

Barred Owl Removal Study
Safe Harbor Agreement
Western Lane District

Barred Owl Removal Study

- On Green Diamond lands, barred owl removal resulted in rapid recolonization of NSO territories.
- US Fish and Wildlife Service initiated study plan for Oregon and Washington.
- Removal of barred owls in the Oregon Coast Ranges study area near Veneta began in late September.
- Likely effect is that abandoned NSO territories will become active again, once barred owls are gone.

Safe Harbor Agreement

- Reoccupied NSO sites can be an encumbrance to the land manager.
- US Fish and Wildlife Service wants to be able to conduct research.
- Landowners want operational certainty.
- Solution is a Safe Harbor Agreement, a tool for Endangered Species Act compliance.
 - Establishes a "baseline" condition.
 - Provides assurance to land manager that lands can be returned to baseline condition by the end of the agreement.
 - Provides a "net benefit" to the species.

SHA Process - Establishing Baseline Condition

- In this case focuses on specific NSO territories.
- ODF and USFWS used NSO survey data to determine which sites are part of the baseline.
- ODF Salem and Western Lane District staff worked together to negotiate with the Service on baseline sites, and to understand the potential effects of sites on planned management activities.
- Baseline letter received by ODF.
- Work has begun on drafting the SHA.

SHA Process - Draft Agreement Components

- Purpose and Need statement
- List of Covered Species
- Responsibilities of the Parties
- Baseline determination
- Description of the enrolled lands
- Landowner management activities
- Conservation measures
- Assurances to the land manager for take
- Net Conservation Benefit statement
- Any Reporting and Monitoring requirements
- Modifications
- Additional Measures

Conservation Measures and Management Activities

- Conservation Measures include:
 - Granting access for the removal study.
 - Limiting harvest in baseline areas.
 - Seasonal restrictions outside baseline areas, if necessary.
- Management Activities include:
 - Outside baseline areas, normal forest operations with minimal restrictions.
- These activities and measures are still in negotiation.

Net Conservation Benefit

- Net Conservation Benefit describes how the Safe Harbor Agreement will benefit the covered species.
 - Knowledge gained from the study may further conservation strategies for NSO.
 - Baseline NSO sites receive protection for life of SHA.
 - Removal of barred owls allows NSO to return to their home ranges, at least for a time.
 - Cooperative efforts between the Service and non-federal landowners may help spur larger, more “programmatic” solutions to T&E issues.

SHA Process – Application and Approval

- Draft SHA is submitted to the Service as part of application for an “Enhancement of Survival” permit.
 - Similar to “Incidental Take Permit.” Awarded in response to voluntary landowner actions that benefit the covered species.
- The draft SHA is first reviewed internally by the Service and then posted for public comments (30 to 45 days).
- The draft SHA is reconciled against public comments and finalized.
- The SHA is formally adopted by ODF and the Service, and the “Enhancement of Survival Permit” is issued.

Best Interests of the State

- Our fundamental decision is what is in the best interests of the State
 - Service will be conducting the study, so there will be re-occupancy of non-baseline areas that affect Western Lane District.
 - Safe Harbor Agreement is more practical response than standard take avoidance policies.
- Our current negotiations give us:
 - A reasonable baseline under an SHA
 - Reasonable management flexibility for current and planned operations

ODF Safe Harbor - Key Personnel

ODF

- Ole Buch
- Jason Hayzlett
- Nick Palazzotto
- Corey Grinnell

USFWS

- Jody Caicco
- Betsy Glenn
- Rich Szlemp
