

## **NCWAS Conservation Program Guidelines**

National Audubon Society's (NAS) mission is centered on the protection and enjoyment of birds. NCWAS, being the local chapter of NAS in Chelan, Douglas, Okanogan, and Ferry counties, conducts numerous activities within our region in support of these goals.

### **NAS's Mission Statement:**

The National Audubon Society protects birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow, throughout the Americas, using science, advocacy, education, and on-the-ground conservation. Its goal is "conservation of birds, other wildlife, and healthy ecosystems".

### **NCWAS Chapter Mission Statement:**

To enhance, protect and restore healthy natural ecosystems and native biodiversity using science, advocacy, education and on-the-ground conservation to promote the welfare of birds in North Central Washington.

### **How these mission statements inform the chapter's conservation program:**

To protect birds in our region, our work must encompass the protection, enhancement, and/or restoration of what they need to survive and thrive. As a group, birds occupy and utilize the entirety of our lands and waters. They also depend upon a stable climate, or at least one that changes slowly enough to allow them and the habitats they are adapted to adequate time to adjust. Given this, the scope of our conservation work takes an expansive view.

### **Considerations driving NCWAS decisions to address a specific issue or project:**

- 1) Would it negatively or positively affect the occurrence of healthy, functional, natural habitats or ecosystems of importance to birds?
- 2) Would it directly or indirectly affect landscape scale ecological continuity, integrity, and native biodiversity?
- 3) For an issue or project that is quite local in nature, might it bring great benefit or harm to birds?
- 4) Birds depend upon complex ecosystems that often straddle county, state, and/or national borders. In recognition of this, even though the issue or project may not lie entirely within our chapter's territory, does its impact overlap our chapter's boundaries?

### **Conservation Decision Flow:**

Generally, conservation matters are first considered by the Conservation Committee. The committee then brings issues to the Board for further discussion and consideration. Issues NCWAS ultimately takes on, or actions regarding them that may materially affect the organization, must be approved by the Board.

The Conservation Chair and Issue Leads are implementers of policy, not policy makers. Issue Leads must understand their relationship to the Conservation Committee, and the Conservation Chair likewise to the Board. Both must keep upline entities fully informed and seek approval to act when required.

**A Decision Flow Example Explaining Conservation Committee authority:**

The Conservation Chair has kept the Board fully informed of our involvement with the Icicle Water Management Strategy and our intent to submit NCWAS comment on the Draft Programmatic EIS. Given this, the Conservation Committee has authority to draft and submit NCWAS input to the process. However, if at some point the Conservation Committee felt NCWAS might want to take legal action on the matter, it would need to be brought before the Board for consideration and a final decision.