Southwest Washington Prairie-Oak Working Group

About the Partnership: Prairie-oak ecosystems are among the rarest in North America. There is significant conservation opportunity across public and private lands in southwest Washington, located between Olympia and Portland in Lewis, Cowlitz, and Clark Counties.

The goals of the Southwest Washington Prairie-Oak Working Group are to (1) identify areas for conservation, (2) build community, (3) identify shared resources, and (4) improve and conserve prairie-oak habitat in the area. This group has held four in-person meetings and one virtual meeting, drawing a wide range of partners including agencies, non-profits, and landowners.



Meet the Partners: Ecostudies Institute, Pheasants Forever, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Washington Department of Natural Resources



Conservation Impact: Over the past 30 years, the conservation community has made significant investments in restoring prairie-oak habitat, establishing new populations of rare species, and expanding partnerships to include a diversity of people, places, and priorities. But the prairies and oak woodlands of southwest Washington have received significantly less conservation attention than other regions, despite the many important landscapes, species, and communities that call this area home. The Southwest Washington Prairie-Oak Working Group was created in 2023 to address this regional disparity.

Shovel-Ready SWPOWG Projects Ready for Investment


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Returning Prescribed Fire to the Landscape

Estimated Impact: 15-20 burns **Estimated Cost:** $500,000

The partnership seeks funding for prescribed fire crews to conduct restoration-focused fires on public and private lands in southwest Washington. This is an important step in restoring prairie-oak habitats, which depend on regular disturbance. Returning fire to the landscape and increasing capacity for restoration-focused prescribed fire increases habitat quality for rare species and reduces wildfire risk.


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Coordination of Partners in Southwest Washington

Estimated Impact: 3-5 years **Estimated Cost:** $50,000

The Southwest Washington Prairie-Oak Working Group is seeking 3 to 5 years of funding for a part-time Partnership Coordinator. This individual would plan restoration projects with landscape-scale outcomes, coordinate between partner organizations, and facilitate regular meetings.


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Shared Restoration Crew and Capacity-Building

Estimated Impact: 1,000 acres **Estimated Cost:** $500,000

This shared crew would conduct restoration, monitoring, and outreach efforts, filling capacity gaps within local agencies' land management crews and increasing our collective capacity for conservation-focused management on private working lands. This shared crew would also support local monitoring efforts for rare species and to understand native vegetation cover across the landscape.

Contact the Southwest Washington Prairie-Oak Working Group: kfoster@pheasantsforever.org