



Oregon

Board of Commissioners

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Date: November 7, 2018

To: Oregon Board of Forestry
Attn: Board Members

From: Columbia County Board of Commissioners

The Columbia County Board of Commissioners support the decision of the ODFW Commission not to uplist the Marbled Murrelet from threatened to endangered. We contend that there is insufficient science to allow for establishment of credible survival guidelines. Survival guidelines must be quantifiable and measurable. This is not a realistic goal to achieve in light of the inadequate data currently available on the life cycle, the population, and the nesting habits of the Murrelet.

Current research by Oregon State University, during the last 2 years, is providing increased information on the life cycle of the Marbled Murrelet. This continuing research should reveal a more in-depth look into the life cycle and survival needs of the birds and more fully inform future decision making. We support this continued research and urge the Board of Forestry to request regular updates on this research project.

Over 80% of the land in Columbia County is in timber, with the majority held by private and industrial owners. These lands are managed according to the Forest Practices Act, which currently does not contain any regulation related specifically to the Marbled Murrelet. We encourage great caution in adopting regulations that restrict management of timberland beyond current levels.

We would like to emphasize that in Columbia County many of our best paying, fully benefitted jobs are closely related to forest products. The average annual wage in Columbia County, for private sector jobs, is just over \$37,000. Wages in forestry, wood products manufacturing, and trucking range from \$44-\$58,000 per year, as opposed to tourist sector jobs in Columbia County which pay around \$17,000 per year. These natural resource jobs are essential in our county. The previous loss of natural resource employment in timber and fisheries has been a factor in causing approximately 75% of our working population to have to travel out of the county for employment. Columbia County also has the dubious honor of having the longest job commute time of any county in Oregon. We cannot afford to lose more local employment opportunities.

We urge you to take into consideration the significant negative impacts that rule-making may have on the businesses in the timber counties of Oregon. We request that you postpone any rulemaking directed at the life cycle of the Marbled Murrelet until there is sufficient science available to support the guidelines.