

WAC 222-10-041 Northern spotted owls. The following policies shall apply to forest practices subject to SEPA if the forest practices may cause adverse impacts to northern spotted owls.

(1) **In SOSEAs or areas of SOSEAs where the goal is demographic support,** suitable spotted owl habitat should be maintained either to protect the viability of the owl(s) associated with each northern spotted owl site center or to provide demographic support for that particular SOSEA as described in the SOSEA goals.

(2) **In SOSEAs or areas of SOSEAs where the goal is dispersal support,** either suitable spotted owl habitat should be maintained to protect the viability of the owl(s) associated with each northern spotted owl site center or dispersal habitat should be managed, over time, to provide the dispersal support for that particular SOSEA as described in the SOSEA goals. Dispersal support is provided by a landscape which includes dispersal habitat at the stand level interspersed with areas of higher quality habitat. Stands of dispersal habitat should be managed to reduce gaps between stands and to maintain a sufficient level of dispersal habitat to meet the SOSEA goals over time.

(3) **In SOSEAs or areas of SOSEAs where the goal is a combination of dispersal support and demographic support,** either suitable spotted owl habitat should be maintained to protect the viability of the owl(s) associated with each northern spotted owl site center or a variety of habitat conditions should be provided which in total are more than dispersal support and less than demographic support. This can be accomplished by providing:

(a) Dispersal support as described in subsection (2) of this section;

(b) Areas of suitable spotted owl habitat that contain some opportunities for nesting as well as roosting and foraging habitat; and

(c) Connectivity between areas of SOSEAs designated for demographic support or adjacent federal lands which are designated as late successional reserves, congressionally reserved areas, or administratively withdrawn areas.

(4) **Within SOSEAs,** the following amounts of suitable habitat are generally assumed to be necessary to maintain the viability of the owl(s) associated with each northern spotted owl site center, in the absence of more specific data or a mitigation plan, as provided for in subsections (6) and (7) of this section respectively:

(a) All suitable spotted owl habitat within 0.7 mile of each northern spotted owl site center;

(b) Including the suitable spotted owl habitat identified in (a) of this subsection:

(i) For the Hoh-Clearwater/Coastal Link SOSEA - A total of 5,863 acres of suitable spotted owl habitat within the median home range circle (2.7 mile radius).

(ii) For all other SOSEAs - A total of 2,605 acres of suitable spotted owl habitat within the median home range circle (1.8 mile radius).

The department shall first identify the highest quality suitable spotted owl habitat for this purpose. Consideration shall be given to habitat quality, proximity to the activity center and contiguity in selecting the most suitable habitat. Suitable spotted owl habitat identified outside 0.7 mile of a northern spotted owl site center may support more than one median home range circle.

(5) **Outside SOSEAs,** during the nesting season (between March 1 and August 31), seventy acres of the highest quality suitable spotted owl habitat surrounding a northern spotted owl site center should be

maintained. The seventy acres for one site center shall not be utilized for meeting suitable habitat needs of any other site center.

(6) The assumptions set forth in subsection (4) of this section are based on regional data. Applicants or others may submit information that is more current, accurate, or specific to a northern spotted owl site center, proposal, or SOSEA circumstances or goals. The department shall use such information in making its determinations under this section where the department finds, in consultation with the department of fish and wildlife, that the information is more likely to be valid for the particular circumstances than the assumptions established under subsection (4) of this section. If the department does not use the information, it shall explain its reasons in writing to the applicant.

(7) The department shall consider measures to mitigate identified adverse impacts of an applicant's proposal. Mitigation measures must contribute to the achievement of SOSEA goals or to supporting the viability of impacted northern spotted owl site centers.

[Statutory Authority: [RCW 76.09.040]. WSR 06-17-128, § 222-10-041, filed 8/21/06, effective 9/21/06. Statutory Authority: RCW 76.09.040, 43.21C.060, and 43.21C.120. WSR 02-11-075, § 222-10-041, filed 5/13/02, effective 6/13/02. Statutory Authority: Chapter 34.05 RCW, RCW 76.09.040, [76.09.]050, [76.09.]370, 76.13.120(9). WSR 01-12-042, § 222-10-041, filed 5/30/01, effective 7/1/01. Statutory Authority: Chapters 76.09 and 34.05 RCW. WSR 96-12-038, § 222-10-041, filed 5/31/96, effective 7/1/96.]