



Proposed Boundary for Trombetta Canyon NAP

ISOLATED LIMESTONE CLIFFS
SHELTER RARE PLANT SPECIES



The Natural Areas Program of the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is proposing to establish the Trombetta Canyon Natural Area Preserve (NAP) in Stevens County. The site is located about 2 miles south of the Town of Northport.

If the Commissioner of Public Lands approves the natural area boundary, the land within the boundary—when acquired—will become a part of the natural area preserve.

The ecological importance of the Proposed Trombetta Canyon NAP

The limestone cliffs of Trombetta Canyon provide habitat for two rare plant species and other limestone-dependent species of interest for conservation. The site includes extensive scrub-shrub and emergent wetlands at its lower end, providing habitat for a third rare plant. Trombetta Canyon is isolated from disturbance by its location and topography, and offers protected habitat for a variety of other organisms—particularly those that may be adapted to limestone substrates.

The proposed boundary for the Trombetta Canyon NAP takes in the limestone cliffs and other areas immediately adjacent to the natural area that add to the conservation values of the site. Currently, many of the lands within the proposed “boundary” are Common School Trust lands, managed by DNR. Lands inside this proposed boundary will not be a part of the natural area until they are acquired from willing sellers at market value, or transferred out of state trust ownership through the state Trust Land Transfer Program. Privately owned lands within the proposed boundary would be acquired at a later time, typically using state-administered grant funds.

The trust land transfer process

DNR manages 3 million acres of state trust lands for specific named beneficiaries. About 1.8 million acres are Common School Trust land, managed to earn revenue to build kindergarten through 12th grade public schools statewide. Not all of these lands are best suited for income production. Some have higher values for ecological or recreational qualities important to the entire state. The Trust Land Transfer Program presents an opportunity to retain these special lands in public ownership and protect these ecological and other values. Replacement properties with higher potential for long-term economic benefits are acquired for the trusts.

Based on a list of site recommendations provided by DNR, the Washington State Legislature considers, approves and funds the transfer of specific parcels. The parcels are then appraised for their timber and land values, and the cash value of the un-harvested timber is deposited into the Common School construction fund. The value of the land is deposited into a land replacement account, which is used to buy replacement trust land with higher long-term income potential.

Potential impacts to private landowners

A proposed natural area boundary is a designation of lands eligible for inclusion within a state-owned natural area. Lands located within the boundary only become part of the natural area if they are acquired by DNR. The boundary is simply an administrative tool to indicate where DNR will work with willing property owners to create the natural area. A proposed natural area boundary imposes no change in land use zoning, development code requirements, or any other restrictions on landowners. Land is purchased only from willing sellers at market value, which is determined by an independent, third-party appraisal.

Public participation in establishing the site

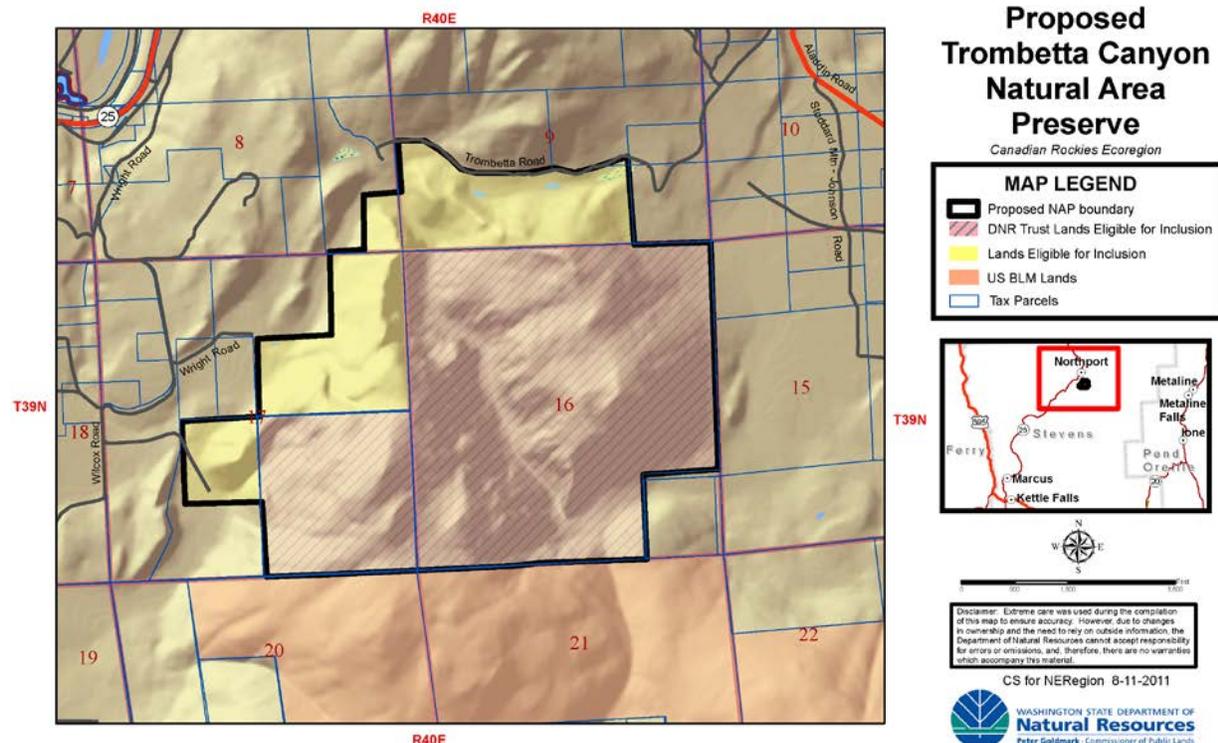
DNR welcomes information and ideas from the public about the establishing a natural area and its boundary. Public comments will be received at a boundary hearing. Written comments also will be accepted throughout the public review process. All public comments become part of the record in the department's development of a recommendation for designation of the natural area preserve. The Commissioner of Public Lands takes these comments into consideration when evaluating whether to move forward with establishing a natural area.

DNR's natural areas

Conserving Washington's native species and ecosystems, today and for future generations

DNR manages 54 natural area preserves (NAPs) and 31 NRCAs on more than 144,000 acres statewide. NAPs protect high-quality examples of native ecosystems and rare plant and animal species. NAPs serve as genetic reserves for Washington's native species and as reference sites for comparing natural and altered environments.

NRCAs protect lands having high conservation values for ecological systems, scenic qualities, wildlife habitat and low-impact recreational opportunities. Environmental education and approved research projects occur on both NAPs and NRCAs.



Note: A downloadable image is available on the DNR website; search for "Natural Area Program," in the right side document links