



**1. What is a habitat conservation plan?**

A [habitat conservation plan](#) is a planning document that is required as part of an application for an incidental take permit. It describes the anticipated effects of the proposed taking, how those impacts will be minimized or mitigated, and how the habitat conservation plan will be funded.

Habitat conservation plans can apply to listed and non-listed species, including those that are candidates or have been proposed for listing. Conserving species before they are in danger of extinction or are likely to become so can also provide early benefits and prevent the need for listing.

**2. Who is the applicant?**

Sierra Pacific Industries prepared the Draft Habitat Conservation Plan for the northern spotted owl and California spotted owl and applied for a 50-year incidental take permit.

**3. What species are included in this habitat conservation plan, and where are they located?**

[Northern spotted owl](#) (*Strix occidentalis caurina*) and [California spotted owl](#) (*Strix occidentalis*) are covered by the Habitat Conservation Plan for northern spotted owl and California spotted owl.

Northern spotted owl is a subspecies of spotted owl that is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. They are nocturnal, forest-dwelling birds that nest in mature and old-growth forests from southwestern British Columbia, Canada, southward through Washington and Oregon into northwestern California. The northern spotted owl is located in the following California counties: Humboldt, Siskiyou, Shasta and Trinity.

California spotted owl is a subspecies of spotted owl that is closely related to the northern spotted owl subspecies, but it is not currently listed under the Endangered Species Act. California spotted owls can be found from the southern end of the Cascades and northern Sierra Nevada, south through the Peninsular and Transverse ranges of southern California and northern Baja California. They are also found in the coastal mountains north to Monterey Bay. The California spotted owl is located in the following California counties: Amador, Butte, Calaveras, El Dorado, Mariposa, Modoc, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sierra, Siskiyou, Shasta, Tuolumne and Yuba. It has also been found in Washoe County, Nevada.

**4. What is Sierra Pacific Industries going to do to offset harm to the species resulting from activities covered in the habitat conservation plan?**

The purpose of the habitat conservation plan is to provide long-term comprehensive conservation and protection of the northern and California spotted owl and their habitats at ecologically appropriate scales on Sierra Pacific Industries lands in California. Conservation for both species includes:

- Increasing potential habitat areas across the landscape.
- Protecting habitat at occupied spotted owl sites.
- Retaining habitat elements during salvage harvesting.
- Reducing potential for catastrophic fire.
- Reducing potential impacts to reproductive sites.
- Reducing potential impact from illegal activities.
- Retaining habitat elements during timber harvest.
- Addressing barred owl as a stressor on both subspecies.

**5. Will other species benefit from conservation measures outlined in this habitat plan?**

Reducing the potential for catastrophic fire, as well as retaining some habitat elements during timber harvest, may benefit other forest species.

**6. If the California spotted owl is not protected under the Endangered Species Act, why is it included in the habitat conservation plan?**

Habitat conservation plans can apply to both listed and non-listed species. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is currently reviewing the status of the California spotted owl to determine if listing under the Endangered Species Act is warranted.

Sierra Pacific Industries considered preparing a habitat conservation plan that addresses only the federally and state-listed northern spotted owl; however, they determined that if the California spotted owl became listed, they may need to develop a second conservation strategy for the same plan area to address the species' conservation needs and ensure their management activities were covered. In addition, they decided that omitting the California spotted owl from the conservation planning process would result in fewer conservation benefits for this subspecies and would not provide long-term assurances.

Conserving species before they are in danger of extinction or are likely to become so can also provide early benefits and prevent the need for listing.

**7. What activities are covered in the habitat conservation plan?**

The habitat conservation plan covers forest management, species management and monitoring activities.

**8. Why is the incidental take permit period 50 years?**

The five-point policy for habitat conservation plans requires the applicant to specify the permit terms, and because their activities are expected to continue for an undetermined amount of time, Sierra Pacific Industries requested a 50-year permit. Forest development is a relatively slow process, so a long permit term fits Sierra Pacific Industries' planning needs and the time required to grow spotted owl habitat.

With 50 year permits it is required that the applicant propose a sufficient compliance monitoring program to ensure the biological goals and objectives of the HCP are being met and that assumptions made are on track to ensure that the take authorized has not been exceeded, thereby, in compliance with their permit.

**9. Will the habitat conservation plan inhibit Sierra Pacific Industries' forest management work?**

The habitat conservation plan will not inhibit forest management work because the conservation measures outlined in the draft plan were developed in coordination with Sierra Pacific Industries' timber management strategy.

**10. Will any private lands be impacted by the habitat conservation plan?**

The habitat conservation plan applies only to areas on Sierra Pacific Industries property, totaling approximately 1,566,151 acres.

**11. What impact will the regulations of the habitat conservation plan have on private citizens and recreation in the sierras?**

The habitat conservation plan will have no impact on private citizens and will not impact recreation. The plan is limited to commercial timberland owned by Sierra Pacific Industries.

**12. How will the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ensure the habitat conservation plan is implemented?**

The habitat conservation plan includes monitoring, reporting, and adaptive management requirements that will be discussed at biannual meetings between Sierra Pacific Industries and the

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Additionally, the U.S. Forest Service and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife have been involved in development of the plan.

**13. How can people submit their comments?**

Members of the public will have the opportunity to ask questions, discuss issues regarding the environmental impact statement, and provide written comments at in-person public meetings and a webinar scheduled as indicated below. Direct all requests for sign language interpreting services, closed captioning or other accommodation needs to Kim Turner, TTY 800-877-8339, by close of business on July 1, 2019.

May 28, 2019 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. (pacific) at Hilltop Holiday Inn, Buckskin Room, 1900 Hilltop Drive, Redding, CA 96002

May 29, 2019 from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. (pacific) at Bonderson Building, Hearing Room, 901 P St., Sacramento, CA 95814

Service-hosted webinar: May 29, 2019 from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. (pacific)