Introduction

I'm Mike Schwartz.

I'm the director of the National Genomic Center for Wildlife and Fish Conservation.

My general field of research is using DNA based tools and often times these are tools

that we take from human genome project, from human medicine, and we're taking these tools

and we're applying them to wildlife and fish populations.

What is your research

So, that means we're looking at the DNA of an organism to try to understand something

about its population size, about connectivity among populations,

or about the genetic health of a population.

And we're learning things that you couldn't learn by just watching an animal,

or by putting a radio collar on an animal.

These are things about, either contemporary things about the animal

or historic things about animal populations.

So we can look at genes as they're spread all throughout a landscape and look

at how they connect to one another.

And from that, we can make inferences as to where animals will be moving,

and what areas are really important for connectivity on a landscape.

And so, one of my favorite accomplishments that comes out of our lab,

is that when we can provide maps to natural resource managers, so they can make decisions

about where to protect specific locations of land.

What are your favorite accomplishments

I think the best part of this work is the fact that we work for a natural resource agency.

And that means that our data, data that we collect, doesn't just go on a shelf

and gather dust, it gets used by managers.

Not only that, we get to work in incredible teams with people of very diverse skills.

So the team of folks I get to work with every day is just an unbelievable, intellectual yet practical group of people, it's just a very inspiring workplace.