



Policy for Sustainable Forests

Washington State Trust Lands

How do Older Forests fit in?

Board of Natural Resources

December 7, 2021

Angus Brodie



Agenda

- Policy Framework
- DNR Policy on Older Forests
- Public Comments
- Next Steps

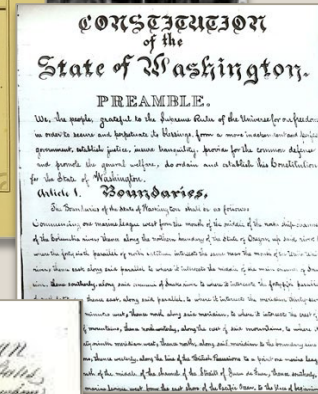
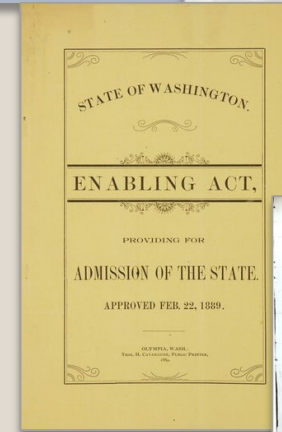
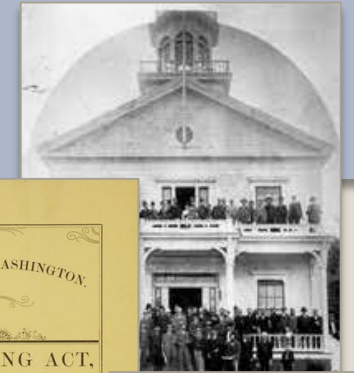
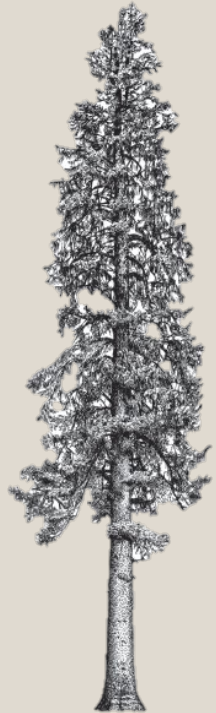




Policy Framework

Policies comply with a Legal Framework

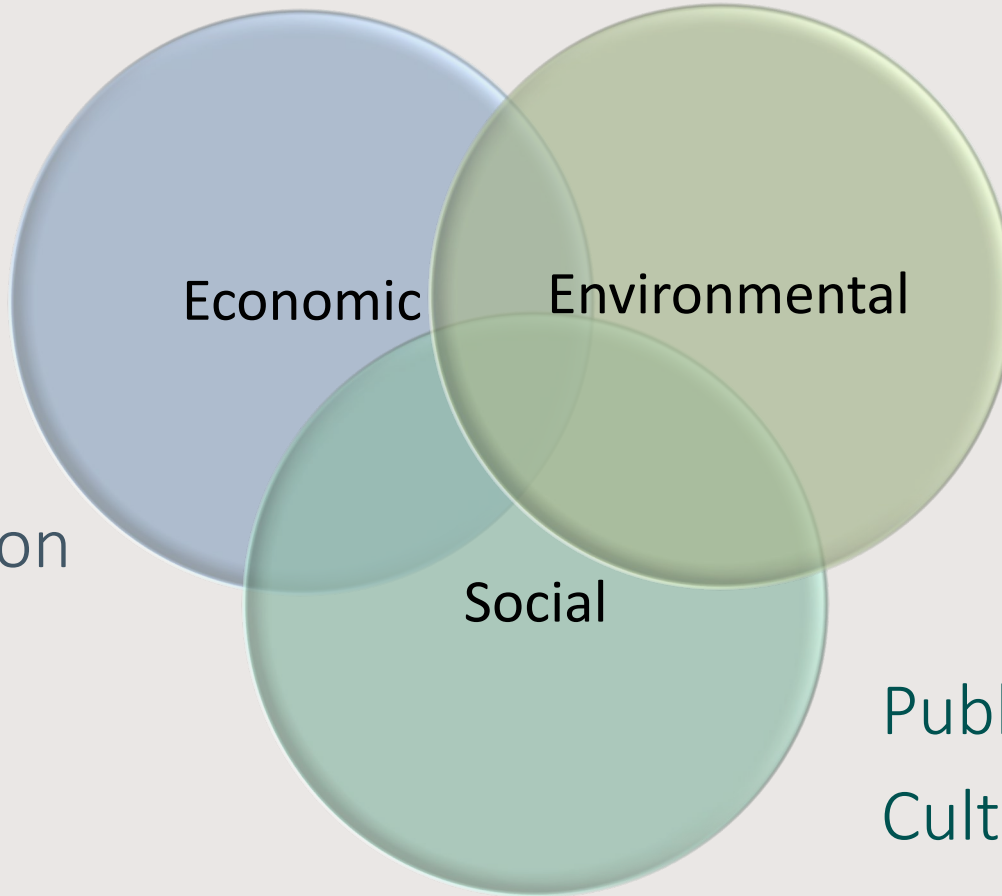
- Enabling Act¹⁸⁸⁹, Constitution¹⁸⁸⁹
- Federal Laws, e.g. Endangered Species Act¹⁹⁷³
- Tribal Treaties¹⁸⁵⁴⁻⁵⁶
- Powers of the Board (RCW 43.30.215)¹⁹⁵⁷
- Multiple Use (RCW 79.10.100..120)¹⁹⁷¹
- Sustainable Harvest (RCW 79.10.300..340)¹⁹⁷¹
- Laws of General Applicability





Policy Framework - Sustainability


 Net Present Value
 Revenue Generation
 Support Local
 Economies

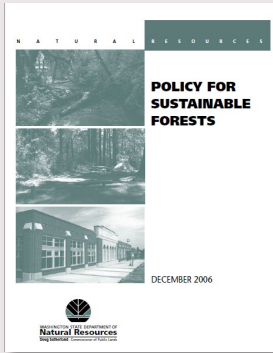



 Healthy ecosystems
 Habitat conservation
 Watershed protection


 Public Access and Use
 Cultural and Historical Resources
 Supporting Critical Local Services

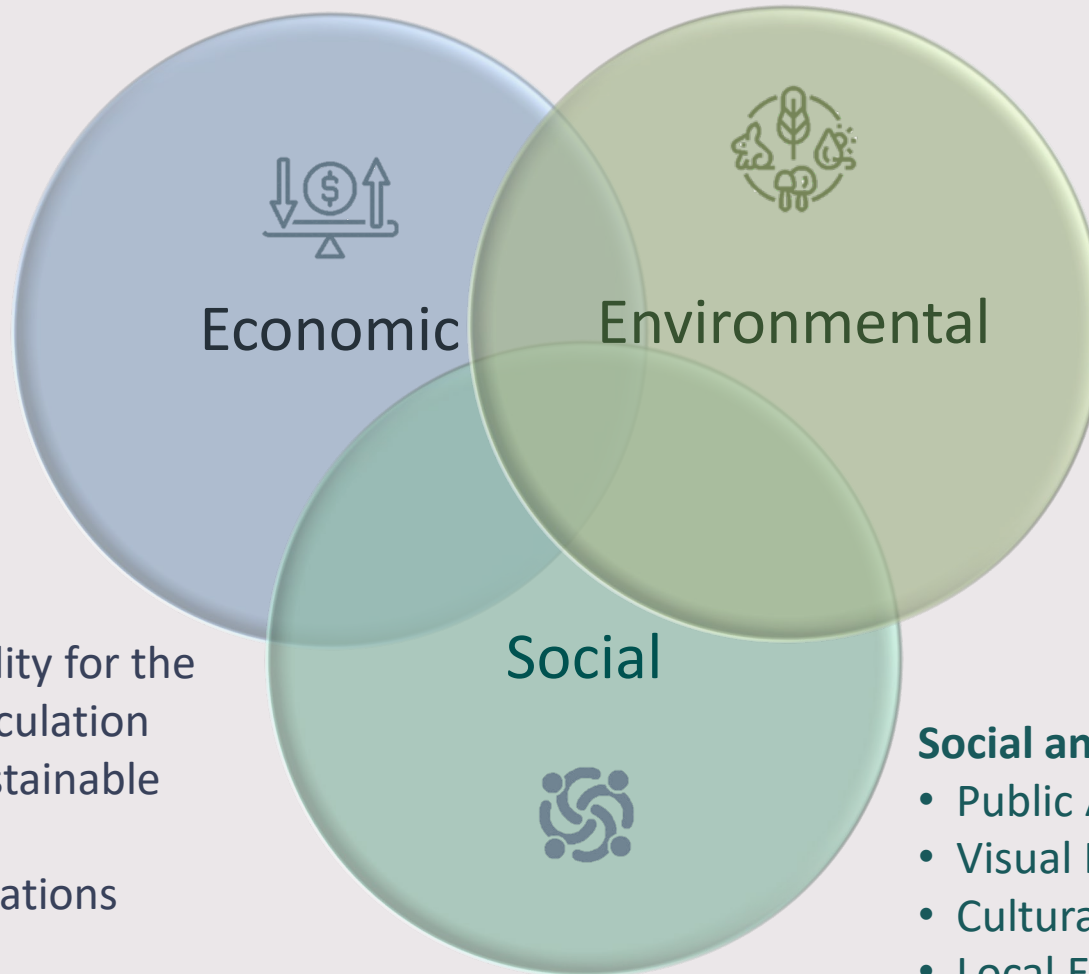


Policy Framework - Sustainability



Economic Performance

- Financial Diversification
- Financial Assumptions
- Definition of Sustainability for the Sustainable Harvest Calculation
- Recalculation of the Sustainable Harvest Level
- Harvest Deferral Designations



Forest Ecosystem Health and Productivity

- Forest Health
- Catastrophic Loss Prevention
- Old-Growth Stands in Western Washington
- Wildlife Habitat
- Watershed Systems
- Riparian Conservation
- Special Ecological Features
- Genetic Resource

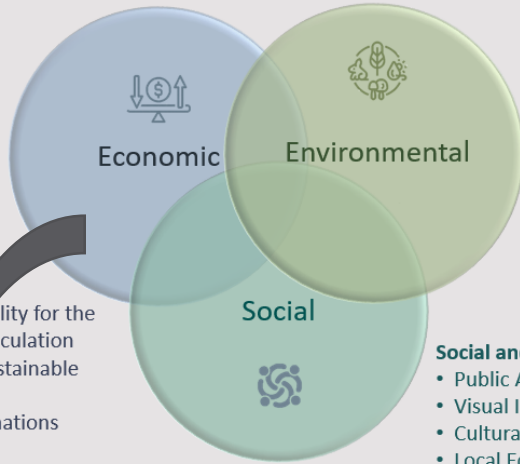
Social and Cultural Benefits

- Public Access and Recreation
- Visual Impacts
- Cultural Resources
- Local Economic Vitality





Policy Framework - Sustainability



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Economic Performance

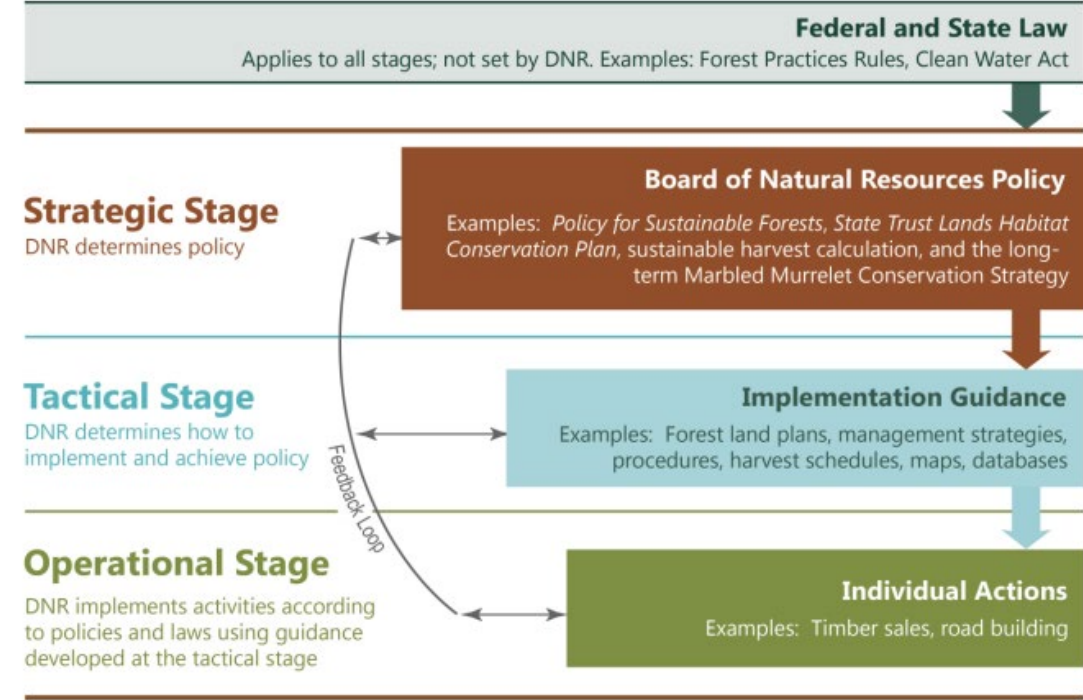
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Implementation

- Forest Land Planning
- General Silvicultural Strategy
- Forest Roads
- Research
- External Relationships
- Implementation, Reporting and Modification of the Policy for Sustainable Forests



Figure 1.4.2. DNR's Planning Process



WADNR 2019 Final EIS page 1-16





Implementing Sustainable Forestry



Silviculture:

The art and science of cultivating forests to achieve objectives

POLICY ON GENERAL SILVICULTURAL STRATEGY

- The department will provide professional management of forested state trust lands through active management and stewardship of the greatest possible portion of these lands.
- The department will carry out active management as an integral part of the department’s fiduciary responsibilities to achieve, on a landscape basis, a combination of forest structures that, over time, provide for broad and balanced economic, ecological and social benefits.
- The department will use intensive and innovative silviculture to guide the desired progression of stand development to simultaneously produce trust revenue and create structural diversity across the landscape.
- The department will target 10-15 percent of each Western Washington *Habitat Conservation Plan* planning unit for “older” forests—based on structural characteristics—over time.
- Through landscape assessments, the department will identify suitable structurally complex forest stands to be managed to help meet older-forest targets. Once older-forest targets are met, structurally complex forest stands that are not needed to meet the targets may be considered for harvest activities. However, old growth is addressed in the Old-Growth Stands in Western Washington policy.



Summary

The department will:

- Provide professional management of forested lands through active management and stewardship of the greatest possible portion of these lands
- Balance economic, ecological and social benefits
- Use intensive and innovative silviculture to produce structural diversity and revenue
- Target 10-15% for “older” forests *over time*, and use landscape assessments to identify stands that help meet targets

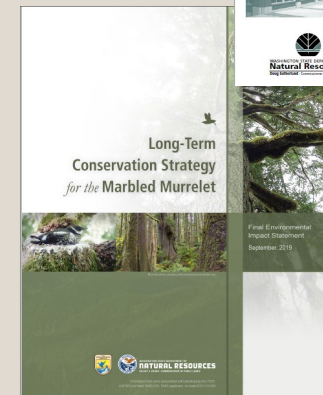
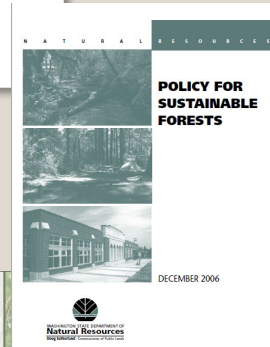
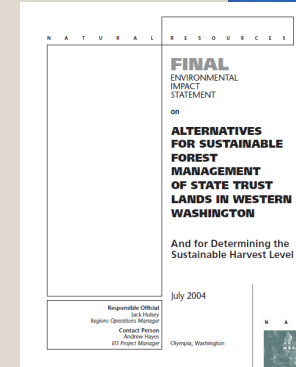
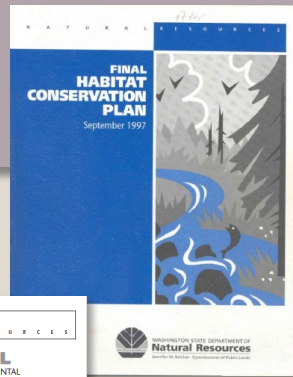




Development of Older Forest Targets

Policies that shaped our current management

- 1997 Habitat Conservation Plan
- 2004 Sustainable Harvest Calculation
- 2006 Policy for Sustainable Forests
- 2019 Marbled Murrelet Long-term Conservation Strategy – Habitat Conservation Plan Amendment



Landscape Management Activities under the Habitat Conservation Plan



HCP Multi-species Conservation Strategy
Uncommon Habitat



HCP Riparian Conservation Strategy
Riparian Buffer



Policy for Sustainable Forests
Sustainable Harvest Level



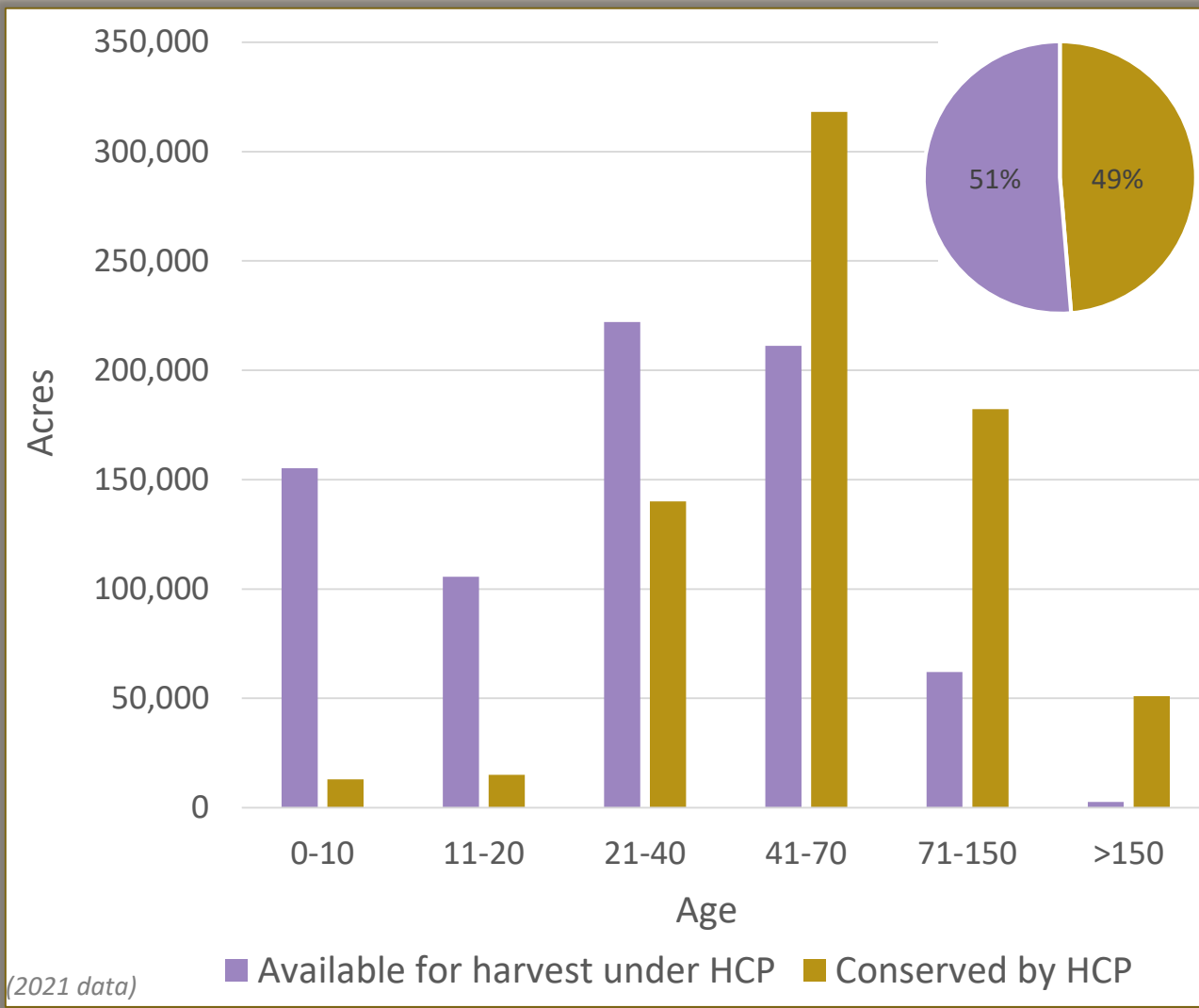
HCP Marbled Murrelet Conservation Strategy
Occupied Site



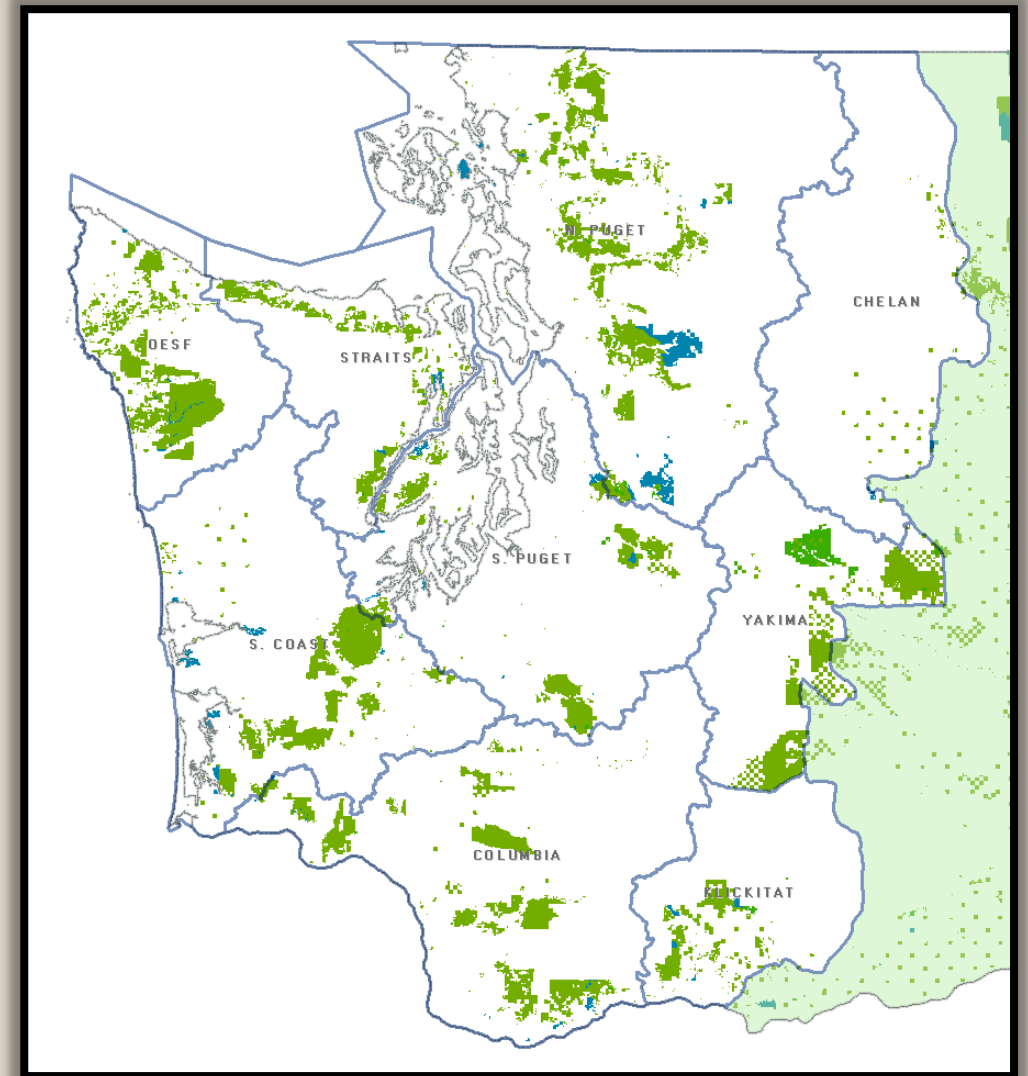
HCP Northern Spotted Owl Conservation Strategy
NRF Habitat



Acres Available for Harvest and Conserved under the HCP Strategies



HCP Planning Units within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl





Federal listing of Northern Spotted Owl, Marbled Murrelet, and Salmonids under the Endangered Species Act (ESA)

- **ESA Compliance Options**

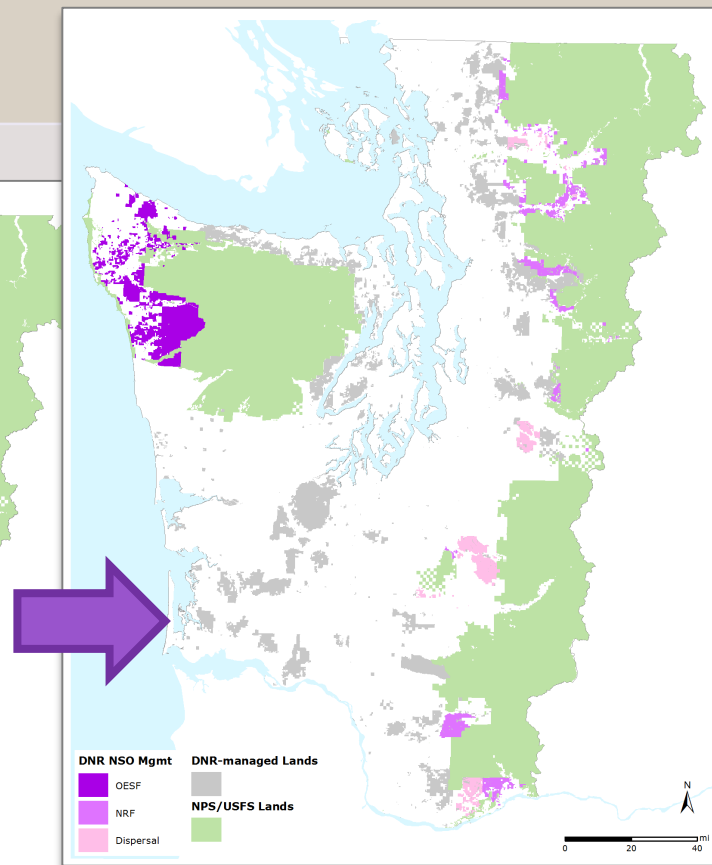
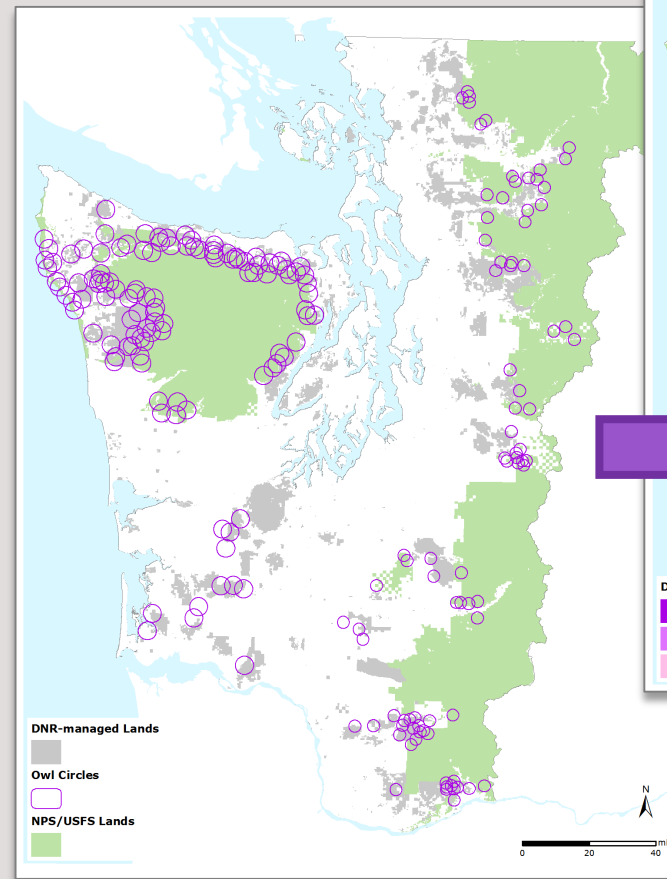
- Take avoidance (*or*)
- Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)

- **Conservation Approach**

- Take avoidance is site specific
- HCP's provide **landscape approach**

- **1997 State Trust Lands HCP**

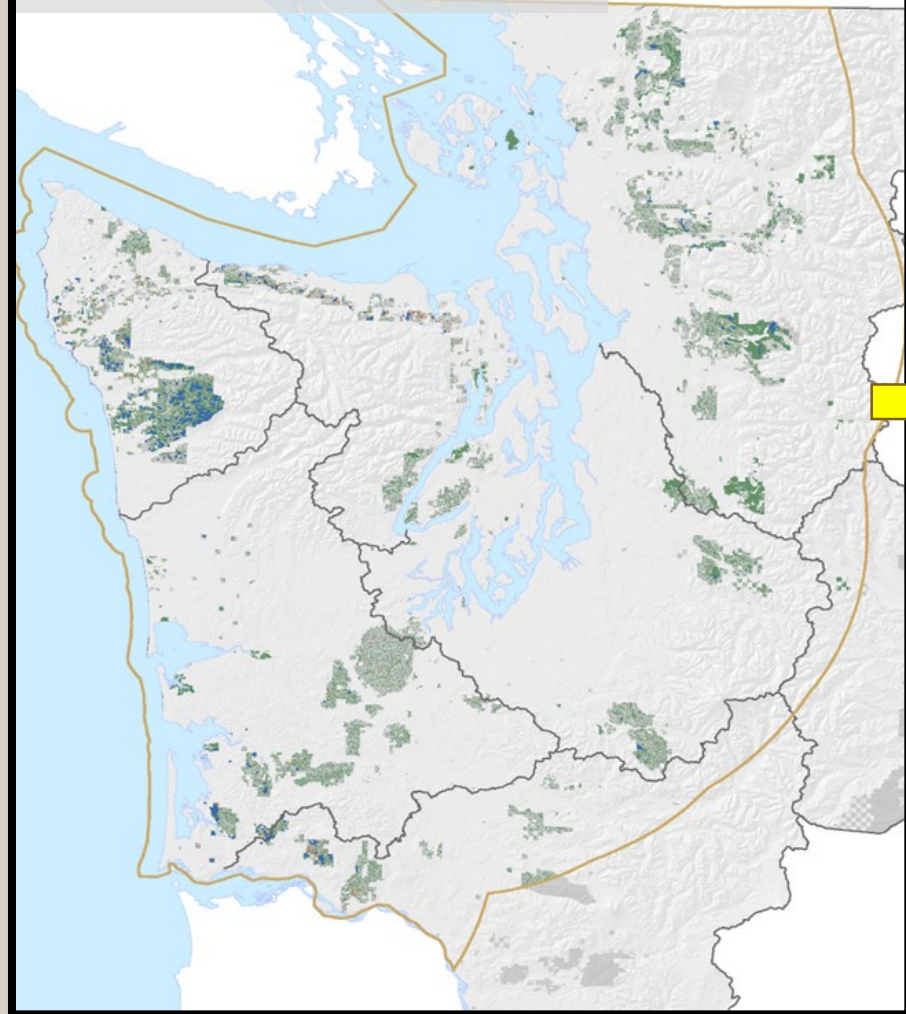
- Much of the existing older forest is captured in the HCP strategies



2019 HCP Amendment - By the Numbers

Marbled Murrelet Long-Term Conservation Strategy

No Action – Interim Strategy



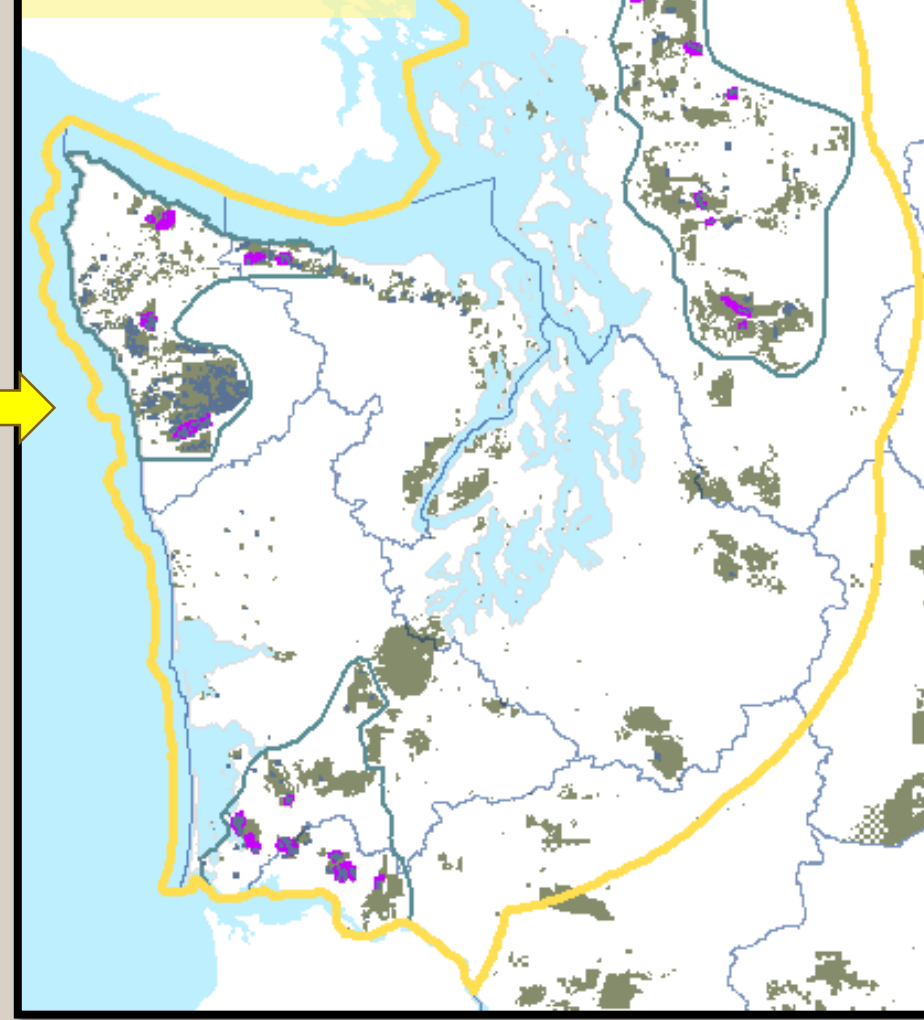
Interim Strategy

- **Site specific conservation:** occupied sites and existing higher quality habitats (33,000 acres)¹
- Marginal habitats available for harvest (35,000 acres)²

HCP Amendment

- **Site specific conservation:** occupied site and buffers (21,000 acres)¹
- **Special habitat area** (47,000 acres)¹
- **Habitat released** (38,000 acres)²
- **Metering**

HCP Amendment



Notes:

1. [Table 2.2.3. FEIS](#)
2. [Table 4.6.2. FEIS](#)

Table 4.6.2. Estimated Acres of Habitat Released for Harvest in the Analysis Area by the End of the Planning Period (Raw Acres)

		Alt. A (no action)	Alt. B	Alt. C	Alt. D	Alt. E	Alt. F	Alt. G	Alt. H
Low-quality habitat loss to harvest (P-stage value 0.25–0.36)	Southwest Washington strategic location	4,002	7,620	4,342	4,341	4,341	1,683	2,352	5,264
	OESF and Straits (West of the Elwha River) strategic location	6,670	8,648	6,876	7,400	6,197	3,535	1,008	6,419
	North Puget strategic location	11,946	12,234	10,929	10,976	10,595	6,969	9,822	10,869
	Other high- value landscape	7,184	9,261	8,930	8,931	8,938	5,594	8,907	8,948
	Marginal landscape	932	1,530	1,530	1,530	1,530	1,525	1,530	1,530
Subtotal		30,734	39,293	32,608	33,178	31,600	19,307	23,619	33,030
High-quality habitat loss to harvest (P-stage value 0.47–0.89)	Southwest Washington strategic location	7	259	0	174	0	76	0	174
	OESF and Straits (West of the Elwha River) strategic location	727	1,495	0	1,230	0	459	0	1,241
	North Puget strategic location	2,509	2,556	0	2,340	0	1,396	0	2,194
	Other high value landscape	900	1,348	0	1,249	0	673	0	1,312
	Marginal landscape	97	97	0	97	0	92	0	97
Subtotal		4,240	5,754	0	5,090	0	2,697	0	5,017
Total acres		34,974	45,047	32,608	38,268	31,600	22,004	23,619	38,047

“Older” Forest Released for Harvest

Table 4.6.2 WADNR
Final EIS, page 4-37

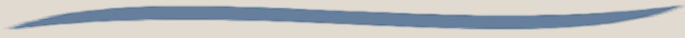


Policy Summary

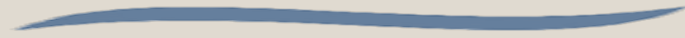
Trust Lands are managed to generate sustainable long-term revenue for the beneficiaries



The Policy Framework is Sustainability



The Habitat Conservation Plan is a landscape approach to protecting species, habitat, and biodiversity



Changing policy leads to an examination of the balance between the economic, environmental, and social benefits



Photo: Peter Harrison



Public Comments





Selected Public Comments



Ecological

- Naturally generated forests are more complex
- Trees are larger in naturally-regenerated stands
- These forests contain more carbon than plantations
- All lowland old-growth has been logged in South Puget Sound

Don't harvest naturally regenerated forests that have an origin date prior to 1945

Social

- These forest are learning opportunities
- Popular recreational destinations for hunters, hikers, bikers, and other outdoor enthusiasts

Policy

- HCP obligates DNR to keep these forests
- DNR's own policy obligates it to keep these forests until the 10-15% targets are reached
- There's more than enough plantations to satisfy the sustainable harvest targets and fulfill DNR's current commitments to beneficiaries

What does the review look like?



Extra review of timber sales that receive public comments

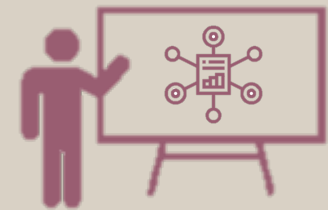


Delayed a number of timber sales



Extra screening protocols for forest stands close to Board's 'Old-Growth' definition

Reviewed policy framework with the Board





Q. How many acres of ‘older forest’ are there?

A. It depends on the Age Class one chooses

Age Class (years)	Operable Acres	Acres Conserved by HCP (i.e. LTFC)	Total Acres
0-9	165,190	14,090	179,280
10-19	115,680	13,620	129,300
20-39	247,870	136,810	384,680
40-69	237,980	326,850	564,830
70-119	64,040	157,400	221,440
120-169	8,200	43,470	51,670
>=170	2,220	41,210	43,430
Total	841,180	733,450	1,574,630

10,420 acres

Operable Acres:
Forested areas identified for even-age management, including regeneration harvest

Acres Conserved by HCP:
Includes forested areas in old growth areas, marbled murrelet management areas, habitat in northern spotted owl management areas, riparian and wetland management zones

Data from July 2021

Next Steps

1. Delaying timber sales in forests close to the Board's old-growth definition

For FY 2022, 7 sales and 49 million board feet are delayed

2. Review of the Pre-1900 forests

Anticipate this review to be complete by May 2022

3. Planning a forest carbon presentation to the board in first quarter of 2022
-

4. Public outreach



