

## **OFCO'S STATE FOREST LANDS ACTIVITIES**

### **August 2012**

OFCO has been working on various issues on Washington state forest lands, managed by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). What has OFCO been doing?

#### **Participating with other conservation groups on forestry issues in Washington**

- OFCO was active in commenting on DNR's Sustainable Harvest Calculation, which concluded in the fall of 2004 with a 30% increase in the harvest level. We joined the National Audubon Society, Washington Environmental Council and Conservation Northwest in challenging this decision, especially as it affected Northern Spotted Owls. Our successful court challenge in 2005 led to a Settlement Agreement between DNR and the Conservation Caucus in March 2006. This Settlement in turn led to the Draft Olympic Experimental State Forest Landscape Plan of June 2010. Our comments submitted on July 15, 2010, contributed to a revision which is due out some time in the summer or fall of 2012.
- OFCO is prepared again to comment on the Revised Draft Plan and EIS. We are also leading an effort to invoke formal Dispute Resolution challenging DNR's failure to comply with the Settlement.

#### **Reviewing timber sales on the Olympic Peninsula**

- Over the years OFCO has reviewed most of the timber sales proposed by DNR for the Olympic Experimental State Forest (OESF). Generally this is a paper review, as we have not had staff or volunteers for on-the-ground review. Our comments, often with help from the Washington Forest Law Center, have led to some important revisions of those sales.
- This work continues.

#### **Commenting on the Olympic Experimental State Forest Landscape Plan**

- OFCO recruited 11 experts to write detailed comments on this proposed Plan. Our comments totaled 111 pages, plus extensive attachments. OFCO members also submitted comments. The comments covered such issues as water quality and sediment impacts; mass wasting and landslides; fish and streams, Northern Spotted Owl and Marbled Murrelet habitat. This extensive and detailed response has delayed DNR's work by more than two years.
- OFCO will respond with more comments when the next Draft is released.

#### **Working to provide for both counties and Marbled Murrelets across Washington**

- The conservation community is recognizing that providing resources for counties and recovering Marbled Murrelets and other wildlife are closely linked. We must do both. Our legal efforts on behalf of the murrelets are only half of the solution, so we also will be working on funding for counties that does not hurt wildlife in state forests.
- We work on this issue across all of Washington, because only statewide solutions will work. We can't provide for only the Peninsula counties, or only the Peninsula murrelets—it just won't succeed.

#### **The Settlement Partners are being convened to resolve a dispute over DNR's compliance with the Settlement.**

- The Settlement Agreement issue under negotiation says, "DNR agrees to perform at least the same number of acres of enhancement activities as regeneration harvests, measured across the entire OESF during the entire period of the Agreement." This is the 1-to-1 ratio of enhancement to regeneration. Regeneration is defined as total harvest, except for leaving 8 trees per acre. Currently the ratio is 0.18-to-1, and the best case DNR estimate is 0.68-to-1.

#### **Starting an assessment of DNR activities across the Hoko and Clallam watersheds**

- We are starting the Hoko/Clallam Project to describe, study, assess and analyze the impacts of DNR's timber management in those watersheds.