

Marbled Murrelet Conservation Strategy



Photo: Nick Hatch, PNWRS

Washington Department of Natural Resources
Spring 2012

Washington DNR

Manager of state lands

- 2.9 million acres of forested, agricultural, and other trust lands
- 2.6 million acres of aquatic lands
- 144,000 acres of protected natural areas

Core Principles

- Sustainable Stewardship
- Public Interest
- Sound Science



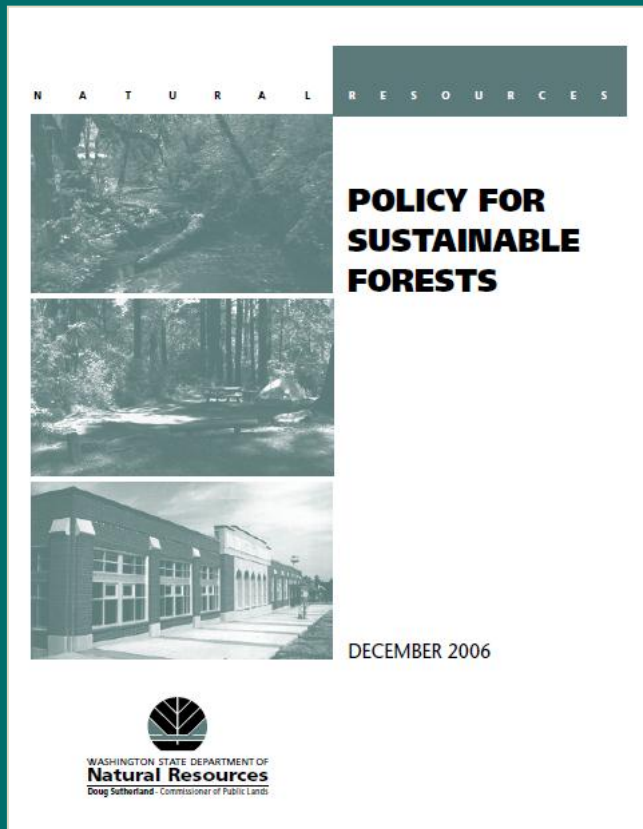
DNR's Trust 'Mandate'

As manager of state trust lands,
DNR has fiduciary responsibilities to:

- Generate revenue and other benefits for each trust, in perpetuity
- Preserve the corpus of the trust
- Exercise reasonable care and skill
- Act prudently to reduce the risk of loss for the trusts
- Maintain undivided loyalty to beneficiaries
- Act impartially with respect to current and future beneficiaries



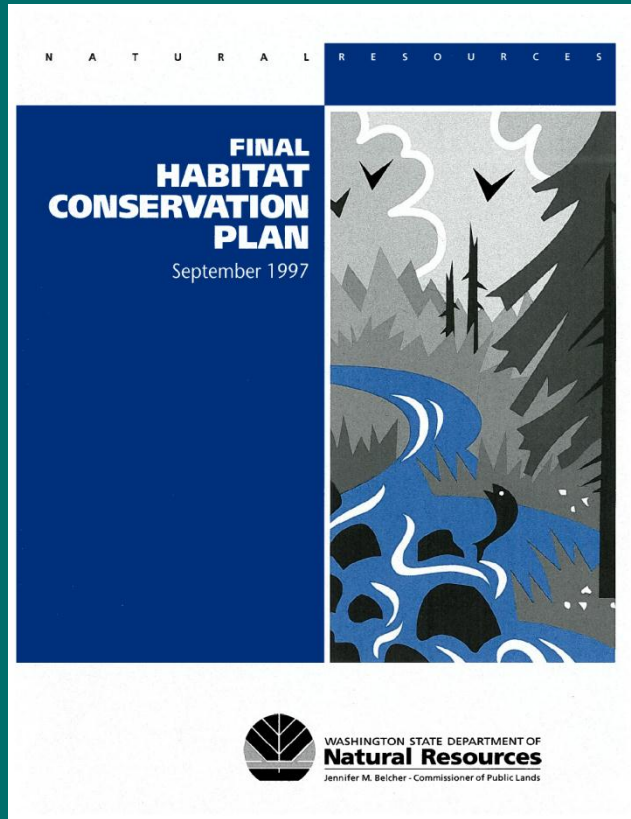
Policy for Sustainable Forests



- Approved in 2006
- Provides broad direction to manage forested state trust lands for the beneficiaries and the people of Washington, today and into the future
- Includes protection of “Old-growth” forest stands and very large diameter, structurally unique trees

1997 Trust Lands

Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)



- 70-year agreement
- Covers 1.8 million acres of forested trust lands and natural areas
- Ensures habitat conservation for multiple species, while allowing management activities, such as timber harvest

1997 Trust Lands

Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)

- 70-year agreement
- Covers 1.8 million acres of forested trust lands and natural areas
- Ensures habitat conservation for multiple species, while allowing management activities, such as timber harvest



1997 Trust Lands

Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)



- 70-year agreement
- Covers 1.8 million acres of forested trust lands and natural areas
- Ensures habitat conservation for multiple species, while allowing management activities, such as timber harvest

1997 Trust Lands

Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)

- Four conservation strategies
 - Marbled Murrelets
 - Northern Spotted Owls
 - Riparian Areas, Wetlands & Salmonids
 - Other Species of Concern & Uncommon Habitats
- When the HCP was signed, there was insufficient information to develop a long-term murrelet strategy



Photo: Hobson



1997 Trust Lands

Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)

The HCP described an interim murrelet strategy:

Step 1. **Defer harvest of suitable habitat**

Step 2. **Conduct “Habitat Relationship Studies”
in each Planning Unit**

Step 3. **Release low quality habitat**

Step 4. **Survey higher quality habitat**

Step 5. **Develop a long-term conservation strategy**



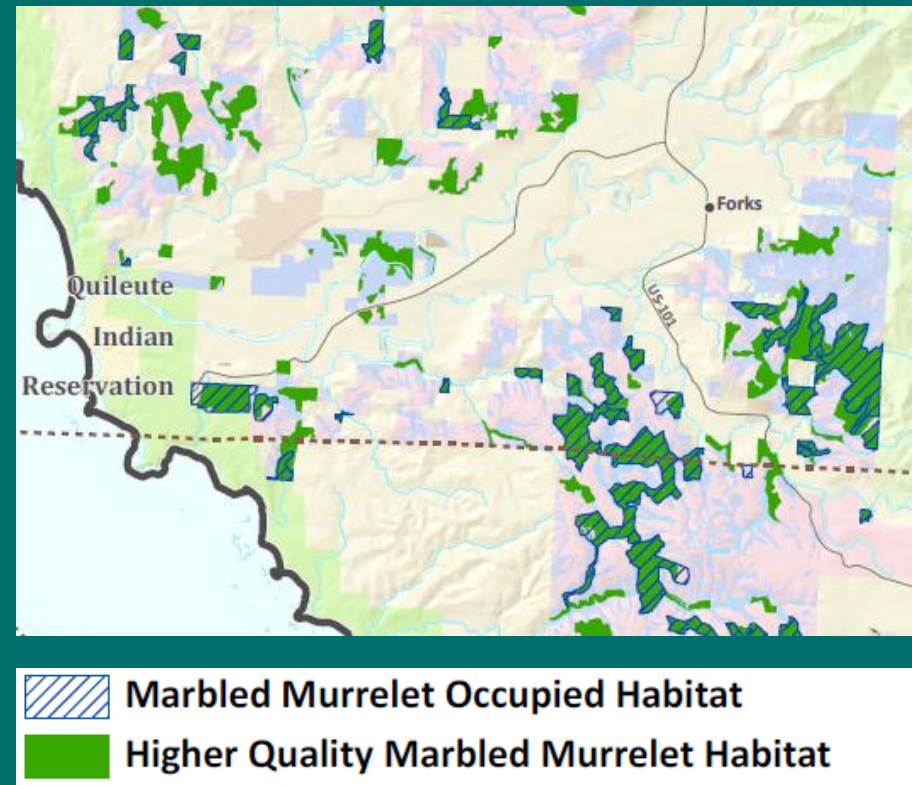
Marbled Murrelet Interim Conservation Strategy

- In four planning units, DNR's habitat models identify 'higher quality habitat' predicted to contain 95% of occupied sites
- 'Higher quality habitat' was surveyed to identify areas 'occupied' by murrelets



Marbled Murrelet Interim Conservation Strategy

- In four planning units, DNR's habitat models identify 'higher quality habitat' predicted to contain 95% of occupied sites
- 'Higher quality habitat' was surveyed to identify areas 'occupied' by murrelets



Marbled Murrelet Interim Conservation Strategy

- In North Puget, DNR's habitat model identifies 'possible habitat'
- In South Puget, we do not have a model
- For both, DNR staff identify 'higher quality habitat' in the field
- Some areas have not been surveyed for occupancy



Marbled Murrelet Interim Conservation Strategy

- In North Puget, DNR's habitat model identifies 'possible habitat'
- In South Puget, we do not have a model
- For both, DNR staff identify 'higher quality habitat' in the field
- Some areas have not been surveyed for occupancy

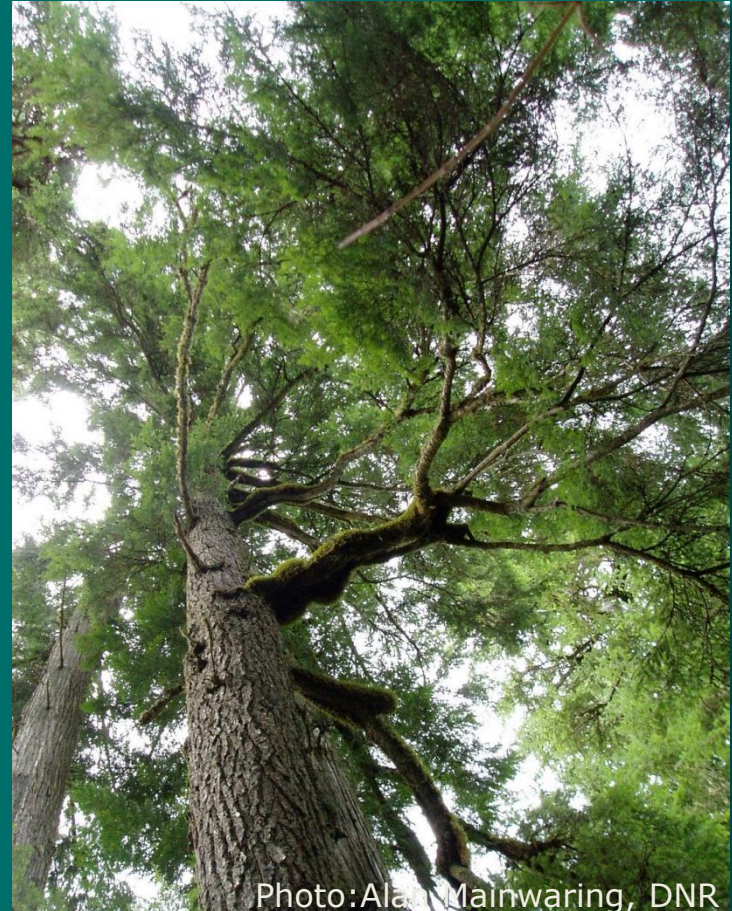
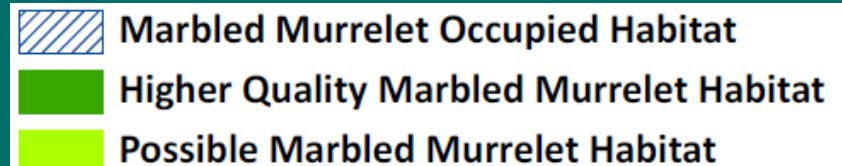
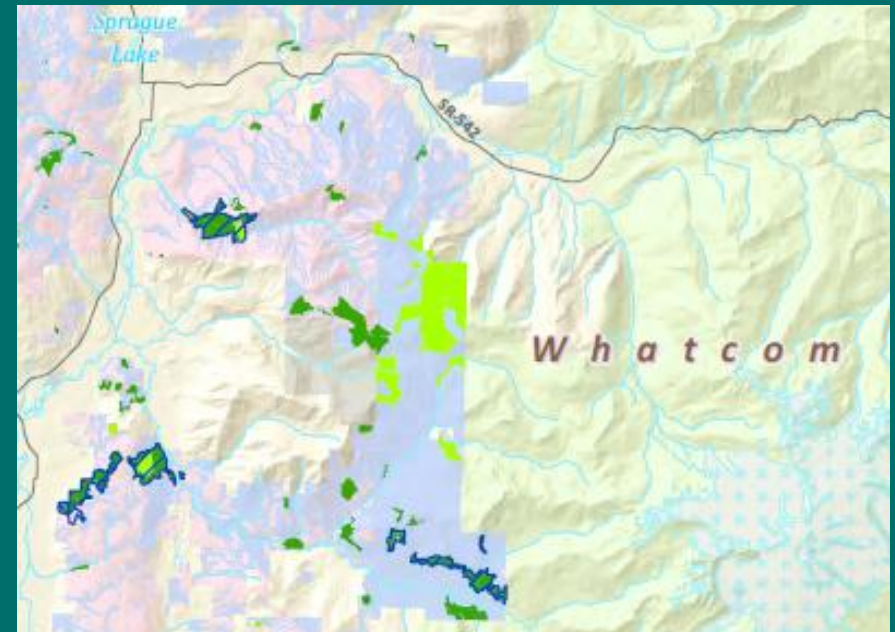


Photo: Alan Mainwaring, DNR

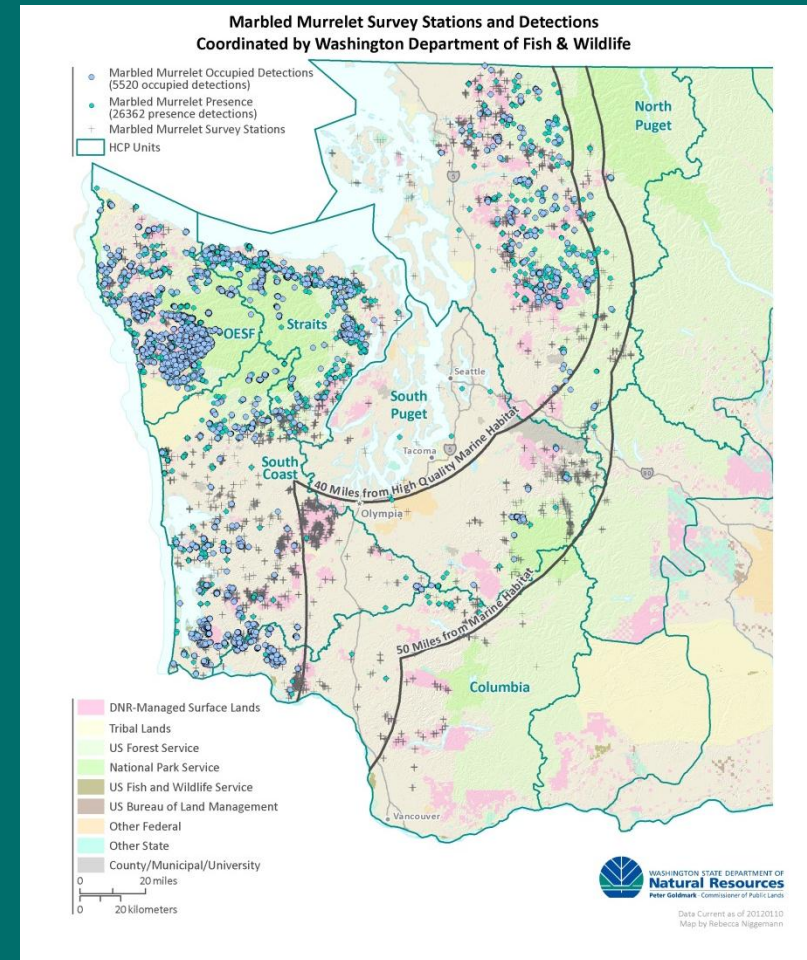
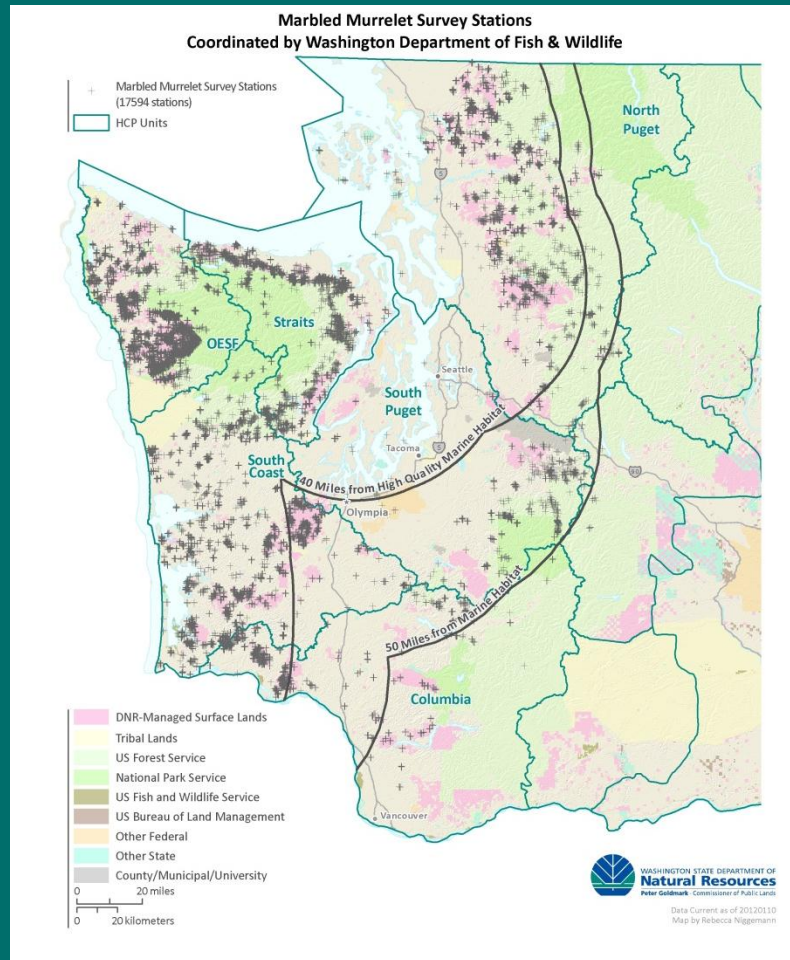
Marbled Murrelet Interim Conservation Strategy

- In North Puget, DNR's habitat model identifies 'possible habitat'
- In South Puget, we do not have a model
- For both, DNR staff identify 'higher quality habitat' in the field
- Some areas have not been surveyed for occupancy



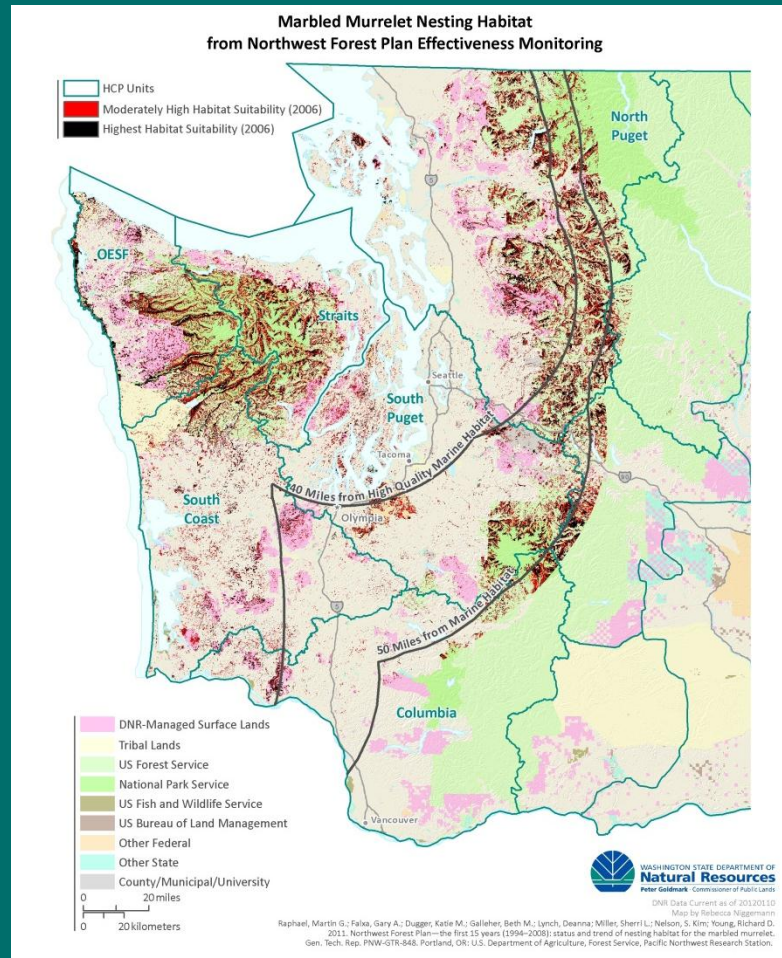
Marbled Murrelet

Other Relevant Data & Information



Marbled Murrelet

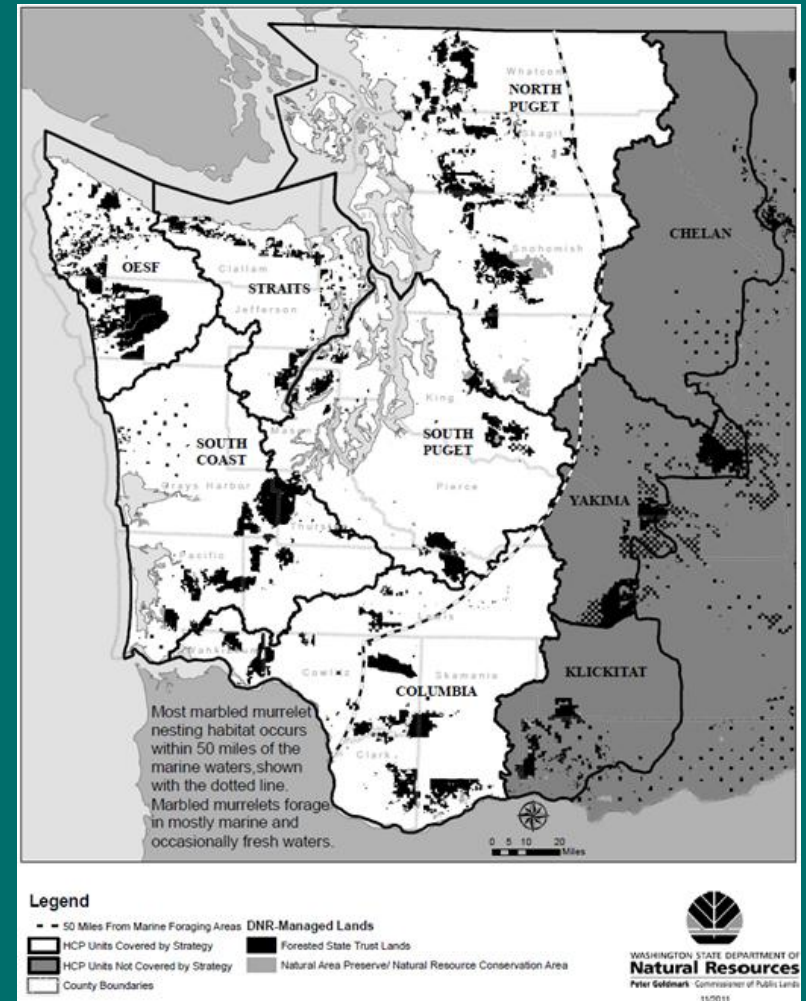
Other Relevant Data & Information



Marbled Murrelet

Proposal for a Long-term Strategy

- Includes six Westside HCP Planning Units
- Forested state lands shown in black
- Dotted line indicates 50 miles from marine habitat, which is the furthest distance from marine waters that murrelets have been seen in Washington



Marbled Murrelet

Proposal for a Long-term Strategy

Need, Purpose and Objectives

- The '*Need*' statement describes why DNR and FWS are pursuing this proposal
- The '*Purpose*' statement describes the overarching vision or goals for the proposal, and
- The '*Objectives*' specify the individual terms that all reasonable management alternatives must meet, in addition to the Need and Purpose



Marbled Murrelet

Proposal for a Long-term Strategy

Need

- To obtain long-term certainty for timber harvest and other management activities on forested state trust lands and to contribute to long-term conservation for the marbled murrelet, consistent with commitments in the 1997 Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)



Marbled Murrelet

Proposal for a Long-term Strategy

Purpose

- To develop a long-term habitat conservation strategy for marbled murrelets on forested state trust lands in the six west-side planning units, subject to the Washington State Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) fiduciary responsibility to the trust beneficiaries as defined by law and USFWS' responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act.



Marbled Murrelet

Proposal for a Long-term Strategy

Objective 1: Trust Mandate

- Generate revenue and other benefits for each trust by meeting DNR's trust responsibilities, including: making trust property productive; preserving the corpus of the trust; exercising reasonable care and skill in managing the trust; acting prudently with respect to trust property; acting with undivided loyalty to trust beneficiaries; and acting impartially with respect to current and future trust beneficiaries.



Marbled Murrelet

Proposal for a Long-term Strategy

Objective 2: Marbled Murrelet Habitat

- Provide forest conditions in strategic locations on forested trust lands that minimize and mitigate incidental take of marbled murrelets resulting from DNR's forest management activities. In accomplishing this objective, we expect to make a significant contribution to maintaining and protecting marbled murrelet populations.



Marbled Murrelet

Proposal for a Long-term Strategy

Objective 3: Active Management

- Promote active, innovative and sustainable management on the forested trust land base.

Objective 4: Operational Flexibility

- Provide flexibility to respond to new information and site specific conditions.

Objective 5: Implementation Certainty

- Adopt feasible, practical and cost effective actions that are likely to be successful and can be sustained throughout the life of the HCP.

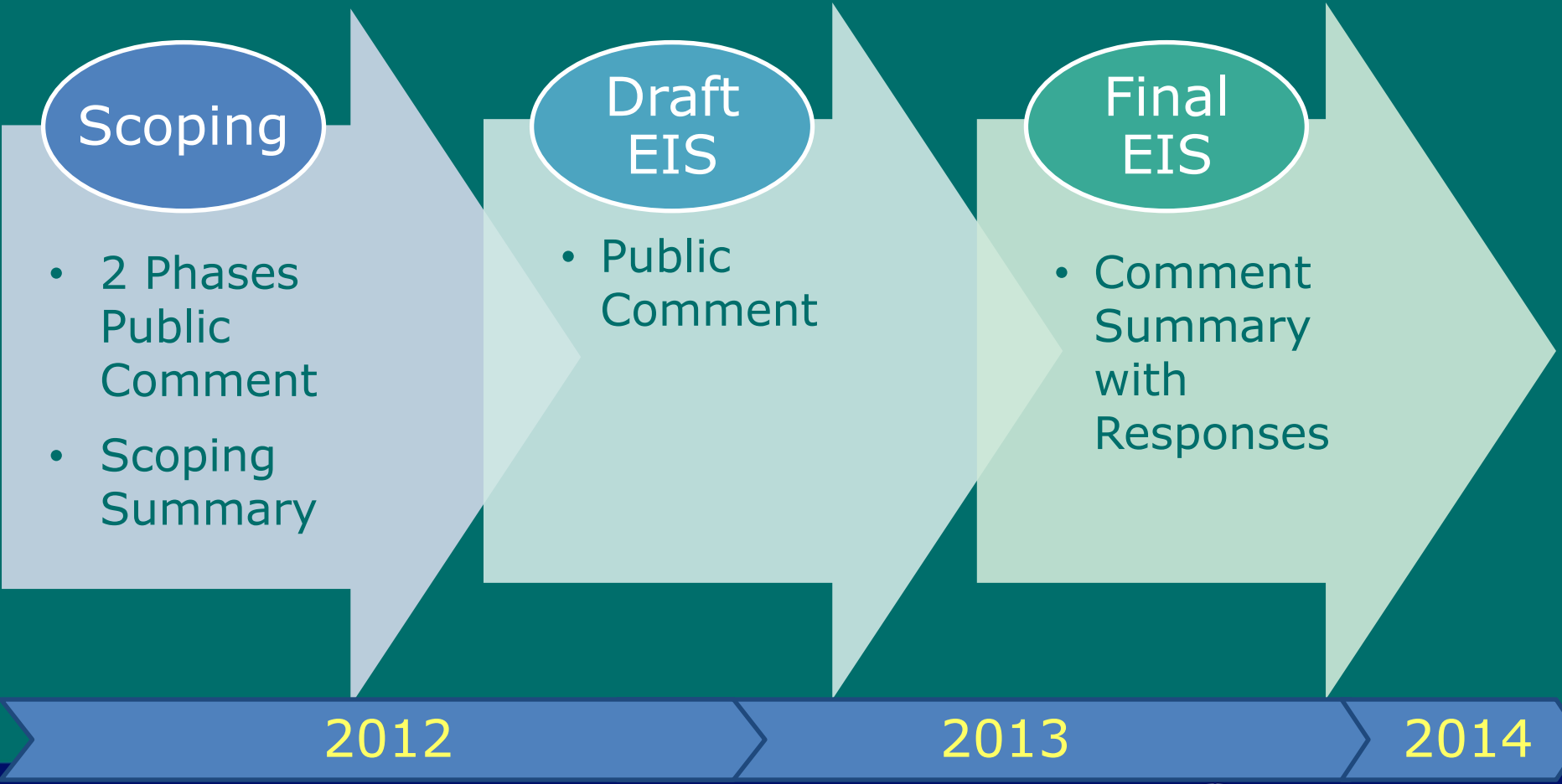


Environmental Review Process

- NEPA Mandate
 - USFWS “agency action” requires review under National Environmental Policy Act
- SEPA mandate
 - DNR “agency action” requires review under State Environmental Policy Act
- Agencies agreed to a combined review and will jointly develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)



Marbled Murrelet Conservation Strategy NEPA/SEPA Joint EIS Process



Marbled Murrelet Conservation Strategy NEPA/SEPA Joint EIS Process

Final EIS

- Comment Summary with Responses

Board of Natural Resources

- Approves conservation strategy

US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Completes Biological Opinion, Findings, Record of Decision

Board of Natural Resources

- Adopts conservation strategy

Environmental Elements

- Ecosystems
- Earth
- Air
- Water
- Plants
- Animals
- Energy and Natural Resources
- Environmental Health
- Land and Shoreline Use
- Historic and Cultural Preservation
- Housing
- Health
- Socio-economics
- Environmental Justice
- Aesthetics
- Light and glare
- Noise
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Public services
- Utilities



Environmental Impacts

- Identifying key environmental issues or impacts will help us focus our analysis and compare management alternatives
- This programmatic, “non-project” EIS focuses on landscape-level analysis
 - Decisions at this planning level indirectly affect elements of the environment
- We will also look at “cumulative” or additive impacts from other actions, including past, present and foreseeable future projects and plans



Marbled Murrelet Conservation Strategy

Helpful Feedback

- What should we consider in the scope of environmental review?
 - Issues and specific impacts to include in analysis
 - Conceptual management alternatives
 - Other mitigation options
- What additional information is available or needed to address key issues and impacts?



Marbled Murrelet Conservation Strategy

Contact Information

- **Scoping Comments:** sepacenter@dnr.wa.gov
- **DNR Marbled Murrelet Strategy:**
Jennifer Arnold, jennifer.arnold@dnr.wa.gov, 360-902-1724
- **NEPA/SEPA Coordinator:**
Annie Szvetecz, annie.szvetecz@dnr.wa.gov, 360-902-1612
- **USFWS/NEPA:**
Mark Ostwald, Mark_Ostwald@fws.gov, 360-753-9564

DNR Website:

<http://1.usa.gov/IkQJri>

USFWS Website:

<http://ecos.fws.gov/speciesProfile/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B08C>



Discussion Stations

1. Marbled murrelet biology and conservation
2. DNR's fiduciary responsibilities as manager of state trust lands
3. Developing a proposal for the Marbled Murrelet Conservation Strategy
4. Environmental review, including NEPA and SEPA

Take a look at the posters and ask questions. Submit written comments here, by email or mail.

