

Priority Habitats and Species Shrubsteppe Decision Support Tools

Implementation Guidance for Land-use Planners and VSP Workgroups



Introduction

What is this Priority Habitats and Species Implementation Guidance?

The Growth Management Act (GMA) tasks county and city land use planners and Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) workgroups with accommodating growth and promoting agriculture while protecting critical areas. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) program and partners have developed several decision support tools to inform such actions. This document provides guidance for how to apply these decision support tools to land use decisions frequently made by Eastern Washington planners and VSP Workgroups.

This PHS Shrubsteppe Implementation Guidance is part of a series of PHS documents including [Shrubsteppe Management Recommendations](#), [Shrubsteppe Restoration Manual](#), [Local Government User Guide for PHS Shrubsteppe and Eastside Steppe Maps](#), and [PHS Shrubsteppe and Eastside Steppe Map Technical Report](#). Because this Implementation Guidance builds upon these PHS products, in this document we do not repeat basic building blocks such as the PHS definition of shrubsteppe or explain how PHS relates to local government land use mandates in the GMA and Shoreline Management Act (SMA). Please refer to the other documents in this series for those building blocks.

Request this information in an alternative format or language at wdfw.wa.gov/accessibility/requests-accommodation, 833-885-1012, TTY (711), or CivilRightsTeam@dfw.wa.gov.



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Context

Ecological: Up to 80% of Washington’s shrubsteppe habitat has been lost or degraded. Many populations of shrubsteppe-dependent species are isolated and at heightened risk of local extinction. Land use actions, wildfire, invasive species, and climate change continue to fragment and degrade shrubsteppe habitat and further imperil at-risk species.

Planning mandates: Local governments and VSP workgroups play essential roles in ensuring that Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (FWHCA) are protected through local policies and programs. Under the GMA, local government land use planners and VSP workgroups are responsible for achieving no net loss of shrubsteppe function at the project, jurisdiction, and watershed scales. Local governments are also responsible for avoiding the creation of isolated sub-populations of species.

Problem Statement this Document is Designed to Address

Prior to publication of this document, PHS did not provide written expert opinion to local government planners and VSP workgroups regarding how to interpret and apply multiple shrubsteppe decisions support tools. As a result, these essential conservation partners lacked a basis for knowing where to take specific actions to avoid, minimize, and provide offsetting compensatory mitigation for unavoidable harm to shrubsteppe and shrubsteppe-dependent species at a project, jurisdiction, and/or watershed scale.

Acronyms

ALI	Arid Lands Initiative
BAC	Biodiversity Areas and Corridors
CAO	Critical Areas Ordinance
DNR	Department of Natural Resources
FWHCA	Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas
GMA	Growth Management Act
HRCD	High Resolution Change Detection
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
PHS	Priority Habitats and Species
SMA	Shoreline Management Act
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
VSP	Voluntary Stewardship Program
WDFW	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
WHCAP	Washington Habitat Connectivity Action Plan
WSSC	Washington State Conservation Commission
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation
WSRRI	Washington Shrubsteppe Restoration and Resiliency Initiative
WSU	Washington State University

Land Use Decisions and Decision Support Tools

Table 1 shows which decision support tools are best suited to answering typical land use questions related to shrubsteppe and shrubsteppe-dependent species. The following sections describe these decision support tools. See Table A1 in the Appendix for additional resources and details.

Table 1. Land Use Decision Support Tools for Local Government Planners and VSP Workgroups in the Columbia Plateau.

Land Use Questions	Decision Support Tools (Bold = Primary)
Which areas should our jurisdiction designate as a critical area ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PHS Shrubsteppe and Eastside Steppe Map • WSRRI
What shrubsteppe functions and values does this project site or parcel provide?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PHS Management Recommendations for Shrubsteppe (Appendix 9) • PHS BAC, WSRRI, ALI
Where should we focus on protecting shrubsteppe of high conservation value with low-density zoning or other actions? Where should we focus shrubsteppe restoration ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSRRI • PHS BAC, WHCAP, ALI, Least Conflict Solar Siting Conservation Value Map
Where should we avoid siting large-scale wind and solar projects ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSU Least Conflict Solar Siting Conservation Value Map • PHS BAC, WSRRI, ALI
Project-scale Monitoring: Did the developer achieve no net loss of shrubsteppe functions and values at the project scale ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PHS Management Recommendations for Shrubsteppe (Appendix 9)
Jurisdiction-scale Monitoring: Did our jurisdiction achieve no net loss of shrubsteppe functions and values at the jurisdiction scale ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSRRI • WDFW High Resolution Change Detection
Population Monitoring: Did our jurisdiction avoid creating isolated sub-populations of species that rely on shrubsteppe?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WDFW Periodic Status Reviews • WDFW State Wildlife Action Plan

Standard Guidance When Using Decision Support Tools for Land Use Planning

We provide these standard guidelines for people using spatial decision support tools – especially those that are based on modeled data:

- **Flag for subsequent on-site evaluation.** The mapping products were developed with spatial data that, in most cases, has not been locally field verified for accuracy. We recommend using these datasets as *flagging tools* to identify where shrubsteppe habitat is likely present. Use field surveys to confirm the presence and quality of shrubsteppe habitat.
- **Refer to multiple datasets to support land use planning.** While there are many similarities between these mapping products, they were developed with different data sources and intended uses. Please refer to multiple datasets when prioritizing areas to protect and restore.

- **Review reference information for additional guidance.** The information contained in this document is a summary of existing resources. Please look at the linked references to learn more about the spatial data products and their intended uses, as well as other data sources such as local habitat and survey data, high resolution aerial photos, and input from experts familiar with the local shrubsteppe landscape.
- **Use the most recent information.** WDFW and partners occasionally update the datasets referenced in this document and create new spatial mapping products.
- **Request WDFW technical assistance.** Please contact [your local WDFW Habitat Biologists](#) for further assistance with these data products.

Resources to Use When Designating and Protecting Shrubsteppe

We recommend two resources when considering where to designate and protect shrubsteppe habitat under a local government's critical areas ordinance (CAO).

PHS Shrubsteppe and Eastside Steppe Map (primary)

WDFW developed the PHS Shrubsteppe and Eastside Steppe map to advise counties and cities which areas to designate as Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (FWHCAs) in their CAO. The PHS map shows the general location of PHS Shrubsteppe and Eastside Steppe in Washington. WDFW made significant updates to the PHS map in 2021 that greatly improved the mapping of shrubsteppe habitat. This PHS map is intended to be used as a flagging tool to identify locations where shrubsteppe is likely present. Where land use changes are proposed, the PHS map can help identify where site surveys are needed to verify and delineate the presence and quality of shrubsteppe to inform local land use decisions and programs.

To understand how the PHS Shrubsteppe map supports and is supported by other PHS information, please refer to each document when updating a CAO or a comprehensive plan's land use element:

- [Management Recommendations for Washington's Priority Habitats: Shrubsteppe](#)
- [PHS At-A-Glance Shrubsteppe and Eastside Steppe](#)
- [PHS Shrubsteppe and Eastside Steppe Map User Guide](#)
- [PHS Shrubsteppe and Eastside Steppe Map Technical Guide](#)

Washington Shrubsteppe Restoration and Resiliency Initiative Maps (secondary)

The Washington Shrubsteppe Restoration and Resiliency Initiative (WSRRI) was initiated in 2021 to develop a statewide strategy to prioritize shrubsteppe recovery in the face of increasing wildfires. The program is co-managed by WDFW, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC). As part of the WSRRI Long-Term Strategy, multiple spatial

mapping products were developed to prioritize recovery areas. The WSRRRI landcover data, which shows the general location of shrubsteppe in Washington State, can be used by counties and cities to supplement the PHS Shrubsteppe and Eastside Steppe map to designate shrubsteppe habitat as a FWHCA. Like the PHS Shrubsteppe and Eastside Steppe map, the WSRRRI landcover data is intended to be used as a flagging tool and should be field verified to inform site-scale land use decisions.

- [Washington Shrubsteppe Restoration and Resiliency Initiative | WDFW](#)
- [WSRRRI Long-Term Strategy \(2024-2054\)](#)
- [WSRRRI Spatial Priorities Map](#)
- [WSRRRI Spatial Data Inputs and Methodology](#)

Resources to Use When Evaluating a Site's Existing Functions and Values



When determining appropriate permit conditions to avoid and minimize harm to existing shrubsteppe ecological functions and values, a local government must know what a proposed project site's existing functions and values are. VSP workgroups must be able to evaluate a site's existing habitat functions and values as part of their monitoring programs. We recommend using PHS Management Recommendations as a primary resource; three other resources may also be helpful.

PHS Shrubsteppe Management Recommendations (Appendix 9; primary): The shrubsteppe mapping and assessment tool described in Appendix 9 (pages A25-44) of the [PHS Management Recommendations for Shrubsteppe Habitat](#) provides a protocol for a qualified expert to:

- Determine the boundary of shrubsteppe habitat.
- Identify the type of shrubsteppe habitat present.
- Rank the habitat quality of shrubsteppe habitat.

The results of this protocol can help planners identify appropriate permit conditions to maintain the parcel's shrubsteppe habitat functions and values, avoid the best quality habitat on site, and inform compensatory mitigation.

PHS Biodiversity Areas and Corridors: Some parcels include important travel corridors or core area functions. The [PHS Biodiversity Areas and Corridors map](#) shows the general location of large intact wildlife habitat and corridors in the Columbia Plateau. This map flags areas that may be of high conservation value and/or serve as corridors at a landscape scale. The PHS Biodiversity Areas and Corridors (BAC) map includes areas with low intensity land use, such as agriculture, that with wildlife-friendly management can function as important wildlife corridors.

Reference Information:

- [PHS At-A-Glance Biodiversity Areas and Corridors](#)
- [PHS Biodiversity Areas and Corridors Map User Guide](#)
- [PHS Biodiversity Areas and Corridors Technical Guide](#)
- [PHS Management Recommendations for BACs \(coming soon\)](#)

WSRRI: The maps created for WSRRI are also useful for identifying a site's existing functions and values (subject to verification). See descriptions of WSRRI maps above and below.

Arid Lands Initiative: The Arid Lands Initiative (ALI) was established in 2009 to bring together a diverse assemblage of public, private, and tribal interests to develop a coordinated strategy to conserve and restore arid lands in eastern Washington. The ALI identified a set of shared biological goals, strategic actions, and priority areas to focus landscape-scale conservation efforts. The ALI spatial mapping product identified and ranked core habitats and corridors where protection and restoration actions can be targeted. The ALI spatial data can be used in conjunction with other spatial mapping tools, like PHS and WSRRI, to identify priority areas of high conservation value. Because land uses have changed since this data product was created, please verify current conditions when using this data.

Reference Information:

- [Arid Lands Initiative Shared Priorities for Conservation at a Landscape Scale Report](#)
- [Arid Lands Initiative Products and Spatial Data](#)

Resources to Use When Determining Where to Protect and Restore Habitats of High Conservation Value

Under the GMA and SMA, jurisdictions must plan for and accommodate multiple land uses. Identifying areas of high conservation value can inform long-range planning actions, such as modifying Urban Growth Areas, land use maps and zoning densities, and open space and natural resource land designations. Identifying areas of high conservation value can also inform where a jurisdiction allows compensatory mitigation receiving sites and areas suitable for voluntary conservation incentive programs such as the VSP and reduced property taxes through a Public Benefit Rating System.

Please work with [WDFW regional staff](#) when designating areas of high conservation value.

WSRRI (primary): WSRRI’s strategy of “Protect the Core, Grow the Core, and Connect the Core” identifies *core areas* that have the highest quality habitat, *growth opportunity areas* where restoration activities can improve the quality of habitat, and key *corridors* to support wildlife movement, respectively. The WSRRI strategy is further prioritized across three target areas: sage grouse (a listed species), xeric (dry) ecosystems, and mesic (wet) ecosystems. The WSRRI spatial priorities are based on landcover data that provides landscape-scale indicators for shrubsteppe habitat quality. Like the PHS BAC map, WSRRI spatial priorities include areas with low intensity land use, such as agriculture, that with wildlife-friendly management can provide important habitat functions.

Reference Information:

- [Washington Shrubsteppe Restoration and Resiliency Initiative | WDFW](#)
- [WSRRI Long-Term Strategy \(2024-2054\)](#)
- [WSRRI Spatial Priorities Map](#)
- [WSRRI Spatial Data Inputs and Methodology](#)

Using WSRRI datasets in conjunction with the datasets described below, local jurisdictions have an excellent new toolset to identify the places of highest conservation value.

PHS BAC Maps: See description above.

Washington Habitat Connectivity Action Plan: When considering where to protect or restore shrubsteppe habitat, the Washington Habitat Connectivity Action Plan (WHCAP) will be another helpful source of information. This effort is a collaborative partnership (WDFW, WSDOT, and Conservation Northwest) that will prioritize places and projects that protect and enhance habitat connectivity statewide and describe ways they can be implemented at the local level. The primary goal of the plan is to prioritize both road crossing and landscape connectivity projects. The WHCAP, which will be published in June 2025, will reflect existing conservation priorities and support ongoing or proposed connectivity work from tribes, partners, and stakeholders.

Reference Information:

- [WHCAP factsheet](#)
- WHCAP products (coming soon)

Arid Lands Initiative: This is another useful dataset when identifying places of high conservation value. See the description of the ALI above.

Least Conflict Solar Siting: [WSU’s Least Conflict Solar Siting Conservation Value Map](#) can inform where continued low density zoning and incentive programs can protect lands identified as high conservation value. Please see the description of this effort below.

Resources to Use When Siting Large Solar and Wind Energy Projects

The Columbia Plateau is experiencing rapid growth in commercial-scale solar and wind energy projects. We recommend local governments consider one primary and three secondary resources.

Least Conflict Solar Siting (primary): In 2021, the Washington Legislature funded the Least Conflict Solar Siting Project to identify areas in the Columbia Plateau that minimize conflicts between renewable energy and environmental and agricultural interests. The project’s spatial mapping products can help counties and cities plan for future renewable energy projects that minimize impacts to shrubsteppe habitat and other valued resources.

The least conflict maps were developed by the Washington State University Energy Program in 2023 through a community-informed and value-driven process with farmland, rangeland, environmental, and solar industry stakeholders. The Least Conflict Solar Siting Project identifies general locations in the Columbia Plateau with the fewest potential stakeholder conflicts. These maps are intended to be used as initial screening tools to help guide development decisions during the early phases of project siting. A site visit by a qualified expert is still necessary to document the presence or absence of priority habitats or species. Separate maps were developed to show areas with high solar development potential, and environmental, agricultural, and rangeland resource values.

The [Conservation Value Map](#) is a suitable tool to flag areas where jurisdictions should avoid siting renewable energy projects to minimize impacts to wildlife habitat. This map was informed by the PHS Shrubsteppe and Eastside Steppe, PHS Biodiversity Areas and Corridors, Arid Lands Initiative, and other datasets.

Reference Information:

- [Least Conflict Solar Siting on the Columbia Plateau Report](#)
- [Least Conflict Solar Siting Spatial Data](#)
- [Revised Wind and New Solar Energy Guidelines \(coming soon\)?](#)

Other Resources: When siting large solar or wind projects, local planners may also benefit from looking at PHS BAC maps, WSRRI maps, and ALI maps (described above).

Resources to Use When Monitoring Land Use Change

The GMA and SMA require jurisdictions to protect fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas. To “protect” means (a) to provide for no net loss of critical area functions and values through development regulations¹, and (b) to avoid creating isolated sub-populations.² Counties participating in VSP are required to achieve no net loss using voluntary and incentive-based measures.³ Only by monitoring land use impacts can a local jurisdiction know if their regulations and incentives are achieving the required outcomes. This section provides resources to help jurisdictions monitor land use impacts to shrubsteppe at multiple scales to answer the following questions:

1. Is **no net loss** of functions achieved at the **project scale**?
2. Is **no net loss** of functions achieved at the **jurisdiction or watershed scale**?

¹ [WAC 365-196-830](#)(4) Protection of Critical Areas

² [WAC 360-190-130](#)(1)

³ [VSP Monitoring Resource Library](#)

3. Are efforts to **avoid creating isolated sub-populations** of shrubsteppe-dependent species succeeding?

Robust land use monitoring is not easy. Please speak with a [regional WDFW biologist](#) for more ideas about how to monitor land use change.

Monitoring Land Use Impacts at the Project Scale

PHS Shrubsteppe Management Recommendations (primary): To monitor land use impacts on an individual parcel or project site, we recommend jurisdictions first use the shrubsteppe mapping and assessment tool described in Appendix 9 of the [PHS Management Recommendations for Shrubsteppe Habitat](#) as described above (page 4). Based on this evaluation, identify key shrubsteppe functions to be monitored over time.

Monitoring Land Use Impacts at a Jurisdiction or Watershed Scale

WSRRI (Primary): WSRRI maps, which track landscape level trends in habitat quantity and quality over time, are a suitable tool for monitoring land use impacts at a jurisdiction or watershed scale. A complete overview of the data inputs and methodology for developing the WSRRI spatial data is [available here](#).

Shrubsteppe Quantity

WSRRI landcover data is suitable for tracking landscape level trends in the quantity or area of shrubsteppe habitat over time. With this dataset, users can track annual changes in the distribution and abundance of landcover classes dating back to 1986, with *shrubs, grasses, and forbs* as indicators of shrubsteppe habitat. Using the *bare soil* landcover class, users can identify where land activities or natural disturbances have removed or degraded shrubsteppe habitat. For counties and cities, this data can be used to monitor how land use practices like zoning densities impact the health and connectivity of shrubsteppe habitat. For counties enrolled in VSP, this dataset can help track if agricultural activities are impacting the quantity of shrubsteppe over time.

Shrubsteppe Quality

With WSRRI's xeric (dry) habitat suitability data users can track landscape level trends in the quality of shrubsteppe habitat over time based on the presence of plant communities associated with shrubsteppe. The xeric habitat suitability data layer uses rangeland fractional vegetation cover (an estimate of the percent cover of vegetation types) and human footprint data to assign an ecological integrity score. With this information, users can identify changes in the quality of habitat. Because the habitat requirements for wildlife species vary, other species datasets can be added to this analysis.

Other Considerations

Users may need to account for other factors, such as historic wildfires, permitted development, lands enrolled in conservation programs, and changes in agricultural activities, when validating the types and causes of change occurring in the landscape. Categorizing change detections into natural and anthropogenic classes can help distinguish between the cause of change and the degree of mitigation needed to offset impacts to habitat.

WDFW High Resolution Change Detection (HRCD): [This dataset](#) shows changes in land cover over time – specifically new development and/or tree loss. Using high resolution imagery (1-meter) the HRCD

dataset identifies changes in land cover over time across Washington. The outputs are polygons which show the locations of change and attribute tables with details about what caused the change and the type of change observed (e.g. vegetation loss, impervious surface gain). This product is widely used and very accurate in forested areas and its utility in shrubsteppe areas is increasing as more of the Columbia Plateau is analyzed. This data is highly applicable to evaluating change at a parcel or jurisdiction scale.

Monitoring Isolated Sub-Populations of Shrubsteppe-Dependent Species

We recommend referring to WDFW periodic status reviews and trends information from WDFW's State Wildlife Action Plan when evaluating the status of populations of shrubsteppe-dependent species.

Periodic Status Reviews (primary): WDFW's Wildlife Program prepares these reports for state-listed species. Currently, there are status reviews for four shrubsteppe-dependent species:

- [Periodic Status Review for the Ferruginous Hawk \(Aug. 2021\)](#)
- [Periodic Status Review for the Greater Sage-grouse in Washington \(Apr. 2021\)](#)
- [Periodic Status Review for the Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse in Washington \(Dec. 2017\)](#)
- [Periodic Status Review for the Pygmy Rabbit \(Draft, 2024\)](#)

Reports for [other shrubsteppe-dependent species](#) will be prepared if more listings occur.

State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP): The [SWAP](#) is a comprehensive plan for conserving the state's fish and wildlife and the natural habitats on which they depend. The purpose of the SWAP is to identify actions to help [Species of Greatest Conservation Need](#). The SWAP discusses population trends (see [Chapter 3](#), tables 3-3 to 3-8) and identifies leading causes of population declines.

Appendix

Table A1. Additional Land Use Decision Support Tool resources and applications.

Data Layer	Project Lead	Primary Purpose	Intended Audience	Data Product	Scale of Use	Land Use Planning Application	Voluntary Stewardship Program Application	Data Link
Washington Shrubsteppe Restoration and Resilience Initiative (2024)	WDFW, Department of Natural Resources, and State Conservation Commission	Identify and prioritize areas for habitat conservation, restoration, and fire management in the Columbia Plateau.	Planners, conservation partners, solar developers, and private landowners	Map of areas with high conservation value based on habitat suitability indices. Includes time series landcover data and estimates of habitat quality.	Regional	Identify and designate critical areas, inform long-range planning activities, prioritize areas for protection and restoration, and monitor land use change overtime.	Prioritize FWHCAs to protect and enhance through voluntary incentives. Track changes in shrubsteppe quantity and quality at a watershed scale. Align Work Plan goals and benchmarks with the WSRRI Strategic Priority Actions.	Washington Shrubsteppe Restoration and Resiliency Initiative webpage

PHS Shrubsteppe and Eastside Steppe Decision Support Tools

Data Layer	Project Lead	Primary Purpose	Intended Audience	Data Product	Scale of Use	Land Use Planning Application	Voluntary Stewardship Program Application	Data Link
PHS Biodiversity Areas and Corridors (2023)	WDFW	Identify the most important areas to protect biodiversity and habitat connectivity in the Columbia Plateau.	Planners, developers, conservation partners, solar developers	Map of areas of high conservation value that support biodiversity and connectivity.	Regional	Prioritize areas for protection and restoration and inform long-range planning activities.	Prioritize FWHCAs to protect and enhance through voluntary incentives. Identify agricultural lands with higher potential to contribute to wildlife movement and connectivity.	Biodiversity Areas and Corridors Map User Guide PHS Columbia Plateau Regional Biodiversity Areas and Corridors data
Least Conflict Solar Siting (2023)	WSU Energy Program	Identify locations, based on stakeholder input and value statements, where solar development proposals can minimize conflict with environmental and agricultural interests.	Solar developers, planners, and private landowners	A map developed by stakeholders based on their values. It defines areas important for solar suitability, habitat, ranchland, and farmland.	Regional and local	Inform site selection for large-scale renewable energy projects and inform long-range planning activities.	In conjunction with other datasets, identify areas of high conservation and agricultural value. Monitor impacts to agricultural viability resulting from large-scale renewable energy projects.	Washington Columbia Plateau Least-Conflict Solar Siting Gateway Least-Conflict Solar Siting Conservation Value Map

PHS Shrubsteppe and Eastside Steppe Decision Support Tools

Data Layer	Project Lead	Primary Purpose	Intended Audience	Data Product	Scale of Use	Land Use Planning Application	Voluntary Stewardship Program Application	Data Link
Sagebrush Conservation Design (2023)	Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, USFWS, and USGS	Identify and prioritize areas for protection and restoration in the shrubsteppe biome based on the ecological integrity of the landscape.	Planners, conservation partners, and private landowners	Multi-state map of core habitats and corridors in the shrubsteppe biome.	Regional	<i>Not a priority dataset for land use planning in Eastern Washington. WSRRI incorporated the SCD framework into their spatial mapping products.</i>	<i>Not a priority dataset for land use planning in Eastern Washington. Recommend using other data products that better document Eastern Washington's shrubsteppe habitat.</i>	A sagebrush conservation design to proactively restore America's sagebrush biome
PHS Shrubsteppe & Eastside Steppe Map (2021)	WDFW	Flagging tool to identify where shrubsteppe habitat is likely present to inform critical area (FWHCA) designation under the GMA and SMA.	Planners, conservation partners, and developers	Statewide map of shrubsteppe and eastside steppe habitat.	Regional and local	Identify and designate critical areas, support critical area review and permitting, and inform long-range planning activities.	Designate where FWHCA are present on the landscape to inform VSP implementation and planning.	PHS Shrubsteppe and Eastside Steppe Map User Guide PHS Shrubsteppe data

PHS Shrubsteppe and Eastside Steppe Decision Support Tools

Data Layer	Project Lead	Primary Purpose	Intended Audience	Data Product	Scale of Use	Land Use Planning Application	Voluntary Stewardship Program Application	Data Link
Rangeland Analysis Platform (2018)	USDA	An interactive web app designed to assist managing and monitoring rangeland health and production.	Private landowners, resource managers, and conservation partners	Multi-state map of time series landcover data.	Regional and site-specific	<i>Not a priority dataset for land use planning in Eastern Washington. WSRRI incorporated this dataset into their spatial mapping products.</i>	<i>Recommend using WSRRI spatial data, which incorporates this dataset into their spatial mapping products.</i> Can be used to monitor changes in shrubsteppe quantity and quality at a watershed-scale and evaluate pasture health.	Rangeland Analysis Platform
Arid Lands Initiative (2014)	USFWS, WDFW, NRCS, and more.	Identify and rank areas of high conservation value in the Columbia Plateau based on shared stakeholder feedback.	Planners, conservation partners, and private landowners	Map of priority core areas and key connectivity linkages.	Regional	Inform long-range planning activities and identify priority areas for protection and restoration.	Prioritize FWHCA to protect and enhance through voluntary incentives.	Arid Lands Initiative

PHS Shrubsteppe and Eastside Steppe Decision Support Tools

Data Layer	Project Lead	Primary Purpose	Intended Audience	Data Product	Scale of Use	Land Use Planning Application	Voluntary Stewardship Program Application	Data Link
Washington Connected Landscapes Project: Columbia Plateau (2012)	Washington Wildlife Habitat Connectivity Working Group, WSDOT, WDFW, and more.	Analysis of regionally important connectivity areas in Washington and parts of Idaho, Oregon, and British Columbia.	Planners, conservation partners, and private landowners	Map of priority linkage networks and suitable habitat.	Regional	Inform long-range planning activities and identify priority areas for protection and restoration.	Prioritize FWHCA to protect and enhance through voluntary incentives.	Washington Connected Landscapes: Columbia Plateau Ecoregion
Washington Natural Heritage Program	DNR	Catalog the state's rare plants and ecosystems and prioritize their conservation needs to support funding and identification of Natural Areas.	Conservation partners, planners, and private landowners	Rare ecosystems and plant species.	Local and site-specific	Identify and designate critical areas, support critical area review and permitting, and inform long-range planning activities.	Use to compliment PHS: Designate where FWHCA are present on the landscape to inform VSP implementation and planning.	WNHP Data Explorer