



Federal Owl Plan Leaves Science Behind, Gives No Credit to State & Private Conservation Efforts

Washington Forest Protection Association

724 Columbia Street NW Suite 250 Olympia, WA 98501

(360) 352-1500
www.wfpa.org

Port Blakely Spotted Owl in 2nd growth timber, Ore.



Planting a tree is an investment in the future of forestry. Private landowners plant three trees for every one harvested.



US Fish & Wildlife Finalizing Owl Recovery Plan Without Science and Strategy

- The Pacific Northwest restructured its timber economy around President Clinton's NW Forest Plan. This strategy set-aside Federal forest reserves to recover the owl on more than 24 million acres.
- The 2010 Draft Revised Recovery Plan alters this strategy by, **expanding recovery from federal to all lands**. Called a "**stand alone plan**" it doesn't give credit to state & private conservation efforts.
- The US Fish & Wildlife Service received 11,700 comments on the draft revised plan in December 2010. The Service is now ready to finalize the recovery plan in February 2011, without another public comment period, even while acknowledging that the scientific modeling is incomplete.
- These policy changes are unsound, unscientific and will have dramatic impacts on the economy.

Barred Owl May Make Further Habitat Restrictions Fruitless

"Additional habitat protection, while imposing a substantial economic cost on certain entities, may prove fruitless in the absence of a comprehensive plan to address invasive species such as the barred owl and forest-health issues." (USFWS)

"...the loss of habitat in Washington during the past 10 years is not a likely cause of the higher rate of population decline there, because the rates of habitat loss in Washington are lower than rates elsewhere where owl populations have been stationary." NWFP: The First 10 Years, GTR 651, pg 126

Washington State Owl Rules Complement Existing Federal Recovery Strategy

- Washington's Forest Practices Board worked with the federal government, and adopted consensus-based forest practices rules, designed to complement the Federal recovery strategy. The rule was submitted as an alternative to the USFWS 4(d) rule, to ease restrictions on non-federal land.
- The 4(d) rule met the underlying premise of the NWFP to minimize the social and economic impact from owl conservation. It would have eased restrictions on large areas of non-federal lands outside of ten Special Emphasis Areas (SOSEAs), covering 2.1 million acres. In 1996, the State adopted its rules into law, the USFWS DID NOT, therefore restrictions were never eased.

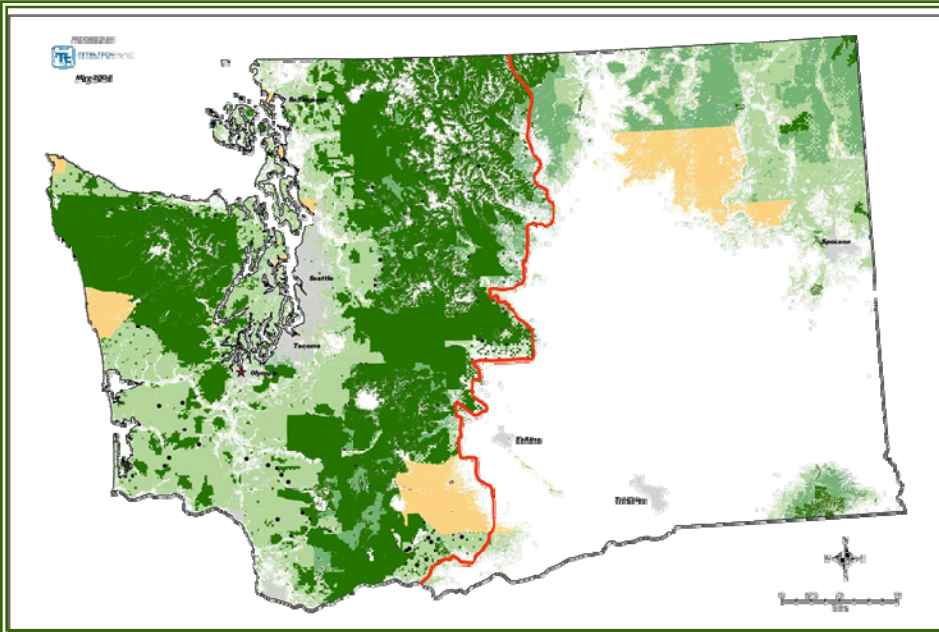
"The State rules mimicked (and were developed in tandem) with our proposed 4(d) Special rule – the State moved forward and we never did." (USFWS)

State/Private Conservation Plans Complement Existing Federal Recovery Strategy

- Voluntary conservation plans now cover approximately 3 million acres across the owl's range in Washington, Oregon & California—2.1 million acres of those are in Washington State.
- Riparian protections in the 2006 Forest Practices Habitat Conservation Plan (FPHCP) covering 9.3 million acres of non-federal forestland, set-aside 764,300 acres of forest, designed to grow into old forest habitat, benefitting the spotted owl and other species.

Learn more: www.northernspottedowl.org

The Building Blocks of Owl Conservation in Washington State — 12.9 million acres of Federal, State, Tribal and Private forestland.



- — Clinton's NW Forest Plan Boundary (3 state total=24.5 mm acres)
- — Federal, state, private forestland w/owl conservation mechanisms
- — Tribal lands contribute to owl conservation

1. The Endangered Species Act protects all owls from "harm or harassment."
2. Federal guidance calls for 2,600—5,900 acres of forestland set-aside per owl pair.
3. State forestry rules add additional owl protection in strategic areas.
4. State and private voluntary conservation plans (CP) contribute to owl protection.

WA Owl Conservation Lands

Landowner	Acres
Federal Government	9,213,026
State & Private CPs	2,118,944
State rules (net SOSEA)	824,584
Tribal lands	513,372
Land exchanges/other	<u>165,605</u>
TOTAL ACRES	12,837,531

Sources:

Jt. Presentation: Forest Practices Board, 8/05
USFWS: Status of CPs in Washington, 6/10

The Barred Owl Overwhelms the Spotted Owl, Even in the Protected Olympia National Park. Of the 922,653 acres in the Park, 755,820 are Forested with 229 Spotted Owls as of 1995.

- 1985** the first barred owl recorded on Olympic Peninsula.
- 1987** 18 barred owls, now extend 25 miles into ONP "needs to be carefully monitored."
- 2001** 31 barred owls, "...appears to be altering the distribution of spotted owls..."
- 2004** 49 barred owls, "Occupancy of spotted owl sites has declined significantly... otherwise suitable spotted owl habitat in ONP is now unavailable to spotted owls for nesting and daytime roosting."
- 2007** 59 barred owls, "Extensive areas of ONP that formerly supported spotted owls now appear to support only barred owls..."
- 2009** "... and competition with this species (barred owl) is now one of the primary threats to the conservation of spotted owls."

Barred Owls



Source:

Olympic National Park Spotted Owl Monitoring Program annual reports.

"As of now, we've found barred owls within a half-mile of 80 percent of the spotted owl sites that we monitor." Spotted owls were found in 19 of the 54 sites we monitor. (Scott Gremel, Wildlife Biologist, 2008)

"In 2005 and 2006, Washington State's Department of Natural Resources conducted surveys in areas it has managed for creation of spotted owl nesting, roosting and foraging habitat since 1995...the area once had 29 spotted owl sites."

In 2005 DNR found only 4 pairs of spotted owls and one single.....and had 150 barred owl detections.
In 2006 DNR found only 3 pairs of spotted owls and four singles.....and had 376 barred owl detections.

Source: June 25, 2010 (USFWS referencing Spencer 2008)