

## Chelan County's Lake Wenatchee: A Washington Shoreline of Statewide Significance



Washington State identifies Lake Wenatchee as a Shoreline of Statewide Significance. Until 2018, the Lake Wenatchee shoreline was designated "Conservancy" that protects water purity and non-degraded ecological functions. This level of protection should be returned as the current low level of recreation intensity and access to scenic resources has an inherent high value for people who own property, use public lands, as well as fish and wildlife. The Washington state legislature mandates in RCW 173-26-201 that county shoreline designations make sure there is no net loss of ecological functions.

Western Grebe at Lake Wenatchee



Common Merganser at Lake Wenatchee



Lake Wenatchee is home to several Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Priority Habitats, including Freshwater Wetlands and Fresh Deep Water. WDFW designated it as a Biodiversity Corridor that facilitates the seasonal migration of water birds and songbirds.

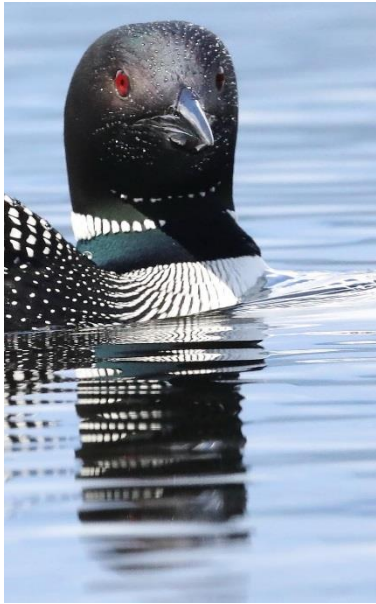
Lake Wenatchee is home to WDFW Priority Species including Trumpeter Swan, Common Loon, Western Grebe, Great Blue Heron, and Vaux's Swift. Bald Eagles and Osprey nest here.

Lake Wenatchee is home to several WDFW Priority Cavity-nesting ducks including mergansers and goldeneyes who rear young on the lake. The adjacent forest are habitat for WDFW Priority species: Pileated Woodpecker, White-headed Woodpecker,

All photos taken at Lake Wenatchee by Tim Gallagher and Susan Ballinger during citizen science monthly monitoring visits, as part of the USFS Upper Basin Birders Project, administered by the USFS.

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### Common Loon at Lake Wenatchee



The ecological services provided by riparian vegetation is increasingly important during this time of increasing length of fire seasons, increasing average temperatures, and warmer stream temperatures. Riparian vegetation shades and cools streams, prevents bank erosion and during floods, slows and disperses the energy of floodwaters. Reduction of riparian vegetation buffers resulted in increased non-point source pollution runoff, bank failure, warmer stream temperatures, and reduced nesting, rearing, feeding, and cover habitat for aquatic and upland wildlife, including birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and aquatic macroinvertebrates like freshwater mussels and insects. Reduction of native riparian plants along waterways makes way for non-native plants to invade, reducing biodiversity for both plants and wildlife.

### View from state park beach to private land riparian buffer



Lake Wenatchee is home to three Priority Fish Species: Bull Trout, Sockeye Salmon, and Chinook Salmon. In the past 20 years, over 55 million taxpayer dollars have been spent protecting and restoring salmon habitat in Chelan County. The 2018 reduction in shoreline protections for trees and shrubs across the county is counterproductive to recovery efforts and jeopardizes the public investment made to date.

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