

Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) Stakeholder Forum Survey Results

FORUM DATE - JANUARY 30, 2018 | DOCUMENT DATE - JUNE 29, 2018

INTRODUCTION

The first Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) Stakeholder Forum (Forum) occurred on January 30, 2018. Information about the Forum is located on the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) website at www.wildlife.ca.gov/conservation/timber/NSO-forum. CDFW asked attendees of the Forum to provide feedback by filling out a short survey. The responses to the survey will help inform CDFW's planning efforts for future Forums.

This document is a summary of the survey responses. The views and opinions expressed in this document belong solely to the individuals who responded to the survey and do not represent the views and opinions of CDFW.

The Forum organizers would like to acknowledge the participants of the Forum for providing their knowledge, insights, and requests during the meeting. Coordination and collaboration are a large part of the path to conservation success.

RESPONDENT SUMMARY

Respondents: 42

Affiliations/Occupations:

- Registered Professional Foresters (RPFs)
- Consulting biologists
- Industrial Timberland Companies
- National Park Service
- State Parks
- CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW)
- U.S. Forest Service (USFS)
- CA Dept. of Forestry & Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- Yurok Tribe
- California Academy of Sciences

Locations:

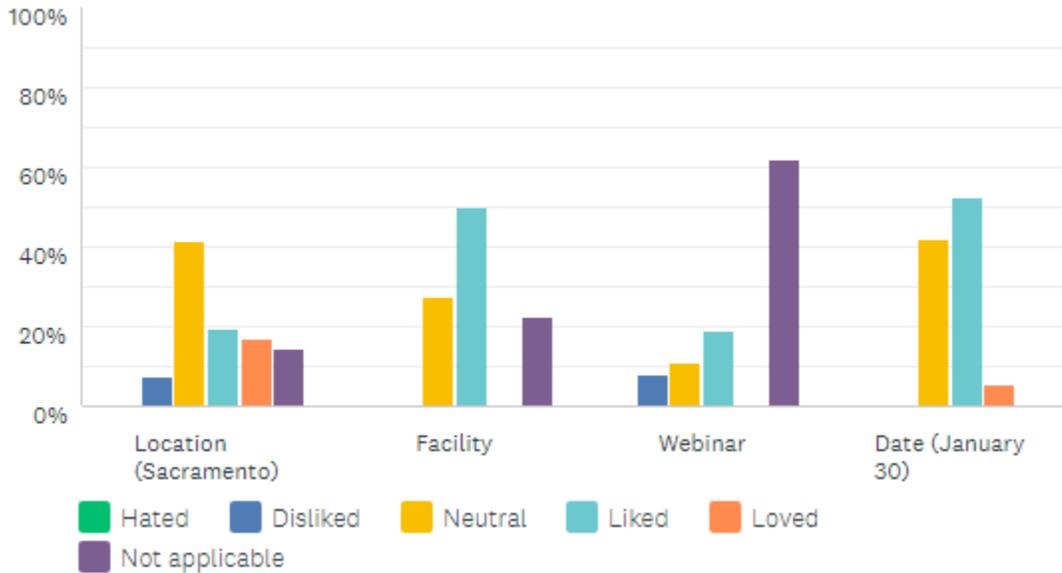
Note - Plurality of respondents were from the Mendocino area

- Mendocino County
 - Calpella
 - Fort Bragg
 - Jackson Demonstration State Forest
- Humboldt County
 - Scotia
 - Eureka
 - Orick
- Sacramento
- Bay-Delta Region
 - Point Reyes National Seashore
 - Santa Rosa
 - San Francisco
- Redding
- Mt. Shasta
- Yreka
- Klamath
- Fresno

QUESTIONS & SURVEY RESPONSES

1. How would you rate the following aspects of the Forum?

Respondents: 41



	Hated	Disliked	Neutral	Liked	Loved	N/A
Location	0	3	17	8	7	6
Facility	0	0	11	20	0	9
Webinar	0	3	4	7	0	23
Date	0	0	16	20	2	0

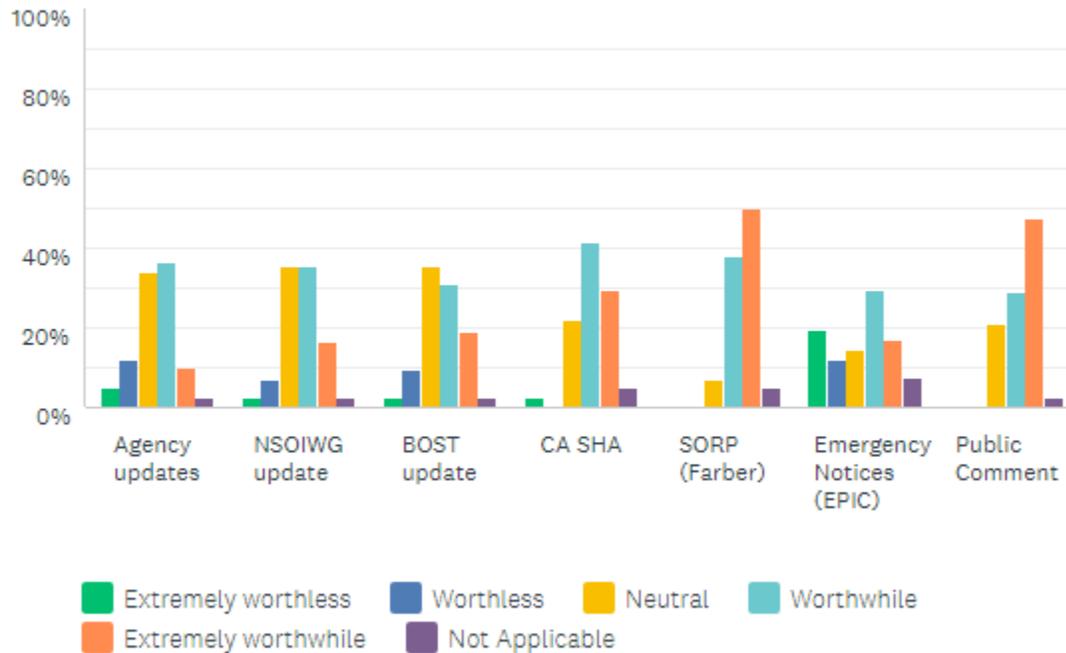
Comments from Respondents:

- Sacramento did not seem like the best place for holding the meeting given the location of most attendees (Humboldt and Mendocino counties).
- Meeting space worked well and Sacramento is convenient for me.
- Location in Sacramento (outside of "NSO zone") probably deterred a lot of in-person attendance. For future I suggest HUM, MEN, or SON counties
- Glad webinar was available.
- Comment for below- Agency, NSOIWG, BOST updates - worthless - nothing is being accomplished
- Need a strong facilitator to keep emotional (men) participants in check.
- Move forums around various locations
- Audio didn't come through clearly, but once the video was cut, it improved. Calling in on skype worked the best.
- From my location, video disappeared after about an hour, and audio was spotty. Probably my connection from Fort Bragg though.
- Unfortunately, as I'm sure you're well aware, the webinar didn't work which was disappointing. The phone worked better, but still it was difficult to hear and the call was dropped at some point. I gave up.

- I attended via Webinar and there were technical issues, as there are with all webinars. There was quite a bit of delay with the presentation slides at times and issues with the audio, but it did improve when the video of the presenter was disabled.
- The location and facility does not matter that much when using the webinar, that said moving the location to the North might seem appropriate as that is where most of the owls are. The webinar didn't function all that well, the presentation slides often didn't match the topic being discussed.
- The first half of the webinar was extremely difficult to make out any information from the speakers due to lag, so the information I was able to gather was minimal. The second half was fine.
- The webinar worked pretty well for those of us primarily tuning in. I used the Skype (not the microsoft version), but the sound and the visuals were OK.
- The sound on the webinar started out very poor, but greatly improved by about 1030 am. Technical support via the chat system was good. Good communication with speakers to use mic - that also helped. Would have been great for speakers to always say their names before answering a question, b/c when multiple people answering the questions, those of us not in the room didn't know who was speaking.

2. How would you rate the following Forum agenda items?

Respondents: 42



	Extremely Worthless	Worthless	Neutral	Worthwhile	Extremely Worthwhile	N/A
Agency Updates	2	5	14	15	4	1
NSOIWG	1	3	15	15	7	1
BOST	1	4	15	13	8	1
CA SHA	1	0	9	17	12	2
SORP	0	0	3	16	21	2
Emergency Notices	8	5	6	12	7	3
Public Comment	0	0	8	11	18	1

Comments from Respondents:

- Agency updates from CDFW were extremely worthless. USFWS updates were worthless, and then absent from the comment period. I commend Cal-Fire biologists for recognizing the importance of experience when providing guidance to landowners.
- The agencies provided no new information on the consultation process or that which we have already been doing thru the THP process.
- I had hoped to hear more detail in the updates. There was little agency focus on NSO protection and conservation, with the focus instead being on policies and procedures for the timber industry, private landowners, etc. It was good to see the focus of the two working groups, but not a lot of detail was available.

- Great to hear both sides, learned a lot
- Rob DiPerna's presentation presented some extremely biased OPINIONS. I think DFW should have allowed a presentation of a more scientific presentation of post-fire ecology.
- Good to hear agency working group updates. Suggest more "product" information on what's being done.
- I missed the SHA presentation due to a schedule conflict, but the topic is important.
- I thought these were all very worthwhile. However, just because they were worthwhile for this meeting doesn't mean they should carry forward for future meetings.
- The N/As were because I couldn't hear.
- During the SHA presentation there were large delays with the slides which made it difficult to follow.
- I only am neutral on the first three because I was having some technical difficulties on my end and couldn't hear very well. The NSORP presentation was excellent, let science drive conservation!!!!
- Information and steps taken by the agencies at this point does not seem to provide any answers; only speculation and the promise of more meetings to come. To me, that insinuates a lack of priority given to the overall subject and that bureaucracies have become too burdensome, even for agency workers. Being rather new to the private consulting sector, I found the SHA and NSORP to be quite informative.
- I had another commitment, and missed the first three talks. As a member of the BOST, I probably didn't need to see that update anyway.
- I think it would have been great if the entire day was framed: "why are we here" - via webinar, the audio wasn't working well during the agency updates so it is impossible to know if they were worthwhile, but in general, many of the speakers assumed that the audience has in-depth understanding of T&E regs, which some do not - a little context would be helpful.

3. How often would you prefer the Forum to meet?

Respondents: 41



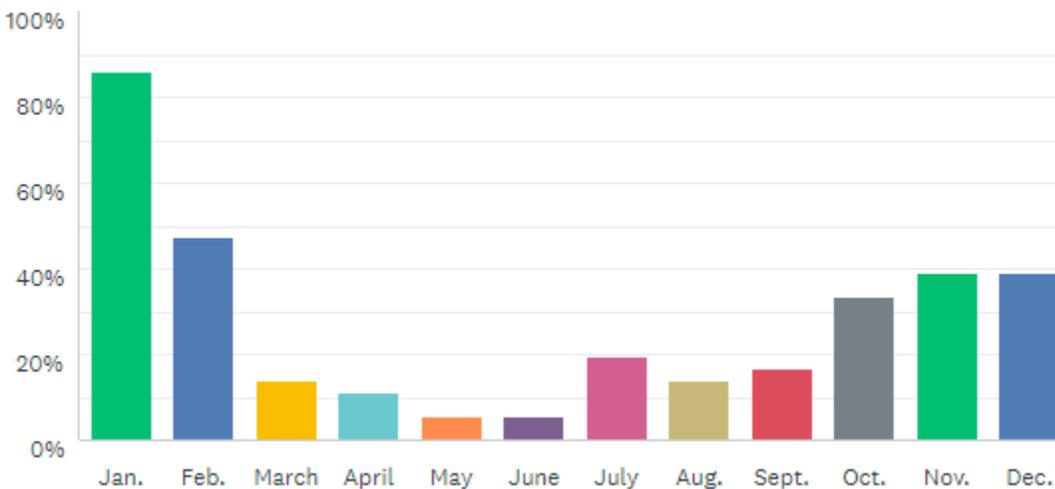
	Monthly	Every other month	Quarterly	Twice a year	Annually	Every other year	Other*
Responses	0	0	7	18	12	0	4

*Other (as specified by respondents):

- Annually as a minimum. As needed when new info available
- Only when there is progress to report
- Only when actually changes to the regulatory climate have occurred
- At least annually. I think that it is important that the stakeholders have multiple opportunities to provide feedback to NSOIWG and the BOST – and I greatly appreciated many of the concerns that folks brought up as questions or in comment periods. Even if the whole group cannot always be present, I think that regular meetings are appreciated and an awesome place for people to share their own concerns with processes and regulations

4. Please select the months you would prefer for future NSO Stakeholder Forums. Select all that apply.

Respondents: 36



- January – 31
- February – 17
- March – 5
- April – 4
- May – 2
- June – 2
- July – 7
- August – 5
- September – 6
- October – 12
- November – 14
- December – 14

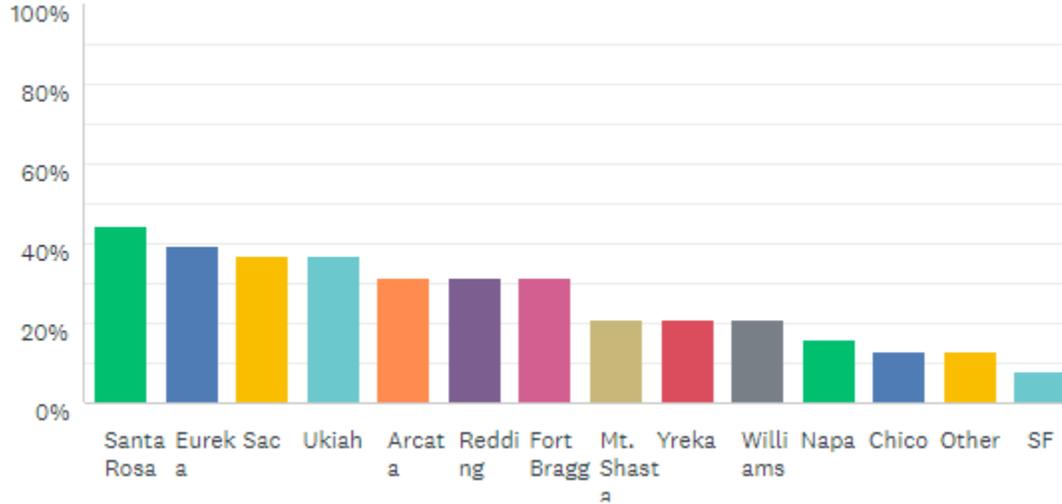
Comments from Respondents:

- Any
- April through December preferred by any month is fine
- No preference
- It's important not to schedule meetings during NSO survey season (March – August)
- Outside field seasons
- January is perfect for gearing up for the upcoming field season

- As needed, but my own field seasons make March through July more difficult, but I will do what I can to attend whenever they are held

5. Which of the following locations would you prefer for the next Forum? Select all that apply.

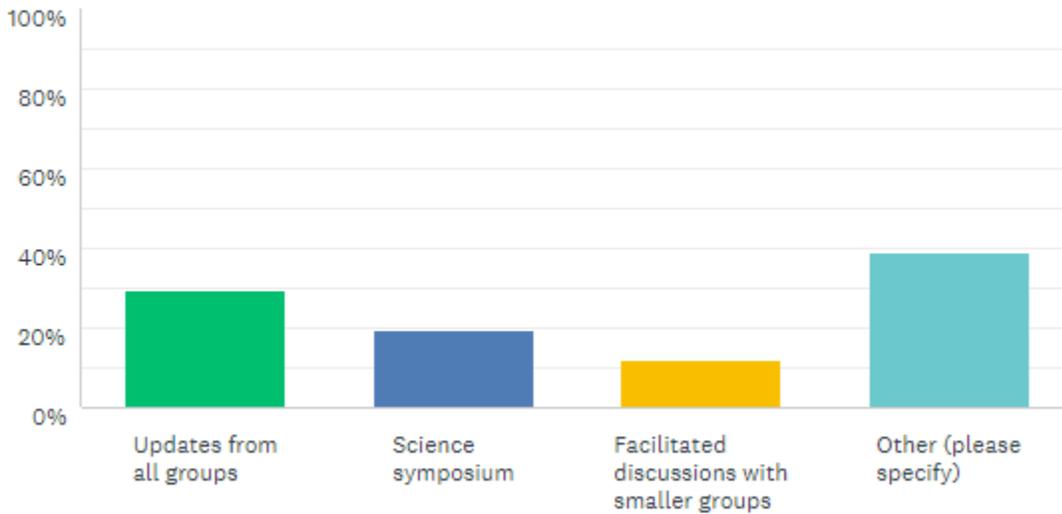
Respondents: 38



- Santa Rosa – 17
- Eureka – 15
- Sacramento – 14
- Ukiah – 14
- Arcata – 12
- Redding – 12
- Mount Shasta – 8
- Yreka – 8
- Williams – 8
- Napa – 6
- Chico – 5
- San Francisco – 3
- Other – 5
 - [Double circled Yreka with arrows] North, go North!
 - Any
- Anywhere that is actually within the range of the NSO – somewhere central to those attending
- Location is not as important as revisions to the regulatory climate
- Orick

6. Which of the following Forum styles would you prefer for future Forums?

Respondents: 41



	Updates from all groups	Science symposium	Facilitated discussions	Other*
Responses	12	8	5	16

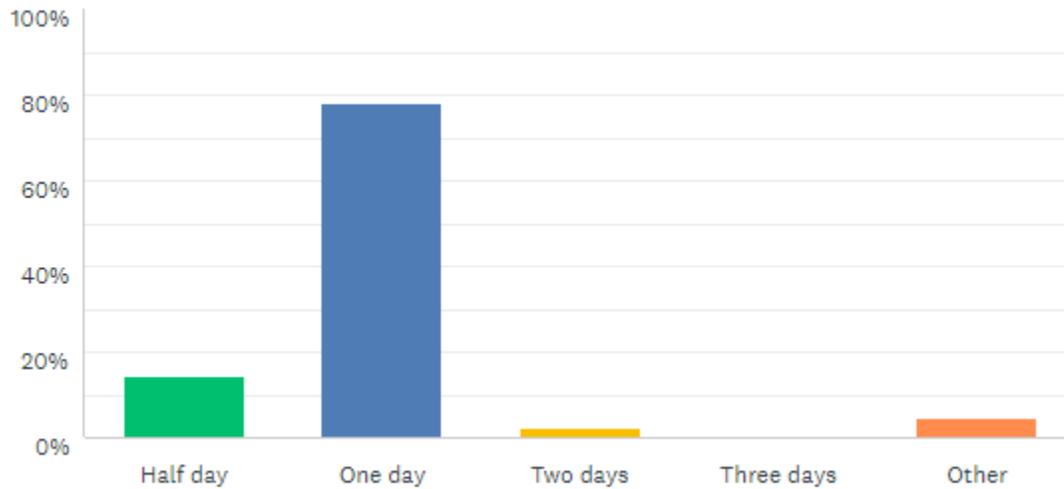
*Other (as specified by respondents):

- All of the above
- Maybe a combination of these? Or do a update one, then a science one, etc.
- All of the above (sorry, they are all great ideas!)
- Science symposium & facilitated discussions
- Updates from all groups and science symposium
- Updates from all groups and science symposium
- Updates and facilitated discussions
- All of the above
- Updates from all groups and science symposium
- All of the above
- All of the above (it would only let me select one). I think if it was all day with a shorter lunch break, all 3 formats could work.
- Actually, depending on how often these meetings are, we could do a combination of the above
- Forum type needs to be designed in a manner that addresses the information being provided. If all that is intended is updates, then simply provide updates. If a collaborative setting that is actually intended to try to refine solutions is the goal, then breakout groups would likely be better.
- Combination
- Largescale updates from all stakeholders important, but a two day symposium with seminar would also be beneficial. Perhaps one of each over the course of the year?

- I like the updates from each of the main groups, but as long as folks are gathering, I wonder if some facilitated discussions or breakout groups might be productive, with each group collectively voicing their primary objectives/concerns.

7. What length of time do you prefer for future Forums?

Respondents: 41



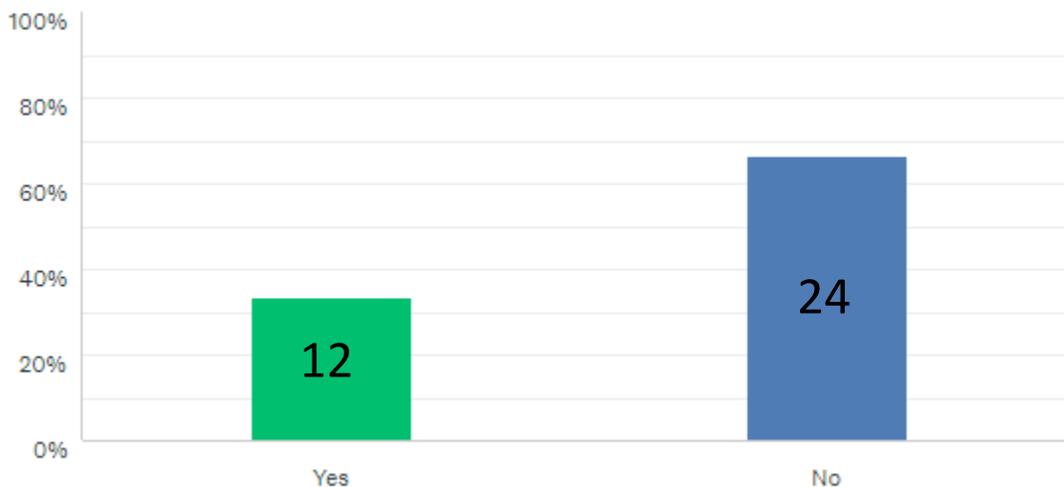
	Half day	One day	Two days	Other*
Responses	6	32	1	2

*Other (as specified by respondents):

- Half day or one day
- ½ day twice a year

8. If a steering committee is formed to organize future Forums, would you be interested in participating?

Respondents: 36



Comments from Respondents:

- Potentially – if Forest Service/public lands is more of a criteria

- Happy to be given easy tasks though
- I'm a fish guy...
- Maybe-
- I'm interested but have super limited time
- Trend to more hard science, potential solutions rather than discussing need for more meetings
- I'm probably not knowledgeable enough to help organize these forums

General Comments and Suggestions

- Thanks for the effort in putting the forum together. I am not certain why the SORP presentation was made other than to assume it is a reasonable way to advise my large landowner clients to move toward. The contentiousness of the emergency exemptions presentation was rather odd, given the audience.
- I think the Western Section of the Wildlife Society has done a good job of organizing symposiums that focus on NSO research. I instead recommend that CDFW continue with stakeholder discussions, but I think these would be more productive if meetings were on focused topics. It was good to see CDFW's approach to NSO management, but most topics discussed this week did not relate to Marin County.
- Better video feed of the crowd and speaker for the webinar would be nice to be able to see who is talking not just the power point display. The Sacramento location was too far to justify traveling for me. There was a lot of questions left unanswered by the agencies that should have been answered instead of kicking the can down the road. We are literally studying the northern spotted owl to death, actions on reducing the Bado population need to be taken before it is too late, which it likely is in a majority of their range. Previous studies have already proven that Bado removal works. I believe the harvesting of trees could stop today and the spotted owl would still go extinct if nothing is done to control the Bado population. There is plenty of habitat out there for NSO's, so that isn't the cause in my opinion. Disturbance is actually good for the prey species that the NSO depends upon. Do we want bado's or nso's, make your choice and go with it soon. Thanks!
- Very informative!
- More small landowner participation and case studies.
- First NSO stakeholder experience. CDFW did a good job navigating through all the stakeholder and keeping it a professional environment. Very informative.
- I think it went well. I liked the format and the content.
- If possible notes/minutes from meetings should be posted on website. Also, notes/minutes from NSOIWG and BOST meetings would be nice to have available before next stakeholder meeting.
- The forum was good. The agency folks need to be more prepared. Need action. Not more studies, groups, etc.
- There seemed to be mis-understandings between some comments and responses by Depts. A meeting referee may be needed to stop the conversation and clarify. Otherwise people get nothing out of it.

- I echo several comments presented in person. Namely that SOE opinions must be given greater weight than non-SOE opinions. Also, we've been actively "managing" NSOs since the early 1990's with the regulatory burden increasing substantially over the near thirty years of this. Despite increasing protections and management burden placed upon landowners NSO populations continue to decline. The definition of foolishness is doing the same thing over and over while expecting a different result. It is time to actively work with landowners to find solutions rather than ramping up the regulatory burden more and expecting it to help NSOs. Thank you.
- Thanks for organizing. I think that since we may need to radically alter our management practices, and include things like Barred Owl culling, it will take a large number of stakeholders gathering in order to reach a working consensus. I was pleased with the overall direction (and interest across the board) in dealing with Barred Owls quickly and effectively, but exactly what tools are appropriate still needs to be worked out. Glad that this is all moving forward.