

From: [Bard Francis](#)
To: [Wildlife Management](#)
Subject: northern spotted owl resp
Date: Thursday, January 23, 2014 6:10:56 PM

Greetings from retired USFS wildlife biologist 35 years in service GS-11 retired, MS Zoology, BS forestry, member 30 groups such as audubon, sierra club, FOE, UCS, etc.

I wrote the first spotted owl plans on the STNF in Mt Shasta, CA. Right at the first I saw they were inadequate and protested, but wrote them anyway as ordered by district ranger Showalter, who changed my data without my knowledge. He proceeded to log spotted owl groves, which led to a federal investigation, which led to whistleblowing, which led to my career stagnation and harassment, while District Ranger Showalter was kicked upstairs\$\$\$ to the SO in Redding. The following rangers were decidedly unfriendly, which led to more sexual harassment of me and 3 physical beatings of me on station grounds, no DR protection of action taken. The explanation was that I was causing the district timber team to not get their cash productivity awards because of "You and your damned spotted owls, see what you done you bastard!" and that includes collaboration with the district ranger Mike Hupp and Bob Hammond, especially Hupp, who collected \$12,254 for logging over a few owls (FOIA).

The point of the above is that the USFS has no incentive at all to protect the NSO (Owl) or any other wildlife that gets in the way of cash awards for selling timber. They will try to get around it as best they can, and as they told me "So whaddya expect us to do now, go glue da trees back onto the stumps? Shaddup and mind yer own buzness!!" and this was the unspoken word as well from the district rangers. For verification, the testimony I gave in Washington DC with AFSEE or FSEE is likely still on the internet and likely they still know me.

If you wish me to go into the biology of it all, I know you know that. The owl is still declining mostly thanks to lackadaisical and incorrect inept tools and rules for timbering, locally at the rate of 5-11% per year. I once had about 28 pairs of owls on this district, now I think maybe under 5 pairs are actually still reproductive, most simply disappeared after we logged them, a few got shot under mysterious circumstances under the tenure of Francis Mangels and Debbie Derby (She would take no sexual harassment from anyone, and threatened liberally, so they turned on me at 5'5"). As ranger Showalter told me directly, "the owls can just go somewhere else, now get out of my office!" With limited habitat, the owls simply died, and I meekly obeyed. The biologists before me left letters on what to expect, and indeed it was worse than they said, eg Becky Provart, Dave W.

The truth is, we just logged away at the spotted owl habitat until it was gone. the timber game was "OOOoops, guess we accidentally logged the wrong hillside, sorry we won't do that again," and collected their logging cash bonus...btw they got about \$3000-5000 each and I got \$150, the bare minimum. haw haw haw. Then they beat me up and harassed me, especially if they were expecting more money. The district rangers took my written complaint and did nothing, but I saved the documents.

Somebody will likely point out climate collapse, and UCS proves this is true. It is a threat to the NSO and many other species as well, such as pikas, goshawks, martens, fishers, wolverine, etc. Not to mention many of our local common birds are disappearing like *Silent Spring* revisited, by Rachel Carson, worth a reread, but now its global heating.

Something else I fought hard about was cattle grazing effects on NSO. It was so hard that it chewed up much of the prey habitat where the owls did not have flying squirrels. These marginal habitat owls went for a few hamburgers, such as the Toad Mtn owls and all owls in the Eddy Mountains. As a cumulative effect, you ought to discourage and terminate all public grazing within 5 miles of an owl nest, and also pay attention to spotted owl winter range at lower elevations. The NSO does not sit around hibernating, it goes downslope to forest edge pastures and feeds there in the winter. The USFS to its credit did hear me on that one and at least modified NEPA to a "may effect not likely to adversely affect" finding, and the projects went ahead because that finding was still a green light to go

for it.

The corridors for owl migration are cut out and gone. The USFS gave lip service to it, but logged it off anyway. Typically, if it was money trees, they took a clearcut-like very heavy thinning out of the middle and terminated the corridors over my protests, thank you Matt Chuela and Ray Haupt, who is now a ranger. Very few biologists made it to DR status, USFS promotes foresters that know how to get the cut out. You might check that ratio. Biologists have little say about the NSO.

Yes, the woods is full of trees, but they are monocultures of small ponderosa pine, not owl habitat. No old growth of quality left. Those marvelous predictions made in the 1950s of how big and fast they would all grow are all falling flat....all failures in prediction and production.

If you wish to find out a bit more on what went on to drive the owl into endangered status, just give me a call at 530-926-0311 in pm and I'll give you more. I'm retired and out of USDA now, but I could see way back in 1985 that things were very inadequate. The entire NSO game was to get the last money trees and march that owl to extinction. Yes, declare it endangered, but at least here on the boundary between Sierra and Coastal habitat owls, that bird is absolutely failing and the corridors for migration are logged out quite effectively by USFS policy and permissiveness of the USFS and BLM administrations.

And there's more if you want it.....

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