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Advancing Monitoring Infrastructure for Oregon's Native Freshwater Turtles with Citizen Science Platforms

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2021

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Monitoring is a core component of conservation plans as well as an opportunity for local stakeholders to contribute. Our objective was to advance monitoring infrastructure for the protection of native, threatened freshwater turtles in the Pacific Northwest through the creation of a citizen science application. This was done by researching previous designs of citizen science projects over the past ten years and improving the platform based on recommendations by practitioners. Current platforms can be improved by better crediting the work of citizen scientists, improving communication between scientists and users, building in flexibility for scientists, and accommodating for disabilities through ergonomic design. This set the framework to design and build a new multi-platform monitoring application. The final product is a mobile and web application that embodies these concepts and is ready for user-testing in the summer, providing scientists with critical data to help monitor multiple species of conservation concern, while engaging the public in this important task.

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