



## Morning Star Trails Planning



# Trails Planning for Morning Star Conservation Area

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is beginning a trails planning process for the Morning Star Natural Resources Conservation Area (NRCA). In collaboration with local governments, recreational users and other interested parties, DNR will create a sustainable trails plan for low-impact recreational opportunities and facilities in the conservation area.



The existing trail network within Morning Star will be evaluated with respect for traditional and cultural use, renovation and/or potential expansion, and desired hiking, backcountry camping, scenic vistas and viewpoints. These will be prioritized for future project development. Emphasis will focus on the restoration of current impacts to environmentally sensitive areas and redevelopment of existing popular trails.

### **Morning Star Conservation Area**

The 36,037-acre mountainous conservation area protects outstanding examples of native plant communities and other ecological features, such as subalpine meadows, wetlands, and lakes. Six plant species rare to Washington state occur within these habitats. The site is also large enough to provide important habitat for threatened and endangered wide-ranging wildlife such as Pacific fisher, grizzly bear, and gray wolf. The conservation area protects the middle and high elevations around the Spada Lake basin, which captures warm moist air as it moves inland from Puget Sound and the Pacific Ocean to create one of the wettest areas in the North Cascade Mountains. High precipitation and cool temperatures cause subalpine plant communities to occur at unusually low elevations in this region.



Among the many conservation features in this mid-elevation and subalpine forest landscape are: forest plant assemblages, wetland and bog systems, one state-threatened plant species, five state-sensitive plant species, and habitat for marbled murrelet, northern spotted owl, Pacific fisher, and bull trout.

### **Public Planning Process**

DNR will form a public trail planning committee that will work with DNR to develop priorities for the trails plan. Committee meetings are expected to occur periodically for about a year starting early in 2017 and a trails plan should be finalized in 2018.



### **Get Involved**

To learn more and to be added to our email contact list, please contact David Way 360-333-5741 or [david.way@dnr.wa.gov](mailto:david.way@dnr.wa.gov).



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