

Carri LeRoy, Evergreen State College

"Bringing science and nature into prisons: The Sustainability in Prisons Project"

The Sustainability in Prisons Project (SPP) is a novel collaboration between correctional facilities and college campuses. Its core partnership was founded by the Washington State Department of Corrections and The Evergreen State College in Washington State, but its model is expanding across the country and to other continents. The mission of SPP is to bring science and nature into prisons through conducting ecological research and conserving biodiversity by forging collaborations with scientists, inmates, prison staff, students, and community partners. Another major goal of the SPP is to help reduce the environmental, economic, and human costs of prisons by inspiring and informing sustainable practices. Currently, inmates are involved in rearing federally endangered Taylor's checkerspot butterflies, WA state-endangered Oregon spotted frogs, caring for WA state-endangered western pond turtles, and propagating over 50 species of rare and endangered prairie plants. With each endangered species project, inmates are involved in several research projects that inform ecologists and conservation biologists working with the species.

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