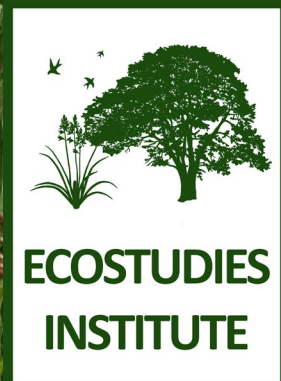


Expanding native prairie conservation value to grazed working lands

Sarah Hamman, Ecostudies Institute
Melissa Habenicht, Ecostudies Institute
Stephen Bramwell, WSU-Extension



PNW Prairie Rare Species



S. Hamman



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



T. Kaye



Institute for Applied Ecology



R. Gilbert



WDFW



R. Gilbert



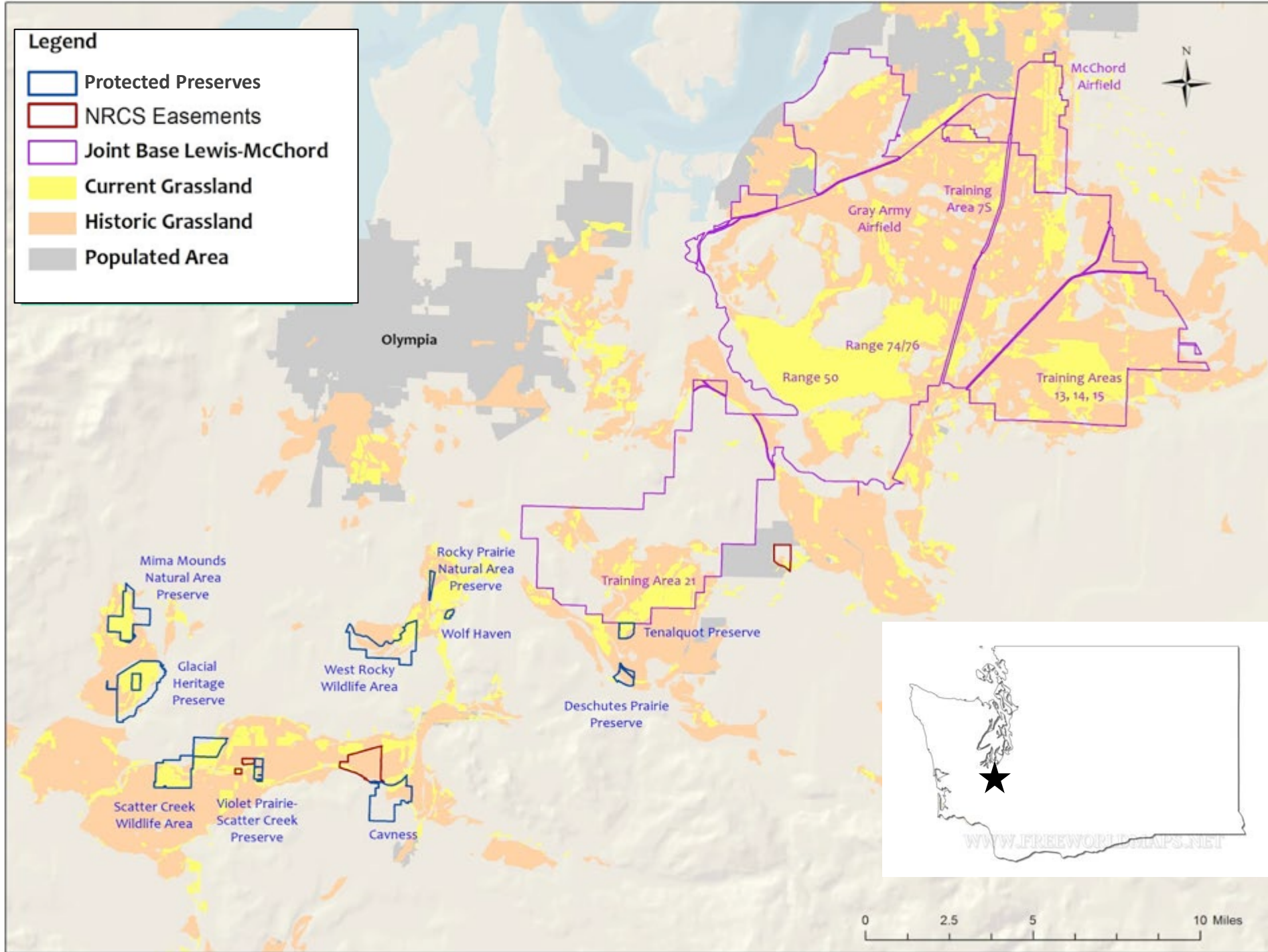
M. Benetsch



T. Hansen

Legend

- Protected Preserves
- NRCS Easements
- Joint Base Lewis-McChord
- Current Grassland
- Historic Grassland
- Populated Area



Ecological and economic benefit-cost comparison of grazed and ungrazed prairie land for critical species protection in western Washington

Partners:

Ecostudies Institute

Washington State University – Vancouver

Washington State University – Extension

Natural Resources Conservation Service

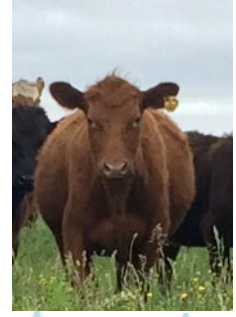
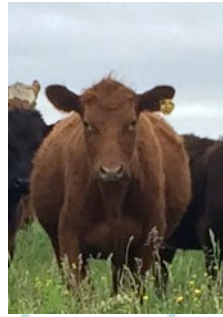
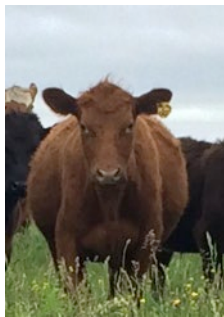
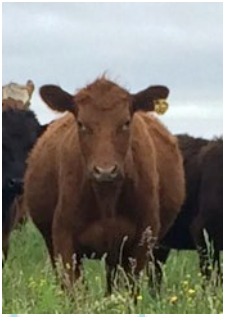
Colvin Ranch

Fisher Ranch

Riverbend Farm



Conservation Grazing Practices (CGP)



J

F

M

A

M

J

J

A

S

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D

Sustainably graze,
moving cattle
frequently.
Maintain stubble
height ~3"

'Rest' pastures,
completely
removing cattle
while native plants
bloom and set seed

Sustainably graze,
moving cattle
frequently. Maintain
stubble height ~3"
Seed native species

Study Design

Colvin Ranch

Fisher Ranch

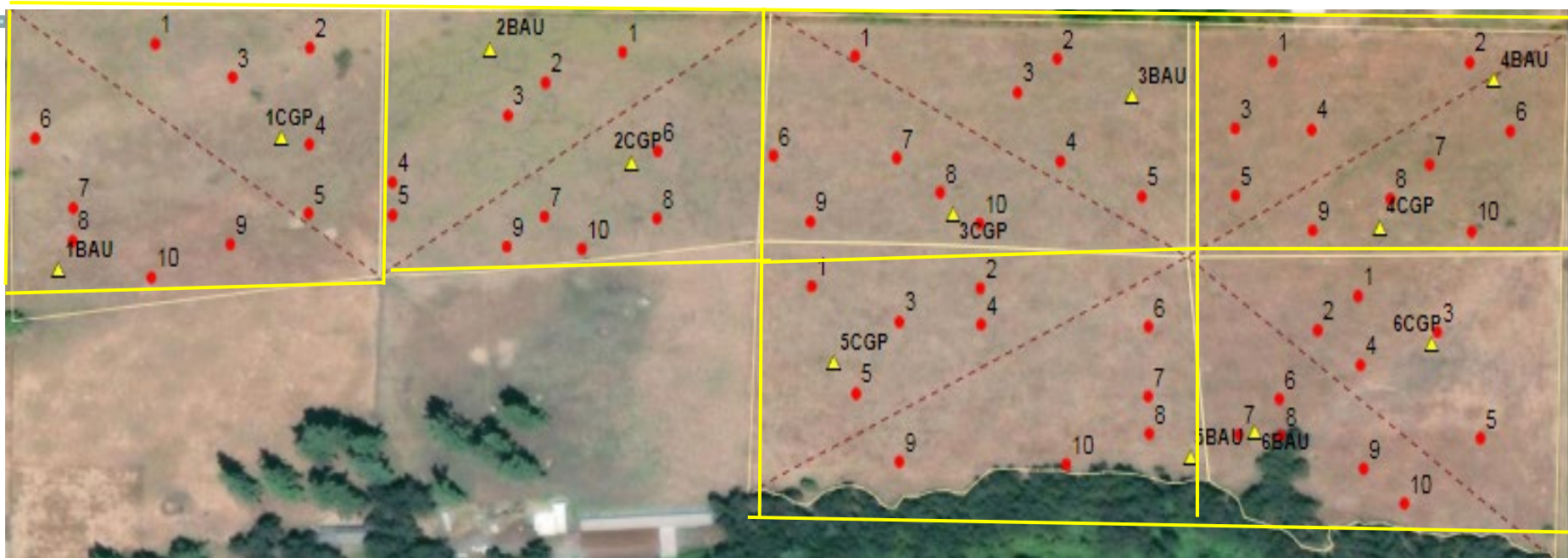
Riverbend Ranch

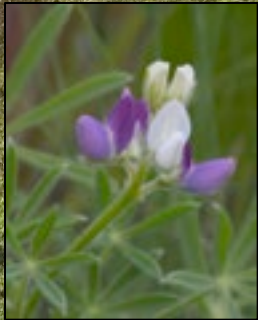
Wolf Haven Prairie

West Rocky Prairie

Johnson Prairie

- On each farm, six paddocks were split into 1-acre Conservation Grazing Practice (CGP) & Business As Usual (BAU) treatments
- Similar sized areas were established at Native Upland Prairies (NUPs)
- Vegetation and gopher data collected from subplots



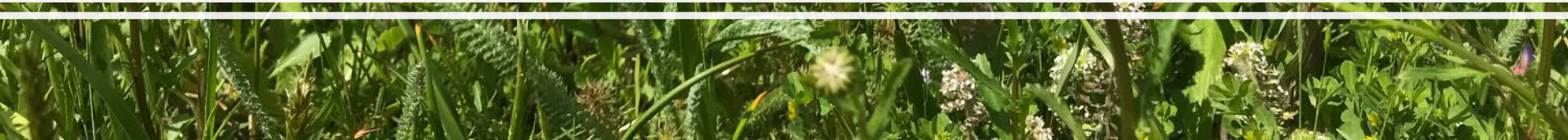


Conservation Grazing enhanced species richness





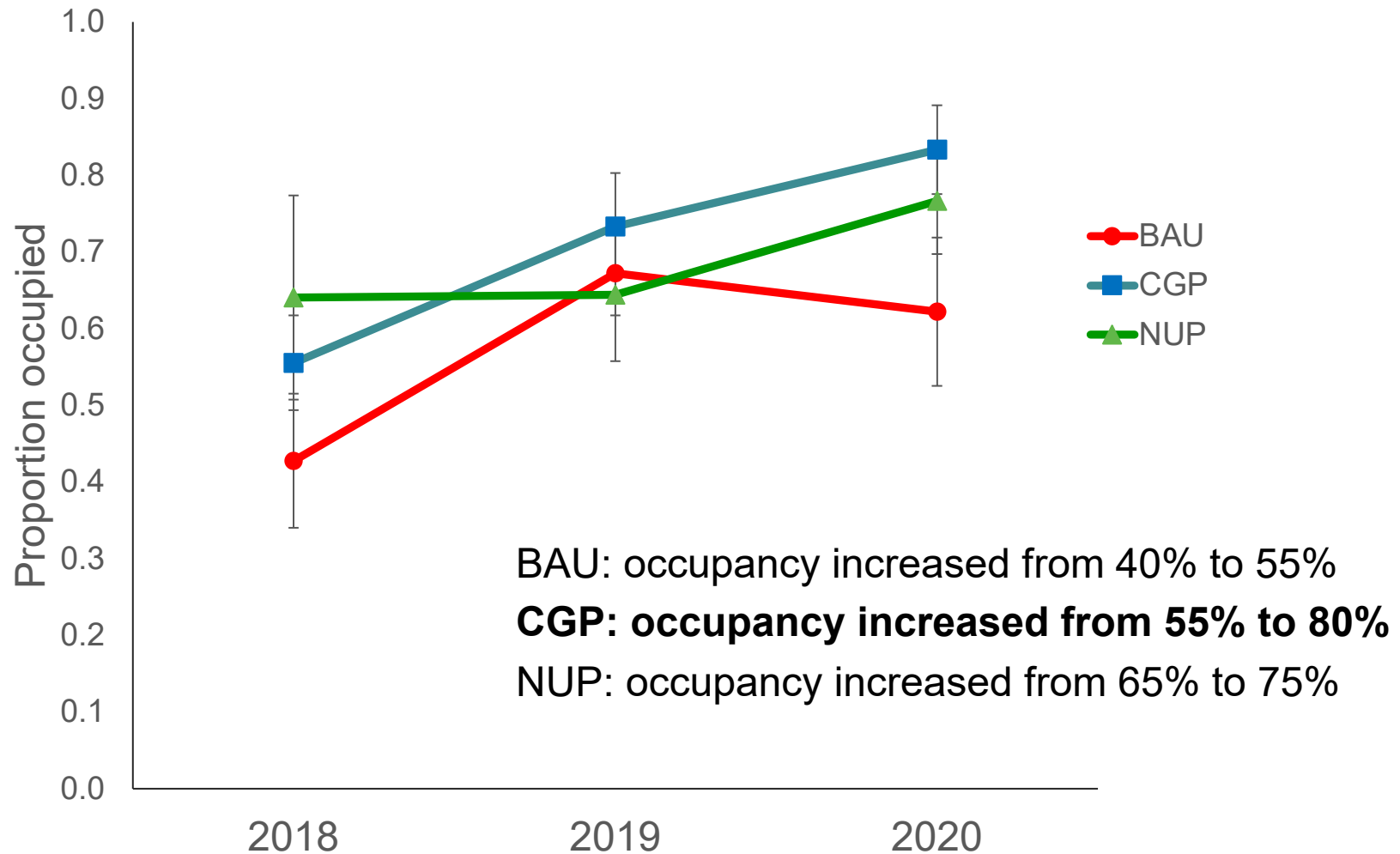
Golden paintbrush (*Castilleja levisecta*)
Federally threatened species



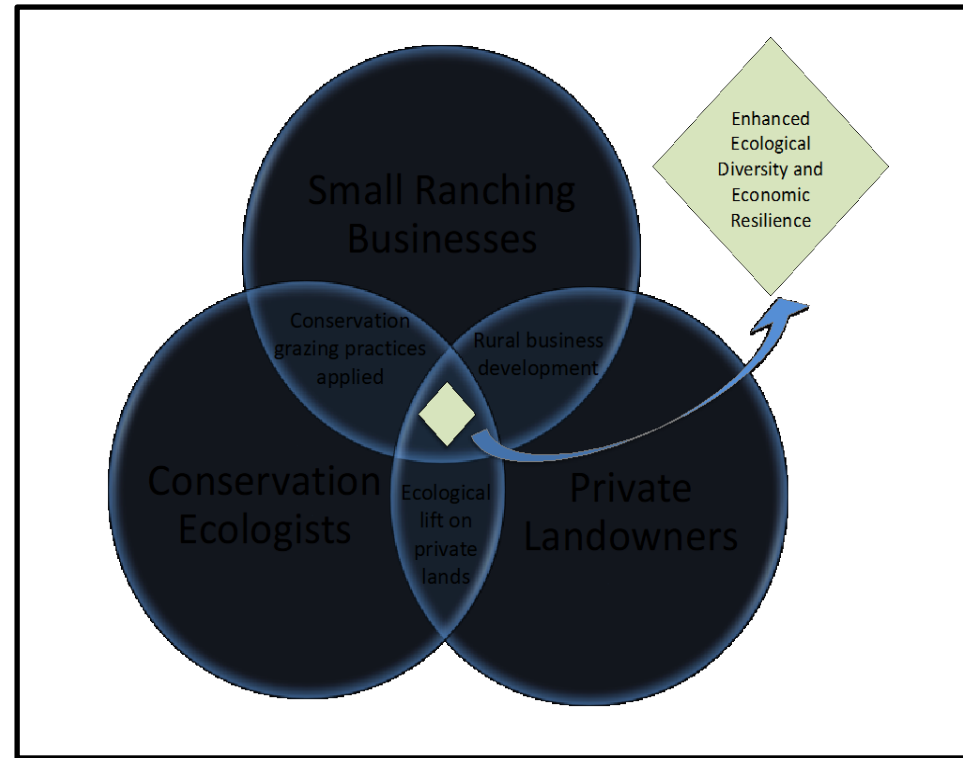
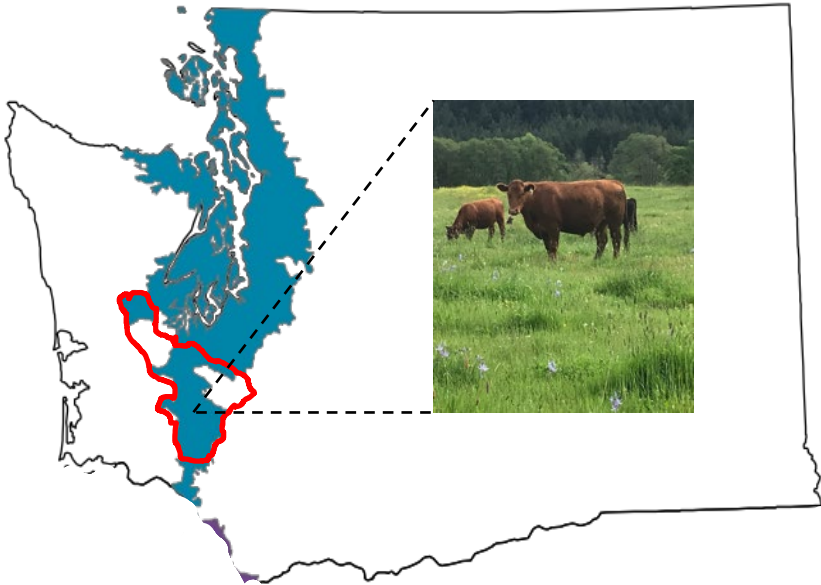
Conservation Grazing enhanced species richness



Gopher occupancy



Enhancing biodiversity of prairie habitat and economic resilience of rural communities through conservation grazing



Partners:

Ecostudies Institute

Center for Natural Lands Management

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Washington State University-Extension

Thurston Conservation District

Lewis Conservation District

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Tracking Y Ranch

Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs

Funding: Washington Coast Restoration & Resiliency Initiative

Tracking change in plants, pollinators & avian communities



Conclusions

- Conservation grazing practices can increase native and overall species richness within three years
- Conservation grazing can be used to promote habitat for rare and endangered species like the Mazama pocket gopher and golden paintbrush
- Think beyond the 'preserve' model for conserving rare species and habitats

A photograph of a grassy field with several cows grazing. In the foreground, there are two black cows and two brown cows. The field is lush green with some yellow and purple wildflowers. In the background, there is a dense forest of evergreen trees under a cloudy sky.

Thank you!

For more information:
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www.ecoinst.org

Visit SW Washington Grazing Association on Facebook!