

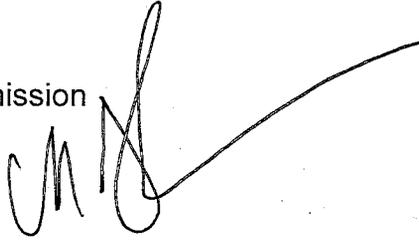
State of California  
Department of Fish and Wildlife

## Memorandum

Date: April <sup>15</sup> 11, 2013

To: Sonke Mastrup  
Executive Director  
Fish and Game Commission

From: Charlton H. Bonham  
Director



Subject: **Northern Spotted Owl Petition Evaluation – Errata and Correction**

It has come to our attention that the Department's petition evaluation inadvertently misconstrued some information available to us related to northern spotted owl population trend and productivity on some private lands in northern California. The error applies to population trend/productivity information collected by three private timber companies and our report treating it all as an indicator of population trend. Attached is an "Errata Sheet" presenting the revised information.

After making these revisions, the Department re-examined the petition evaluation and affirms the recommendation that the northern spotted owl may warrant listing. Additionally, we clarified that the northern spotted owl is a "species of special concern" in California.

If you have any questions regarding this item, please contact Dr. Eric Loft, Chief of the Wildlife Branch at (916) 445-3555.

Attachment

cc: Dan Yparraguirre, Deputy Director  
Wildlife and Fisheries Division  
[Dan.yparraguirre@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Dan.yparraguirre@wildlife.ca.gov)

Eric Loft, Ph.D., Chief  
Wildlife Branch  
Wildlife and Fisheries Division  
[Eric.loft@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Eric.loft@wildlife.ca.gov)

**EVALUATION OF THE PETITION  
FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION INFORMATION CENTER  
TO LIST NORTHERN SPOTTED OWL (*Strix occidentalis caurina*)  
AS THREATENED OR ENDANGERED  
UNDER THE CALIFORNIA ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT  
January 2013**

**ERRATA SHEET**

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) is correcting and clarifying statements in the northern spotted owl petition evaluation submitted to the Fish and Game Commission on February 6, 2013. After making these corrections, the Department has re-examined the petition evaluation and reaffirms the recommendation that the northern spotted owl may warrant listing. The Department regrets the errors in the evaluation.

- 1] In the evaluation of population trend, the petition evaluation (at pages 3 and 5) stated:

“However, annual reports from Humboldt Redwood Company (HRC 2012), Mendocino Redwood Company (MRC 2010), and Green Diamond Resource Company (Green Diamond 2011), summarize survey results over at least a 10-year span and show a steady decline in population for these regions”.

The Department has learned that this interpretation is incorrect as we interchangeably applied productivity levels to infer population trend. While productivity has declined, occupancy reportedly remained stable. Productivity is a measure of a population’s reproductive output, in this case measured as the average number of young owls that fledge per nest. Productivity is related to population trend, but productivity data alone are not predictive of population trends. Population trends are determined by examining a population’s productivity in conjunction with the mortality rates of the population’s adults and young. Without corresponding data on mortality rates, productivity data cannot be related to population trends. The Department is correcting the statement as follows:

~~Delete from pages 3 and 5: A(a)nnual reports from Humboldt Redwood Company (HRC 2012), Mendocino Redwood Company (MRC 2010), and Green Diamond Resource Company (Green Diamond 2011), summarize survey results over at least a 10-year span and show a steady decline in population for these regions.~~

Insert to pages 3 and 5: Reports from Mendocino Redwood Company (MRC 2010), Humboldt Redwood Company (HRC 2012), and Green Diamond Resource Company (Green Diamond 2011) summarized survey or study results over at least 10-year periods and either characterized population trend using territory occupancy, or actually estimated population trend. Mendocino Redwood and Humboldt Redwood indicated a stable occupancy rate with recent declining northern spotted owl productivity on their lands. Green

Diamond developed population estimates on their study site and indicated a downward population trend through 2008, the last year the population estimate report in Green Diamond (2011) was based on, using Forsman et al. (2011). Since 2008, they have a slight upward trend presumably due to barred owl control measures (L. Diller, pers. comm.).

- 2] The petition evaluation (page 12) reports that there is currently no state special status designation associated with northern spotted owls. This is incorrect. The sentence is corrected to read:

~~Delete: The Department currently has no special status classification assigned to the northern spotted owl in California.~~

Insert: The Department currently classifies the northern spotted owl a Species of Special Concern.