

When pressed on the criteria used for uplisting, Director Melcher told us the issue was that of habitat loss. When asked about the desired outcome of the uplisting, Director Melcher told us it was habitat protection. There was no mention of recovery or preventing extinction, just lost habitat.

It is my understanding that the ODFW Commission had six of its seven members present for the February vote and when the vote was called, it was a three – three tie which means the call for uplisting was not upheld. Yet remarkably, after a period of time, another vote was called and this second vote was four – two to uplist. Curious to say the least.

Your own staff report provided to you today states that these birds are difficult to detect, their nests are extremely challenging to find, and there is no efficient and effective method to actually locate nests. At the same time, your staff report says surveys indicate the population trend is likely stable and results for state-wide population trends for Oregon indicate an increase of 1.7% per year from 2000 to 2015. It is imperative that we include a detailed assessment of the social and economic impacts of implementing any conservation measures proposed for the marbled murrelet, especially in light of these details provided in your own staff report.

As we move forward, we must not ignore the most recent science, nor make decisions based on a lack of science. OSU is starting the second year of a ten year study...in the context of a stable and increasing population of marbled murrelet, why should we develop and implement new rules with deleterious social and economic effects for rural coastal counties before we have the results of this study. Given good scientific evidence, our foresters can and do adapt to protections necessary for endangered species. However, placing new restrictions on “possible areas of concern” are not in the best interest of Oregonians.

Thanks so much for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

David Yamamoto
Vice- Chair, Tillamook County Board of Commissioners