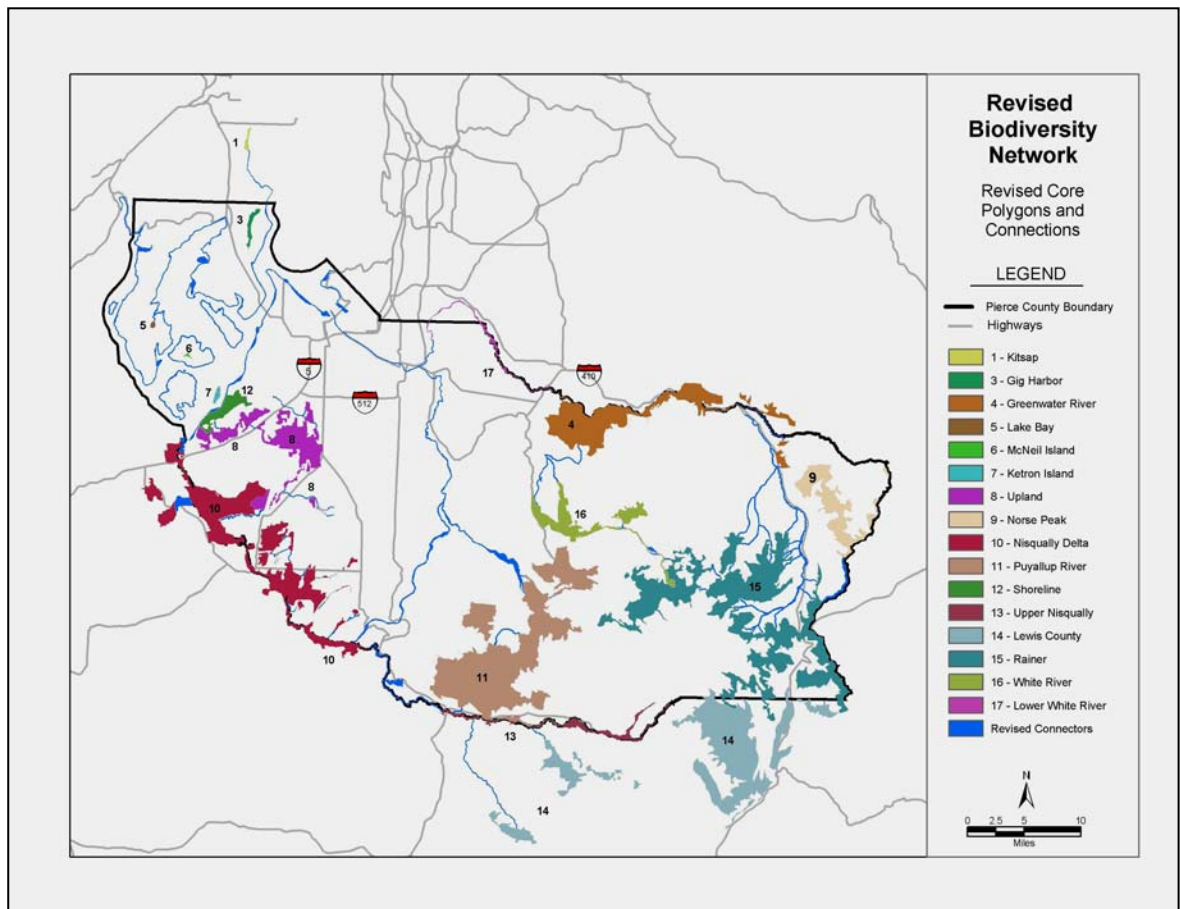


Pierce County Biodiversity Network Implementation Report to the Community

A Work in Progress of the
Pierce County Biodiversity Alliance

(Pierce County Planning and Land Services, University of
Washington, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, MetroParks
Tacoma)



What is Biodiversity Planning?

Biodiversity planning is a method used to identify land areas that provide for a biologically diverse representation of species. This planning method considers long-term ecosystem health and establishes a goal of maintaining adequate habitat to ensure the continued viability of a diversity of species within an ecoregion.

Gig Harbor BioBlitz

June 3-4, 2005

What is a BioBlitz? A rapid biological inventory of the plant and animal diversity found in a designated area during a 24-hour time frame.



Purpose

To begin implementing conservation planning of the Biodiversity Network by selecting one Biodiversity Management Area (BMA) as a pilot. Implementation includes educating the community and specifically landowners living within and bordering the BMA's about

- Biodiversity and the importance of it within the Gig Harbor BMA,
- Tax incentives, restoration opportunities
- How individuals can monitor biodiversity on their own lands

Who was involved?

50 experts from natural resource agencies, universities, Pt. Defiance Zoo, Tahoma Audubon, volunteers, and landowners

What did we find? We collected individual records for:

- 305 plants
- 194 bird, mammal, reptile, amphibian, and fish
- 150 invertebrates (insects, aquatic insects, crustaceans, mollusks)

The Results

| Taxa | Predicted | Observed | Not Predicted | Introduced |
|----------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Birds | 90 | 66 | 4 | 3 |
| Mammals | 43 | 14 | 4 | 5 |
| Amphibians | 8 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| Reptiles | 6 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Fish | | 3 | | 2 |
| Plants | | 170 | | 77 |
| Invertebrates | | 91* | | Not analyzed |

* - Ants, Bees, Beetles, Butterflies, Caddisflies, Crustaceans, Dragonflies, Earwigs, Flies, Mayflies, Millipedes, Mollusks, Spiders, Springtails, Stoneflies, Termites, Wasps

Explanation of the Table

The list of birds, mammals, amphibians, and reptiles were predicted based on a 7-year research project, Washington Gap Analysis Project, conducted by the University of Washington with experts throughout the state from other universities, natural resource agencies, and private individuals.

There are two important things to understand about the results:

1. Bird predictions were for breeding birds only. We expect more species to be added to the list when a winter bird list is created.
2. We only spent 24-hours in Gig Harbor. There may be more wildlife species we didn't see.
 - For some birds, we won't have the opportunity to observe them until migration begins or during the winter.
 - We need more time to find more mammals by tracking their signs, for example, scat, tunnels, tracks, nests, and feeding signs.

Biodiversity Management Area Vision Plan

Working with each Community within the Network as Individual Communities and as Crucial Members of the Network to Identify:



Habitats

Highlight key ecological habitats and their functions within the Gig Harbor BMA including the Crescent Lake, Crescent Creek, forests, family farms, and parks

- Example – Crescent Lake and wetlands

Stresses

Identify stresses and threats to the system

- For example, a introduced species, bullfrogs

Sources

Indicate sources of threats

- Individuals and schools raising tadpoles to eat insects in ponds, then dumping them into lakes when they become frogs.

Actions

Determine steps to address threats

1. Educate about how bullfrogs eat anything they can catch, such as small fish, frogs, small turtles, ducklings, and even small birds like hummingbirds that get too close to the water.
2. Remove the large and easy to recognize egg masses floating in the lake, ponds, and wetlands each spring.
3. Map where the bullfrogs are by recording their locations when seen or heard croaking and submit the data to *NatureMapping* at the University of Washington

Funding

List potential funding sources and partners for implementing actions

- Bullfrog egg identification classes with field trips each year to collect them

Timeline

Establish timeframe to complete implementing actions

1. First identify how many people need to be educated and how long it will take to inform the community
2. Track the changes in the number of bullfrogs seen/heard
3. Continue to survey for 5 years after because bullfrogs live as tadpoles for over 3 years before they turn into frogs.