Is my property a viable site for pond turtle recovery?

General considerations:
1. The site needs to support hundreds of turtles
2. The site will likely require regular and on-going habitat management to maintain suitable habitat for the pond turtles
3. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) will need a guarantee that biologists have access to the property whenever necessary and in perpetuity

Recovery site requirements (not a complete list)
1. The site must be within the recovery zone.
   The recovery zones are highlighted in Fig. 6, page 36, of the Washington State Recovery Plan for the Western Pond Turtle
2. Elevation below 300 m
3. Preferred upland habitat is prairie and open forests. Examples include South Sound prairies, Oak woodlands, Oak-pine woodlands. Pasture may be suitable in some cases.
4. Preferred aquatic habitat is a wetland complex that includes multiple bodies of water with some that are permanent in most years.
5. The occupied area needs to be isolated by at least 1/4 mile from primary/secondary roads and urban centers.

Important site features
- Upland habitat that includes open grassy areas interspersed with deciduous trees and shrubs
- Abundant emergent basking logs (or potential to add)
- Aquatic water bodies with emergent vegetation and mud bottoms
- Abundant invertebrate prey
- No bullfrogs or predatory game fish (e.g., bass) or the ability to remove these predators before introduction of pond turtles

How do I report a Western pond turtle?

How to report a Western pond turtle
1. Photograph the turtle, including
   - Top of the turtle (carapace)
   - Bottom of the turtle (plastron)
   - Side of the turtle
   - Head
2. Send the photographs along with a description of the location where the turtle was observed to WILDTHING@dfw.wa.gov

It is not a Western pond turtle if it:
- has any red or yellow markings on the shell, head or limbs
- has a lower shell that only partially covers the body
- has a leathery flat shell without hard scales (i.e., scutes) and a snorkel-like nose
- can completely close its shell to protect its head and legs
- has a neck that bends sideways when it pulls its head into the shell
- has stump-like legs
- is aggressive (i.e., tries to bite when approached)