



Taylor's checkerspot butterfly (*Euphydryas editha taylori*) | 2015 Action Plan Summary

Taylor's checkerspot butterfly is historically known to occur in western Oregon, Washington and British Columbia. It is currently restricted to one site in BC, two in Oregon and less than ten in Washington. Occurring in grassland and grass/oak woodland sites where food plants and nectar sources are available, the Taylor's checkerspot butterfly population has declined greatly with the loss of prairie habitat in the region and the spreading of invasive plants. In October 2013, the Taylor's checkerspot butterfly was designated Endangered under the Endangered Species Act.

**Conservation Status of
Taylor's Checkerspot Butterfly**


State of WA
Threatened


Federal
Endangered

CPOP and the Species-Specific Working Groups

The Cascadia Prairie-Oak Partnership (CPOP) is an ecoregional group that brings together conservation focused professionals that represent state, federal and local government, military, conservation groups and other entities interested in prairie-oak conservation. CPOP was created to increase coordination between these groups in order to promote conservation action, leverage funding, and expand recovery efforts. The Taylor's checkerspot butterfly working group first convened in 2010 and meets annually to discuss and prioritize recovery actions.



What is an Action Plan and what is its purpose?

Each CPOP working group maintains an Action Plan, a document that lists the 'next best tasks' that can be taken to improve the status of the species and ranks the highest priority actions. Each year at the annual meeting the list is updated to reflect completed work, new opportunities and changes in urgency. The Action Plan is meant to encourage dialogue and consensus among the group as well as to inform entities that work with conservation policies and funding, such as US Fish and Wildlife Service, as to what actions are priorities to support the recovery of Taylor's checkerspot butterfly.

Action Plan Priorities

Rank	Action to be taken
#1	Enhance habitat by controlling/removing invasive species and structural modifiers, and enhancing larval food and nectar plants as appropriate.
#2	Continue to implement captive rearing and reintroduction programs, including monitoring source and release sites in South Sound.
#3	Develop suitable survey and monitoring protocols to determine occupancy, trends, distribution and abundance.
#4	Annually monitor all known populations
#5	Determine and implement best approach for increasing numbers of populations within each region.
#6	Minimize direct impacts to occupied sites.
#7	Pursue conservation easements, acquisitions, and management agreements.
#8	Define habitat targets and butterfly habitat selection through research with an emphasis on understanding oviposition site selection and larval mortality in response to plant community characteristics and thermal context.
#9	Improve connectivity between occupied areas and/or suitable habitat.
#10	Where appropriate, initiate efforts to increase the number of populations through captive rearing and reintroduction with an emphasis on identifying and prioritizing potential future release sites in coordination with recovery planning efforts and entities.

Threats

Although progress has been made, threats such as development, climate change and habitat degradation are still very real for Taylor's checkerspot butterfly. Continued efforts will be necessary to ensure their recovery.



Recently Completed Actions

Since the first Action Plan was created in 2010, the following notable tasks have been completed or have made substantial progress:

- Taylor's checkerspots have been reintroduced to 3 sites in Puget Sound.
- Captive breeding programs have provided a reliable population for reintroduction efforts.
- An increased amount of land has been protected through purchase or conservation easement, allowing for restoration work to begin.
- Direct impacts to occupied sites have been reduced.
- Coordination with the US Forest Service has reduced threats to occupied checkerspot sites and has led to increased site enhancement.
- Genetic studies have been funded and research has begun.
- Larval and nectar native plant production has increased, providing greater support for habitat enhancement projects.
- Monitoring methods were refined, allowing for trend detection.
- Oviposition and host plant research has improved understanding of habitat requirements. Habitat assessment methods have improved to convey status.
- An integrated strategy to enhance suitable habitat is being implemented on multiple protected lands in in preparation for reintroduction.
- A multi-partner comprehensive evaluation was completed regarding a management strategy for potential habitat enhancement sites.

