



NPSO Forest Policy

Contents

- * **Protection: 1-6**
- * **Special Areas: 7-8**
- * **Management & Monitoring: 9-17**
- * **Commerce: 18-19**

The Native Plant Society of Oregon is dedicated to the conservation of Oregon's native vegetation, including our remaining forest ecosystems.

In the last few decades, the forests of the Pacific Northwest have undergone extreme ecological change as a result of logging, road-building and silvicultural practices.

We emphasize science-based management of forest resources and cooperative approaches among agencies, local communities and interest groups

Our policy is directed at all publicly and privately owned forested lands.

Protection

1.

NPSO advocates protection of all remaining Westside old growth forests in reserves where no thinning or salvage is allowed.

Approximately 90% of our Westside old growth forests have been cut. The remaining old growth should be protected by establishing legislatively mandated Old Growth Reserves or Late-Successional Reserves.

We recommend that standards and guidelines be designed and adopted to maintain and further the development of late-successional forest ecosystems and to protect them from loss due to logging, human impacts such as road-building, recreational over-use, and harvest of non-timber forest products.

Since these systems are invaluable reference areas for increasing our understanding of the ecology of old growth forests, we feel that natural processes such as blow-down, disease, fire and other natural disturbance should be allowed to run their natural course.

2.

NPSO advocates protection of all Eastside old growth forests. We disagree with accelerated logging in the already fragmented forests of central and eastern Oregon. We advocate the same criteria for set asides as noted above for the Westside.

3.

NPSO advocates adding to the reserve system forests of various ages, stages, and forest types and plant communities which will be allowed to undergo natural succession.

All seral stages should be represented in a dynamic reserve system.

In order to allow the forest to recover from a half century of serious overuse, a substantial percentage of our public forest lands should now be placed on a long-term, rotational schedule.

NPSO recognizes that change is inevitable in all ecological systems. Land and resource management plans must cover sufficient land area and provide management guidelines to accommodate the dynamic nature of forested ecosystems.

4.

NPSO strongly advocates protection of vascular and nonvascular botanical diversity, including but not limited to threatened, endangered and sensitive plant species, native plant communities and special habitats.

5.

NPSO advocates the establishment of riparian preserves.

Riparian area boundaries should include areas of adjacent vegetation that provide shade, nutrients, and large organic debris inputs to associated streams and wetlands.

The zone of influence or riparian area typically has a profound effect on the condition of the stream and its bordering vegetation.

Failing to protect the riparian zone threatens multiple values such as storage of flood waters, nutrient cycling, water quality, and terrestrial and aquatic habitat.

6.

In order to prepare for possible global climate change, a corridor system of suitable habitat should be established within the forest to allow for migration of both plants and animals.

The forests should be managed in such a way that native species may migrate in response to long term meteorological change

The appearance of new plant species within a given tract of forest land may signal a response to climate change, and such shifts in plant distribution should be studied and monitored.

Special Areas

7.

NPSO advocates careful, case by case management of forest resources occurring in specially designated lands including Research Natural Areas, Special Interest Areas, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, wilderness areas, relict areas, wild and scenic river corridors, national parks, national monuments, wildlife refuges, Wilderness Study Areas and other special natural areas.

Careful management means no scheduled or salvage logging. Hazard trees may be upset, but left on site.

8.

NPSO advocates the protection of wetlands

Many forested wetlands are destroyed during road-building and logging.

Management & Monitoring

9.

NPSO believes that 'new forestry' and adaptive management techniques should be closely monitored to track the achievements of research and management objectives.

The focus of adaptive management areas should be on restoration projects rather than production or resource exploitation.

Research should be conducted cooperatively by forest scientists and resource managers, and should identify the most efficient management practices compatible with maintaining sustained yields, and removal with minimal degradation to the land.

10.

NPSO encourages agencies to manage and monitor the harvest of special forest products, including fungi, bryophytes, lichens and other botanical material collected for commercial or personal use.

Since the effects of removing these biota are unknown, careful regulation and monitoring are needed, especially in riparian areas and special management areas.

Inventories of impacted species should be conducted to assure that the resource is adequate and sustainable. Collectors and buyers should be certified.

11.

NPSO advocates management of Oregon's forests at the watershed level.

The fragmentation of our forests through road-building and clear-cutting had produced ecosystem islands. To compensate for this fragmentation, we encourage landscape-level management standards and guidelines.

Management objectives should ensure ecological functions such as dispersal of organisms, carry-over of species in time from one stand to the next, and maintenance of structural components such as downed woody material.

We encourage improved communication between federal and state agencies to manage for contiguous areas by considering the effects of manipulations of each unit on the entire watershed.

12.

NPSO acknowledges the threat to native plant communities from the invasion of non-native plant species.

We recommend appropriate management practices that reduce this threat, such as removal and control of invasive exotic species, closing of unused logging roads followed by revegetation with nativespecies, and proper cleaning of equipment.

13.

NPSO advocates multi-use management that includes a strong educational component regarding the ecology of our forest resources.

We recommend management that monitors and limits the impacts from recreational use, especially in Research Natural Areas, Wilderness Areas, and riparian reserves.

14.

NPSO supports the development of standards and guidelines for the control of natural fires and the use of prescribed fire in the management of forest ecosystems.

This is especially important east of the Cascades where suppression of natural fire has resulted in increased susceptibility of forests to insect damage.

15.

NPSO supports adherence to the full environmental review process for proposed grazing leases and their renewal with particular attention to sensitive plant species and/or communities.

We advocate the establishment and enforcement of strict standards and guidelines for conducting plant inventories in grazing lease areas, and for setting grazing lease boundaries to exclude locations of sensitive plant species.

We advocate the maintenance and monitoring of drift fences and gates at high elevations where plant communities are particularly fragile.

We advocate open bid competition for leases and the use of lease revenues for plant inventory and protection activities.

16.

NPSO believes that monitoring of all land management activities is the essential key to professional land management.

Monitoring must include biological, edaphic and physical effects on all associated resources over the period of time necessary to determine the full regime of effects.

Monitoring must assess whether project objectives are being met.

Funds for monitoring should be budgeted in advance.

17.

NPSO advocates replanting logged areas with a mix of coniferous and broad-leaved species to replace, in so far as possible, the native plant species composition of the logged area.

The mix of species should depend on the characteristics of the site.

Successional forests should be managed to avoid development of monocultures, depending on historic, natural successional patterns.

NPSO advocates replanting logged areas with a diversity of genotypes as well as a diversity of species. This can be accomplished by consistently using seed stock rather than cloned material.

Commerce

18.

Importation of foreign logs introduces exotic insects, fungi, bacteria and viruses that can devastate native species.

NPSO supports the restriction and control of log importation from foreign countries.

19.

NPSO supports the discontinuation of raw log exports and all unfinished wood products.

We promote the consideration of alternatives proposed in the Sustainable Forestry Initiative of 1994 for altering forest tax structures and establishing community-based restoration development funds.