

# PACIFIC LAMPREY CONSERVATION INITIATIVE

## STRATEGIC PLAN (2026-2031)



*Adopted by the PLCI Steering Committee April 2026*

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## I. BACKGROUND

The Pacific Lamprey Conservation Initiative (PLCI) was initiated in 2008 (and formalized in 2012) as a partnership of Native American tribes, federal, state, local agencies, and non-governmental organizations to coordinate and support conservation, restoration, and research to improve the status of Pacific Lamprey throughout the West Coast of the US. The mission of PLCI is to achieve long-term persistence of Pacific Lamprey and support traditional cultural use of this species throughout their historical range.

PLCI’s partnership-driven strategy to improve the status of Pacific Lamprey is guided by (1) a Conservation Agreement affirming a cooperative commitment by partners<sup>1</sup> to leverage organizational resources to conserve the species, (2) a Pacific Lamprey Assessment to identify the status of the species and to prioritize research, data collection, and conservation actions throughout its range, and (3) Regional Implementation Plans (RIPs) developed at the Regional Management Unit (RMU; Figure 1) level to identify regional differences in Pacific Lamprey populations, threats, and conservation priorities.

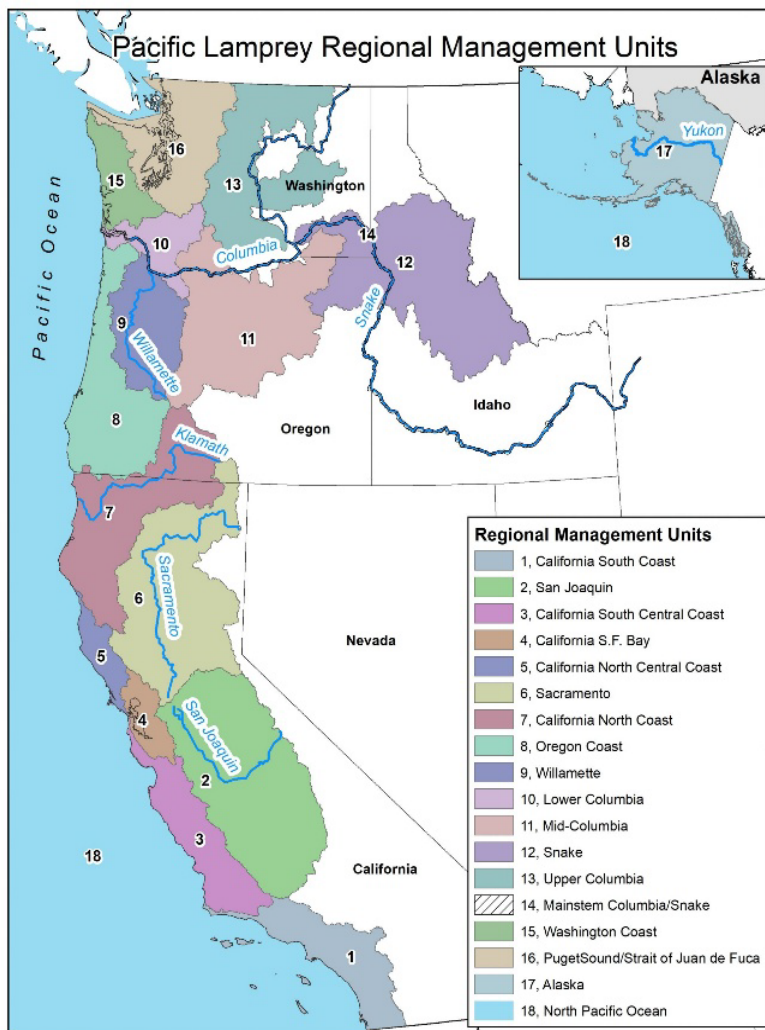


Figure 1. Map of the 18 Pacific Lamprey Regional Management Units.

PLCI is supported by the Bonneville Power Administration’s (BPA) Columbia River Basin Project and the US Fish & Wildlife Service’s National Fish Habitat Partnership (NFHP). These programs provide funding to projects that address conservation and research priorities and/or mitigate threats to Pacific Lamprey as identified in the Conservation Agreement, the Pacific Lamprey Assessment, and the RIPs. From 2018-2025, BPA funded 50 research, conservation, and restoration projects in the Columbia River Basin. PLCI was recognized by NFHP in 2016 and became a congressionally designated Fish Habitat Partnership in 2024, which enables access

<sup>1</sup> PLCI partners include organizations that signed the Conservation Agreement (signatories), organizations that provided a letter of support for the Conservation Agreement (supporters), and organizations and individuals who participate in PLCI but have not signed the Conservation Agreement (participants).

to annual funding for PLCI's coordinator, in addition to funding for successful project proposals. From 2018-2025 NFHP funded 22 projects throughout the US West Coast.

In 2025, PLCI's coordinator and Steering Committee recognized that the growing complexity of PLCI operations and a desire to remain resilient and adaptive required the development of a five-year strategic plan. This strategic plan will ensure PLCI continues to successfully coordinate funding opportunities, facilitate partnership actions, and develop communications in line with PLCI's mission.

This strategic plan will inform the Steering Committee's development of annual workplans and actions over the next five years. Annual workplan development and evaluations will provide an opportunity for PLCI partners to provide feedback on actions completed to date and to prioritize actions for the following year.

## II. GOALS AND STRATEGIES

### GOALS

PLCI partners envision a future where threats to Pacific Lamprey, native lampreys, and their habitats are greatly reduced, and the historical geographic range and ecological role of Pacific Lamprey are restored. Over the next five years, PLCI aims to:

1. Collaboratively conserve and restore lamprey populations and their habitats throughout their historical range, acting with urgency to achieve viable, self-sustaining, harvestable numbers that contribute to healthy ecosystems.
2. Ensure PLCI is collaborative, adaptive, resilient, and effective in supporting on-the-ground conservation, restoration, and research for Pacific Lamprey.
3. Increase awareness of PLCI and its history, actions, resources, and opportunities.

### STRATEGIES

PLCI's strategies fall into six categories that demonstrate the key functions of PLCI.

- A. Funding: Facilitate funding for projects that address threats and conserve Pacific Lamprey and other native lamprey populations, advance or achieve PLCI's goals, and meet Conservation Agreement objectives.
- B. Conservation and Restoration Actions: Facilitate and invigorate collaborations to address threats and implement conservation and restoration actions for Pacific Lamprey and other native lamprey populations across their current and historical distributions.
- C. Technical Guidance: Identify and leverage partner expertise and knowledge to develop and provide accessible data and guidance for practitioners, permittees, and policymakers on how to advance the conservation and restoration of lamprey in their work.
- D. Operations: Maintain and strengthen an adaptive and resilient organizational structure and processes, informed by the Conservation Agreement, operating guidelines, and partner feedback.

- E. Outreach: Tell the story of PLCI, communicate the cultural and ecological importance of native lampreys, and share PLCI products and opportunities to conserve and restore these species.
- F. Engagement: Welcome and provide opportunities for diverse organizations and individuals to engage with PLCI.

### III. OBJECTIVES

PLCI presents a suite of objectives for each strategy to ensure our efforts remain consistent with the key functions of PLCI, capitalize on our strengths, and address our weaknesses.

Annual workplans will include individual, prioritized actions for PLCI to take to achieve these objectives, and ultimately, our goals.

#### A. FUNDING

***Facilitate funding for projects that address threats and conserve Pacific Lamprey and other native lamprey populations, advance or achieve PLCI's goals, and meet Conservation Agreement objectives.***

1. Facilitate annual funding opportunities with the Bonneville Power Administration.
2. Facilitate annual funding opportunities with the National Fish Habitat Partnership.
3. Ensure PLCI-facilitated funding is appropriately and strategically distributed throughout PLCI's RMUs.
  - a. Identify RMUs that have not received funding and/or focused/targeted efforts and work with local partners to identify and address impediments to project implementation.
4. Explore additional funding opportunities to support Pacific Lamprey and other native lamprey conservation, restoration, research, monitoring and evaluation, and education and outreach projects.

#### B. CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION ACTIONS

***Facilitate and invigorate collaborations to address threats and implement conservation and restoration actions for Pacific Lamprey and other native lamprey populations across their current and historical distributions.***

1. Develop conservation and restoration success metrics to better understand, evaluate, and prioritize Pacific Lamprey and other native lamprey conservation and restoration efforts (e.g., abundance-based goals, lamprey passage standards)
2. Advance and support local, targeted conservation and restoration efforts to restore Pacific Lamprey populations, including stop-gap measures where necessary.
3. Identify and address knowledge gaps and impediments to project implementation.
4. Track ongoing PLCI-funded conservation and restoration projects and action-ready projects.
5. Explore the potential to incorporate conservation and restoration efforts for other native lamprey species into the PLCI framework.

## C. TECHNICAL GUIDANCE

***Identify and leverage partner expertise and knowledge to develop and provide accessible data and guidance for practitioners, permitters, and policymakers on how to advance the conservation and restoration of lamprey in their work.***

1. Coordinate with partner organizations to incorporate lamprey data collection into field protocols.
2. Develop regionally relevant guidance and provide training on incorporating best management guidelines to address and mitigate threats to Pacific Lamprey and other native lampreys (e.g., passage improvements) into restoration, permitting, and in-water work.
3. Ensure PLCI tools and resources are readily available and accessible.
4. Develop and support a centralized location to collect and share lamprey data (e.g., distribution data, habitat improvements, conservation metrics, etc.).
5. Develop, update, and provide access to comprehensive identification guides for native lampreys along the Pacific West Coast.

## D. OPERATIONS

***Maintain and strengthen an adaptive and resilient organizational structure and processes, informed by the Conservation Agreement, operating guidelines, and partner feedback.***

1. Affirm stakeholder and partner support for the Conservation Agreement every 5 years (the next iteration will be in 2027).
  - a. Secure support from existing signatories and supporters.
  - b. Expand support for PLCI to include additional signatories and supporters that can contribute to conserving and restoring Pacific Lamprey and native lamprey populations.
2. Collaborate with partners to complete a Lamprey Assessment every 5 years (the next iteration will be in 2027).
3. Ensure RMUs support ongoing regional activities.
  - a. Each RMU has an active and engaged Lead or Co-Leads.
  - b. Each RMU meets annually to discuss ongoing regional work and identifies new threats, knowledge gaps, conservation needs, and action-ready projects.
  - c. Each RMU updates a RIP every 1-2 years to reflect current conditions.
4. Update PLCI operating guidelines on an as needed basis to reflect new and/or changing operational structures, procedures, and policies.
5. Ensure PLCI committees are effective and collaborative.
  - a. Ensure committee membership represents the knowledge, expertise, and geography necessary to conduct our work
  - b. Ensure each committee meets at least once annually.
  - c. Improve connections between the Conservation Team (practitioners), the Lamprey Technical Workgroup (practitioners), and the Policy Committee (policymakers).

6. Encourage PLCI member and supporter participation, as appropriate, in interagency working groups (local, state, tribal, federal) that have leverage to prioritize, increase funding for, and implement regionally relevant best practices for lamprey conservation.
7. Maintain a productive relationship with the National Fish Habitat Partnership.
  - a. Submit an annual report noting accomplishments, project updates, and annual funding requests.
  - b. Attend National Fish Habitat Partnership Coordinator and Board meetings.
8. Maintain an accessible file sharing system for PLCI Leadership (Coordinator, Co-Chairs, Steering Committee) and the Leads/Co-Leads of the RMUs and Lamprey Technical Workgroup Subgroups.
9. Explore the need and processes to build PLCI's capacity via additional lamprey-focused positions to further advance PLCI's strategic and conservation goals (e.g., lamprey implementation tracking system, tribal engagement coordinator, research coordinator).

## E. OUTREACH

***Tell the story of PLCI, communicate the cultural and ecological importance of native lampreys, and share PLCI products and opportunities to conserve and restore these species.***

1. Host annual Lamprey Information Exchanges that are accessible for all partners and interested persons.
2. Host a Lamprey Summit every 5 years that includes policy-level discussions (next Summit will be in 2027).
3. Support knowledge sharing among partners, including Tribal Nations, Indigenous peoples, and Alaska Natives, throughout the U.S. West Coast.
4. Participate in non-PLCI symposia and conferences to share lamprey research, ongoing work, and conservation successes.
5. Develop a communications plan in coordination with the Lamprey Technical Workgroup Outreach Subgroup that identifies target audiences and key messages.
  - a. Identify and address outreach gaps.
  - b. Develop a suite of engaging outreach materials for practitioners and the public (e.g., fact sheets, infographics, videos, etc.).
6. Host a series of workshops and/or webinars aimed at improving awareness of the cultural and ecological importance of lampreys, ongoing PLCI and partner work, and research.
  - a. Target audiences include, but are not limited to, restoration practitioners, permittees, community science networks, and youth groups.
7. Engage with community science networks to harness data collection efforts.

## F. ENGAGEMENT

***Welcome and provide opportunities for diverse organizations and individuals to engage with PLCI.***

1. Expand PLCI involvement throughout the historical distribution of Pacific Lamprey.

2. Engage biologists, engineers, and other natural resource professionals that focus on lamprey-adjacent species and habitats (e.g., freshwater mussels, Pacific salmon) to advance awareness of native lampreys and include lamprey considerations in their work.
3. Improve PLCI’s relationship with academic institutions, young professional organizations, and community science networks to advance awareness of native lampreys.

## APPENDIX 1 – OPERATING GUIDELINES

PLCI’s operating guidelines will be included in this strategic plan following a comprehensive evaluation and update process to be completed by the end of 2026.

## APPENDIX 2 – ADDITIONAL IDENTIFIED OBJECTIVES

Appendix 2 is a repository of objectives identified by PLCI’s Steering Committee, Conservation Team, and/or Policy Committee that were (1) determined to not be a priority for 2026-2031 or (2) identified following the adoption of the 2026-2031 strategic plan as objectives to consider for the next strategic plan term (2032-2037). Objectives can be recategorized as a priority for the 2026-2031 strategic plan by the Steering Committee during annual workplan development. This list will be reviewed when the Strategic Plan is revised every five years.

A. Operations	Date Added/Notes
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B. Funding	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [text]</li> <li>• [text]</li> </ul>	
C. Conservation Actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [text]</li> <li>• [text]</li> </ul>	
D. Technical Guidance	
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F. Engagement	
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