FOREST LANDOWNERS PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

Two decades ago forest landowners in Washington helped pass landmark legislation that put their commitment to environmental stewardship into state law.

With the help of the Forests & Fish Law, forest landowners provide cool, clean water for fish and habitat for hundreds of animal species.

Washington foresters leave buffers of trees and vegetation along streams to provide shade and clean water to fish. They replace culverts to ensure salmon can return to spawn, and they protect habitat for other wildlife to thrive.

Foresters protect the environment using only the latest scientific research. Through a process called adaptive management, Washington forest landowners use the best available science to manage the complex ecosystems on their land.

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The U.S. Supreme Court recently ruled that the state of Washington must replace hundreds of road culverts that block salmon passage. But forest landowners in Washington have been leaders in replacing the culverts for nearly two decades.

As part of the Forests & Fish Law, Washington forest landowners have removed 7,900 fish passage barriers across 9.3 million acres, between 2001 and 2018. They have spent $314 million opening up 5,200 miles of fish habitat. These landowners are nearly done with their goal and are on track to clear all the fish passage barriers in Washington's forested streams by 2021.

The habitat improvements mean salmon are returning, and forest landowners are making a long-term investment in the future of the state’s natural resources.