

Northern Spotted Owl

Resource Management Plans for Western Oregon



Background:

The northern spotted owl is an iconic species in the Pacific Northwest of the United States. It holds cultural and ecological significance, and was one of the major influences on the Northwest Forest Plan. Listed under the Endangered Species Act as a threatened species by the Fish and Wildlife Service in 1990, federal and state agencies have been working together protect northern spotted owl habitat.

The BLM is just one agency managing the northern spotted owl. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, state agencies, and private land owners all play important roles in supporting the northern spotted owl's recovery.

Key Points:

- The northern spotted owl population is under severe biological stress in much of western Oregon and has an even chance of being extirpated from the Coast Range within 20 years. This population risk is predominately due to competitive interactions between northern spotted owls and barred owls.
- In the Coast Range, the BLM has no opportunity, through habitat management, to reduce risks to the northern spotted owl during the next 50 years, and there are no substantive

differences among the alternatives and the Proposed RMP in their potential effects on those risks.

- However, under all alternatives and the Proposed RMP, the BLM would contribute to self-sustaining northern spotted owl populations in the eastern and western Cascades, and the Klamath Basin, during the next 50 years.
- The Late-Successional Reserve designs of the alternatives and the Proposed RMP make similar contributions to the development and spacing of the large habitat blocks needed for northern spotted owl conservation. Once necessary lands are reserved, additional lands provide no appreciable benefit to the development or spacing of large habitat blocks.
- The alternatives and the Proposed RMP differ substantively in their contributions to east-west northern spotted owl movement between the Coast Range and western Cascades.
- BLM-administered lands are indispensable—
 - To northern spotted owl reproduction, movement and survival in the Coast Range, and in western and central portions of the Klamath Basin; and
 - In supporting north-south species movement through the Coast Range, and east-west species movement between the Coast Range and western Cascades.
- Implementation of a hypothetical barred owl control program would appreciably improve the northern spotted owl population response under all alternatives and the Proposed RMP in all modeling regions. In the North Coast and Olympic and Oregon Coast modeling regions, a hypothetical barred owl control program would appreciably delay the probability of *de facto* extirpation of northern spotted owl populations.

The Resource Management Plans for Western Oregon will determine how the BLM-administered lands in western Oregon will be managed to produce a sustained yield of timber products, to further the recovery of threatened and endangered species, to provide for clean water, to restore fire-adapted ecosystems, , to provide for recreation opportunities, and to coordinate management of lands surrounding the Coquille Forest with the Coquille Tribe.

For more information, please visit the BLM's Resource Management Plans of western Oregon website at <http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/index.php>