, grasslands, and riparian/wetland habitat—all three are key habitat types within Washington's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy



The 9,000 acres supports
\$15.6 million in annual
ecosystem service benefits

BENEFITS

Through land acquisition in the lower Grande Ronde Watershed, WDFW has protected a large tract of unique grassland, riparian, and pine ecosystems which support many beloved species. WDFW also has plans to improve public access to the land, increasing hunting and fishing opportunities, and with hopes for additional scientific study of critical species. These are all examples of ecosystem services—the benefits people derive from natural landscapes, in this case habitat, education, and recreation.

In the same way that economists can determine the value of a home as a private asset, economists can also determine the value of ecosystems as natural public assets, such as the value of carbon sequestration, flood risk reduction, or recreation. While not all ecosystem services can or should be valued in economic terms, a range of established methods begin to capture the value individuals and communities place on natural assets. For Mountain View and 4-O Ranch, ecosystem services provide an estimated \$15.6 million in benefits each year. Preserving these lands for critical habitat maintains and even enhances the value of these captivating Eastern Washington landscapes.

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**EARTH
ECONOMICS**

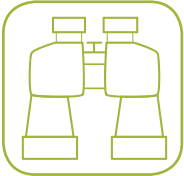
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ANTOINE PEAK CONSERVATION AREA

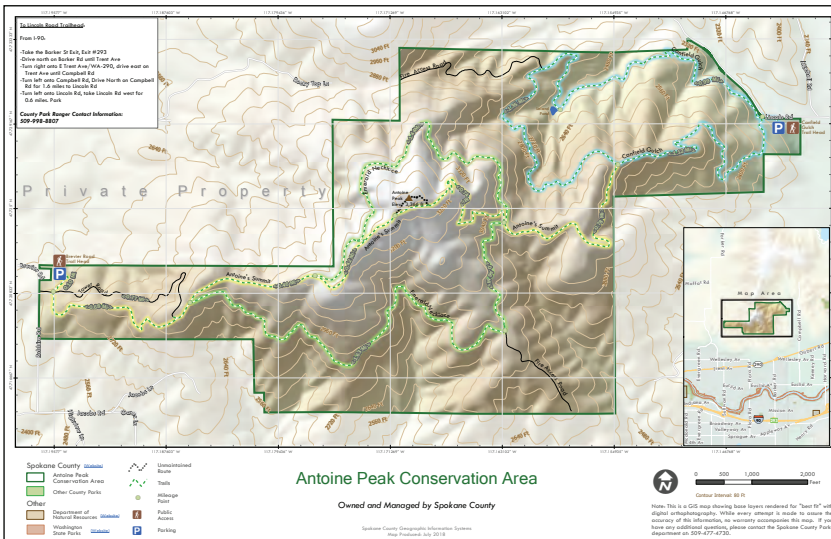
SPOKANE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

On the outskirts of Spokane, Antoine Peak is a refuge for wildlife and people alike. Spokane County used a combination of WWRP and local funding to create the 1,100 acre Antoine Peak Conservation Area.

WWRP FUNDS \$4,680,000 | MATCH FUNDS \$4,680,000 (ALL AMOUNTS ROUNDED)



With such close proximity to the city of Spokane, residents can visit Antoine Peak regularly to enjoy the expansive views, trail network, and wildlife viewing opportunities made possible by this project.



BENEFITS

Often the services provided by nature are taken for granted, particularly as urban population growth increases the demand for development of natural lands surrounding cities. Yet, forests, shrublands, and other ecosystems are the basis of economic activity and a thriving urban environment. They provide clean water, breathable air, nourishing food, flood risk reduction, waste treatment, climate stability, and other critical services. Antoine Peak Conservation Area's ecosystem services provide at least \$3.8 million in benefits to surrounding populations each year.

Uniquely situated not only in close proximity to Washington's second largest city but also in key habitat corridor and watershed headwater areas, Antoine Peak undoubtedly provides value beyond the services identified here. Spokane County's establishment of this hilltop conservation area creates space for wildlife to find shelter and the public to enjoy nature within view of the urbanizing Spokane Valley below.

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Antoine Peak
supports **\$3.8 million**
in annual ecosystem
service value.

**EARTH
ECONOMICS**

47.9129° N, -122.0982° W

BAILEY FARM

SNOHOMISH COUNTY, WASHINGTON

With funds from the WWRP, PCC Farmland Trust has conserved 270 acres of farmland in Snohomish County, including Bailey Farm. Bailey Farm is a fifth generation farm, and a beacon of the region's productivity and rich agricultural history.

WWRP FUNDS \$580,000 | MATCH FUNDS \$570,000 (ALL AMOUNTS ROUNDED)



Farmland conserved through the WWRP is not only a source of locally grown food, it's also an important part of Washington's carbon cycle.



Each year, the 270 acres of farmland conserved in Snohomish County can sequester over 350 metric tons of atmospheric carbon, a service valued at \$16,000.



BENEFITS

Farmland preservation protects valuable farmland; preserves critical habitat for salmon, birds, deer, and elk; and allows families to continue farming the land they have worked on for generations. But the cultivation of farmland that supports a healthy local food economy is also an important part of our region's carbon cycle. Each year, an acre of cultivated land in Washington can sequester over 1.5 metric tons of atmospheric carbon dioxide. Based on current estimates for the value of sequestering carbon, this service is worth over \$16,000 each and every year. And, because this land is preserved in perpetuity, the public will continue to receive these benefits for generations to come.

Now, visitors at Bailey Farm can buy fresh raspberries, harvest their own lettuce, view the surrounding wildlife, and enjoy a breath of fresh air. Investments from the WWRP recognize that the generations of farmers at Bailey Farm are doing a lot more than just growing food for our community, they are also improving the environmental quality of our region.

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WWRP is the **only** source of farmland preservation funding in the Washington state budget.



EARTH ECONOMICS

45.2865° N, -124.0626° W

CAPE DISAPPOINTMENT SEAVIEW DUNES

PACIFIC COUNTY, WASHINGTON

This project used WWRP funds to purchase private properties in the vicinity of Cape Disappointment State Park, preventing development that would affect the natural integrity of the park, one of the last undeveloped portions of the Long Beach peninsula.

WWRP FUNDS \$270,000 (AMOUNT ROUNDED)



Cape Disappointment State Park supports over \$20 million in recreation and tourism expenditures in the local economy each year.



The visual impact of nearby developments has the potential to negatively impact park visitation.



The acquisition of properties in the park's viewshed protects one of the park's most important assets — its views. Protecting Cape Disappointment's views ensures that the economic activity associated with park visitation will continue to support surrounding communities far into the future.

BENEFITS

Each year, well over a million people descend upon Cape Disappointment State Park to revel in the parks' sweeping views. To the east, the mighty Columbia River meets its final destination, while to the west stretches the vast Pacific Ocean, a testament to man's small place in an otherwise wild world.

Visitors drawn to the natural beauty of Cape Disappointment State Park support significant spending in the local community. Not only do visitors spend money on use fees such as the Discover Pass, park visitors also stimulate the local economy with other trip-related expenditures on groceries, restaurants, boutique retailers, and at gas stations, totaling over \$20 million every year.

Studies show that impacts on a park's aesthetic beauty can negatively impact park visitation. As one of the parks largest draws, protecting the viewshed of Cape Disappointment State Park is clearly an investment in the local economy.

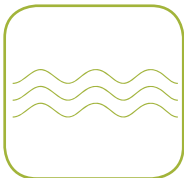
**EARTH
ECONOMICS**

CLEARWATER RIPARIAN

JEFFERSON COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Spearheaded by The Nature Conservancy, this multi-phase project aims to protect critical riparian areas along the Olympic Peninsula's Clearwater River. When complete, the acquired parcels will conserve the riparian corridor from the Clearwater Corridor Natural Resources Conservation Area upstream to the confluence with the Queets River downstream.

WWRP FUNDS \$3,420,000 | MATCH FUNDS \$3,350,000 (ALL AMOUNTS ROUNDED)



This project protects over 45 miles of the Clearwater River and its tributaries.



Investing in the river's restoration ensures the public will continue to benefit from ecosystem services provided by the river system.

BENEFITS

Riparian forests and wetlands are key to thriving salmon populations—they help produce clean, cold, woody debris-filled streams needed for migration and spawning reaches. In addition, riparian areas provide a range of ecosystem services that benefit people of the region. Every year, lands acquired along the Clearwater River contribute an estimated \$17 million in ecosystem service benefits.

This project engages stakeholders from federal, state, and county agencies, tribes, NGOs, and private landowners around the shared goal of riparian protection. As climate change and population growth place pressure on land use and resource tradeoffs, WWRP-funded investments in Clearwater River riparian areas ensure protection of the immense public value of these ecosystems.

¹ Supported by: USFWS, WDRW, WDNR, Jefferson County Commission, Quinault Indian Nation, Hoh Tribe, Hoh River Trust, Wild Salmon Center, Trout Unlimited

The Clearwater river system supports bull trout and a diverse wild salmon population, including: chinook, coho, chum, pink, sockeye, steelhead, and cutthroat.

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**EARTH
ECONOMICS**

47.4157° N, -120.2931° W

EAST WENATCHEE 9TH STREET ACQUISITION

DOUGLAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON

The East Wenatchee 9th St Acquisition supported the purchase of 2.3 acres of land to serve as the location for a new neighborhood park, the first new park in the Eastmont Metropolitan Parks and Recreation District park system since 1969.

WWRP FUNDS \$250,000 | MATCH FUNDS \$250,000 (ALL AMOUNTS ROUNDED)



Once complete, the new park is expected to reduce the burden of healthcare costs for the surrounding community by roughly \$650 every year.



The acquisition of 2.3 acres of land in East Wenatchee will serve as the future home of a neighborhood park in an undeserved area.

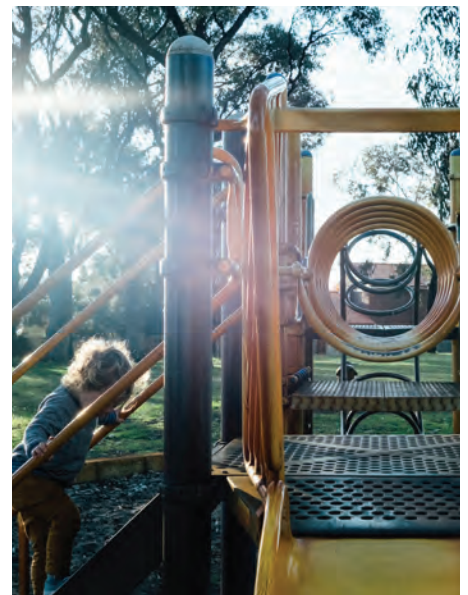
BENEFITS

The Eastmont Metropolitan Parks and Recreation District will use this grant to buy 2.3 acres for a neighborhood park, the first new park in district's park system since 1969. The land is off 9th Street Northeast in an underserved neighborhood of East Wenatchee, in Douglas County. Once an orchard, the land was cleared, to create an open space fit for a new park. The new park would serve an area where 41% of households are poor, 26% of residents are Latino, 15% are senior citizens, and 29% are children.

Neighborhood parks support healthy communities. By filtering air pollutants like particulate matter, the natural landscapes in a park can reduce mortality, hospital admissions, and respiratory symptoms for individuals suffering from asthma. In fact, the reduction of particulate matter provided by one acre of trees can reduce a community's healthcare costs by \$650 each year. These savings are amplified in areas where local parks, including the new one on 9th street, also provide dedicated areas to exercise. In an underserved area like East Wenatchee, a local park is more than just a place to play, it's an investment in happier and healthier communities.

¹ Zupancic, T. (2015). The impact of green space on heat and air pollution in urban communities: A meta-narrative systematic review. Vancouver, BC: David Suzuki Foundation.

A local park on 9th Street would support a healthy Wenatchee, **benefiting senior citizens and children in an undeserved community.**



**EARTH
ECONOMICS**

47.8477° N, -120.7076° W

HEART OF THE CASCADES

CHELAN COUNTY, WASHINGTON

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)'s Heart of the Cascades project protects over 10,000 acres of diverse Central Cascade forest and shrub. Adjacent to the Wenatchee National Forest and the LT Murray Wildlife Habitat Area, these lands are key to the habitat connectivity of the region.



Forests and scrublands acquired through this project provide an estimated \$29 million in ecosystem service benefits every year.



In addition to land acquisition, this project directs funding to habitat restoration for improvements to northern spotted owl foraging areas and salmon spawning streams.

BENEFITS

Abundant wildlife, including grey wolf, deer, elk, and spotted owl call Heart of the Cascades home. There is immense value in the presence and quality of habitat provided by natural areas—whether for endangered species protection, hunting and fishing, or wildlife viewing. Lands acquired through Heart of the Cascades contribute an estimated \$404,000 annually in habitat benefits for endangered species, particularly the spotted owl.

Funding from WWRP and the continued commitment of WDFW ensures that the \$29 million in annual ecosystem service benefits provided by the Heart of the Cascades can be enjoyed into the future. This value represents nature's ability to provide services to surrounding populations, including water filtration, aesthetic value, and air quality improvements.

Not all ecosystem service benefits can be captured in economic terms; landscape connectivity, for example, is critical to the ecological and economic health of the region, but not yet considered through valuation of ecosystem services.¹

Additionally, with the city of Ellensburg nearby, acquiring legacy checkerboard parcels ensures habitat connectivity and opens up opportunity for additional recreational use of the land, while also protecting key natural assets for a growing population and economy.

¹ Krosby, M., J. Tewksbury, N.M. Haddad, and J. Hoesktra, 2010. Landscape connectivity for a changing climate. *Conservation Biology* 24:1686-1689.

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**EARTH
ECONOMICS**

47.46°N, -121.64°W

MAILBOX PEAK

KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

With funding from the WWRP, the Department of Natural Resources developed a new non-motorized trail to Mailbox Peak in the Middle Fork Snoqualmie Natural Resources Conservation Area, located in east King County. The new trail improves public safety, reduces natural resource damage occurring on the existing trail, and helps to meet the increasing public demand for hiking access to Mailbox Peak.

WWRP FUNDS \$270,000 | MATCH FUNDS \$80,000 (ALL AMOUNTS ROUNDED)



800,000 recreational visitors travel throughout the Snoqualmie Corridor each year, many of whom hike the Mailbox Peak Trail, one of the most popular hikes in east King County.¹



Studies suggest that the average hiker traveling to Mailbox Peak spends roughly \$33 as a part of their excursion.²

Even if only a small fraction of the visitors to the Snoqualmie Corridor travel to Mailbox Peak, their trips represent **millions of dollar in spending throughout the region** each and every year.

BENEFITS

The Department of Natural Resources relied on a WWRP grant to develop a new non-motorized trail to Mailbox Peak, long considered a crown jewel of hiking trails in King County. Development of the property included excavation, surfacing, adding water drainage features, and installation of high-elevation alpine trail features, such as rock steps and viewpoints, making the trail accessible to hikers with a range of athletic ability.

Development of a new non-motorized trail to the summit not only improves the hiking experience for visitors searching for the deep feeling of accomplishment that this trail provides, it also helps meet the growing demand for day-hike trails in east King County. Recreation expenditures make a significant contribution to our region's economy, with Mailbox Peak alone supporting millions of dollars of spending each year.



¹ <https://www.seattletimes.com/life/outdoors/project-in-snoqualmie-corridor-will-mean-more-outdoor-opportunities/>

² https://www.fs.fed.us/pnw/pubs/pnw_gtr961.pdf

48.4734° N, -120.1811° W

WINTHROP RINK

OKANOGAN COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Critical funding from the WWRP supported the acquisition of land and construction of a permanent ice rink and outdoor sports court in Winthrop, Washington. The Winthrop Rink was recently named one of the top 10 ice rinks in the west by Sunset Magazine.

WWRP FUNDS \$380,000 | MATCH FUNDS \$430,000 (ALL AMOUNTS ROUNDED)



On average, each visitor receives \$4 worth of consumer surplus, a measure of consumer well-being, with each visit. In total the ice rink supports some \$40,000 worth of consumer surplus each year.



The Winthrop Rink is one of the few ice rinks in the west that does not operate at a loss, meaning the rink is a sustainable community asset that will continue to provide benefits to users into the future.

BENEFITS

The Winthrop Rink seeks to build community through the joy of outdoor skating. As a community asset with programs for every age, the rink attracts over 10,000 visitors each year. Whether on a school field trip, participating in a hockey tournament, or enjoying a skate with the family, visitors and locals alike enjoy the Winthrop Rink.

Individuals who use the rink pay a small fee to use the facility, providing enough revenue to cover operating costs. But a trip to the Winthrop Rink is worth more to consumers than what they pay. Economists use a measurement called consumer surplus to understand the value a person realizes from engaging in a recreational activity. Consumer surplus is simply the difference between what a person is willing to pay to participate in a recreation activity, minus the costs they actually incur. For the average Winthrop Rink user, a visit to the rink is worth \$11, but the average cost of admittance is only \$7, meaning that each visitor receives \$4 worth of consumer surplus per trip. In total, the Winthrop Rink supports over \$40,000 in consumer surplus for rink users every year. While measuring consumer surplus is different than measuring direct expenditures, it provides insights into the value that rink users place on their ability to use the facility. And, because the rink is able to operate sustainably, Winthrop residents and visitors can experience the joy of outdoor skating time and time again.



Winthrop Rink supports variety of community programs, **attracting roughly 10,000 visitors each year.**



EARTH ECONOMICS

46.3043° N, -119.3614° W

YAKIMA RIVERSHORE AND TRAIL

BENTON COUNTY, WASHINGTON

With funds from the WWRP, the City of West Richland was able to acquire and develop a riverfront property to provide public access to the Yakima River for non-motorized recreation activities. The riverfront park also includes trails and walking paths, scenic picnic areas, and educational kiosks that tell the story of the area's native species and natural areas.

WWRP FUNDS \$1,300,000 | MATCH FUNDS \$460,000 (ALL AMOUNTS ROUNDED)



Surveys have found that in 2013 alone, Washington residents spent over \$1 billion on equipment and travel related expenses to swim in natural water and enjoy non-motorized boating activities.¹



The development of the Yakima Rivershore and Trail stands to boost recreation related spending in West Richland, making a positive contribution to the region's economy.

BENEFITS

Located along the rolling Yakima River, the City of West Richland is known for its wide-open spaces and access to recreation. Area residents are known for their love of water-skiing and boating, however, the vast majority of this activity takes place beyond city limits in the nearby Columbia River. But, thanks to the WWRP, West Richland residents will now have the opportunity to enjoy water activities right in their backyard.

The development of the Yakima Rivershore and Trail provides unprecedented access to the Yakima River and will serve as a major attraction for locals and visitors alike. And, because water recreation activities, including swimming in natural waters and non-motorized boating, have been shown to be a huge economic driver for our state, the City of West Richland can expect to receive a significant economic return from this project.

¹ <https://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/ORTF/EconomicAnalysisOutdoorRec.pdf>



Photo Credit: Tom Ring



The development of **the Yakima Rivershore and Trail** will unlock **opportunities** for recreation activities for area residents.



EARTH ECONOMICS