



# Proposed Study Questions: Measuring Outcomes of Habitat and Recreation Acquisitions and Regulations

State of Washington Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee

January 2017

## Why a JLARC Study of Habitat and Recreation Lands?

In the 2016 Supplemental Capital Budget (ESHB 2380), the Legislature directed the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) to review outcomes for programs that protect and conserve habitat and expand outdoor recreation.

The Legislature stated specific interest in identifying how habitat outcomes of land acquisition programs compare with outcomes of land use regulatory programs. The Legislature's assignment focuses on specific state agencies and acquisition or regulatory programs (see back).



## Study Questions

This study will address the following questions:

- 1) What habitat or recreation outcome measures do specific acquisition and regulatory programs currently use? Does research suggest additional measures?
- 2) For three counties west of the Cascades and three counties east of the Cascades:
  - a. How much land has been acquired by the programs for habitat purposes since 1990? Were the desired habitat outcomes of the purchases stated and monitored?
  - b. How much land is subject to major regulatory programs? Do those regulatory programs have stated and monitored habitat outcomes?
  - c. How do the outcomes for habitat land acquisition and regulation compare? To what extent do they overlap?
- 3) Do state agencies have land stewardship programs for land they acquire? To what extent have agencies complied with these programs?

## Study Timeframe

Preliminary Report: December 2017

Proposed Final Report: January 2018

## Study Team

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## Proposed Study Questions:

### Measuring Outcomes of Habitat and Recreation Acquisitions and Regulations

## More about the Study

### Focus on specific agencies

The Legislature's assignment focuses on lands acquired or regulated by 5 agencies: the Departments of Ecology, Fish and Wildlife, Commerce, and Natural Resources, and the State Parks and Recreation Commission. Lands acquired by these agencies, local governments, or other entities using grants from the Recreation and Conservation Office also are included.

### Focus on specific programs

JLARC staff will review the existing or potential outcome measures that can be used to evaluate the success of (1) state-funded acquisitions of habitat and recreation lands since 1990 and (2) major regulatory programs. The review will focus on the following six habitat or recreation acquisition programs and seven major regulatory programs:

#### Acquisition Programs

1. Salmon Recovery Funding Board
2. Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration program
3. Puget Sound Estuary and Restoration Program
4. Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program
5. State Parks and Recreation Commission
6. Trust Land Transfer program and other DNR expenditures

#### Regulatory Programs

1. Growth management regulations regarding critical areas
2. Wetland restrictions
3. Shoreline management rules
4. Forest practices regulation
5. Hydraulic Project Approval program
6. Clean Water Act
7. Flood plain management

This will include a review of the programs' other objective benefits, such as public health and safety. JLARC staff also will review state expenditures and matching local and federal expenditures (since 1990) for the acquisition programs.

### Study Informed by Multiple Information Sources

JLARC staff will use multiple sources of information, including scientific and economic literature, data provided by state agencies, and information from stakeholders who use science-based data to quantify benefits of natural lands.

## JLARC Study Process

