

California Dept of Fish & Game: Roles and Information Needs in Fisher & Marten Conservation

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**Okay Zielinski: tell us
everything you know about
fisher habitat.**



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MOTH INTERROGATION

DFG Mission

“The Mission of the Department of Fish and Game is to manage California's diverse fish, wildlife, and plant resources, and the habitats upon which they depend, for their ecological values and for their use and enjoyment by the public.”

Overview of Information Needs

1. Species Status Assessment
2. Wildlife Management
3. Project Review (CEQA/FPA/NEPA)
4. Habitat Conservation Planning

Species Status

Information Needs	F	M
What are the distribution and abundance of fisher and marten in California?	+ -	+ -
Are extant populations currently self-sustaining? Are any populations declining and, if so, at what rate? Are any populations currently at risk of extinction?	-	-
Are there unique populations (in terms of genetic structure, geographic range, behavior, etc.) that require special conservation efforts?	?	?
What are the factors limiting populations of fisher and marten?	+ -	+ -
What are the best approaches to remove limits on populations at risk of further decline or extinction?	+ -	+ -

(+) = current information adequate; (-) = information inadequate; (?) = unknown

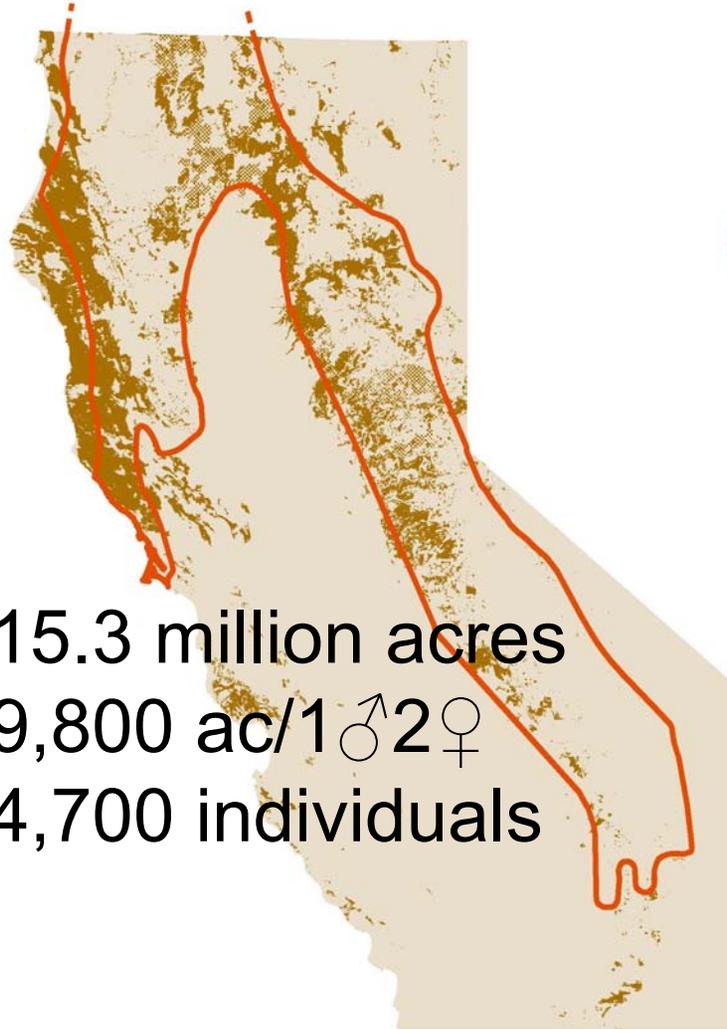
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Overview of Information Needs

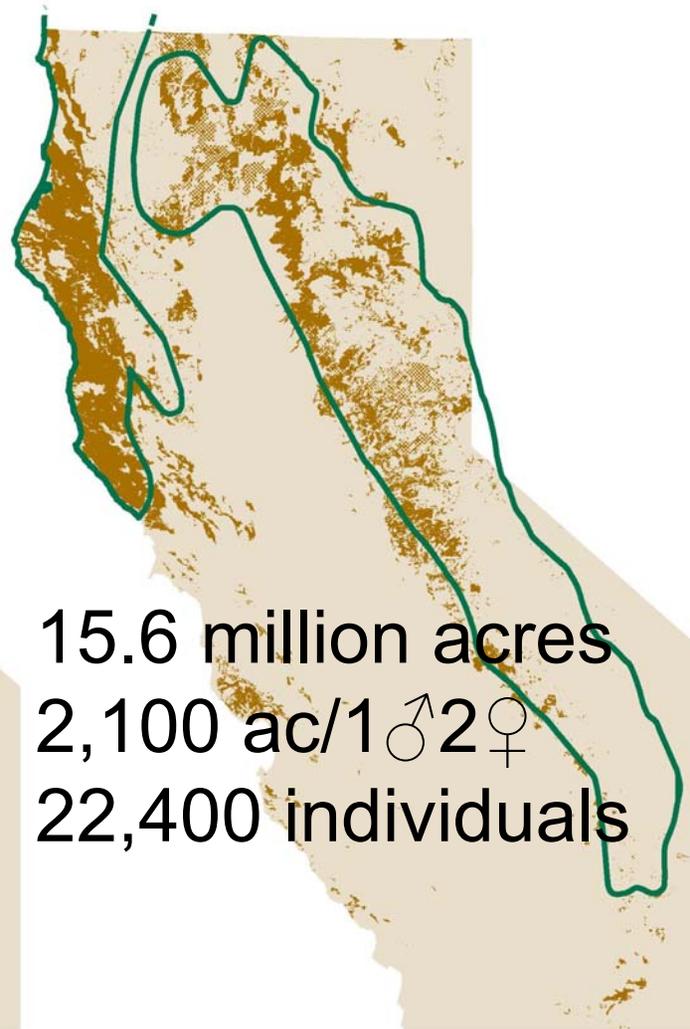
1. Species Status Assessment
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3. **Project Review (CEQA/FPA/NEPA)**
4. Habitat Conservation Planning

Fisher



15.3 million acres
9,800 ac/1♂2♀
4,700 individuals

Marten



15.6 million acres
2,100 ac/1♂2♀
22,400 individuals

Private Timberlands

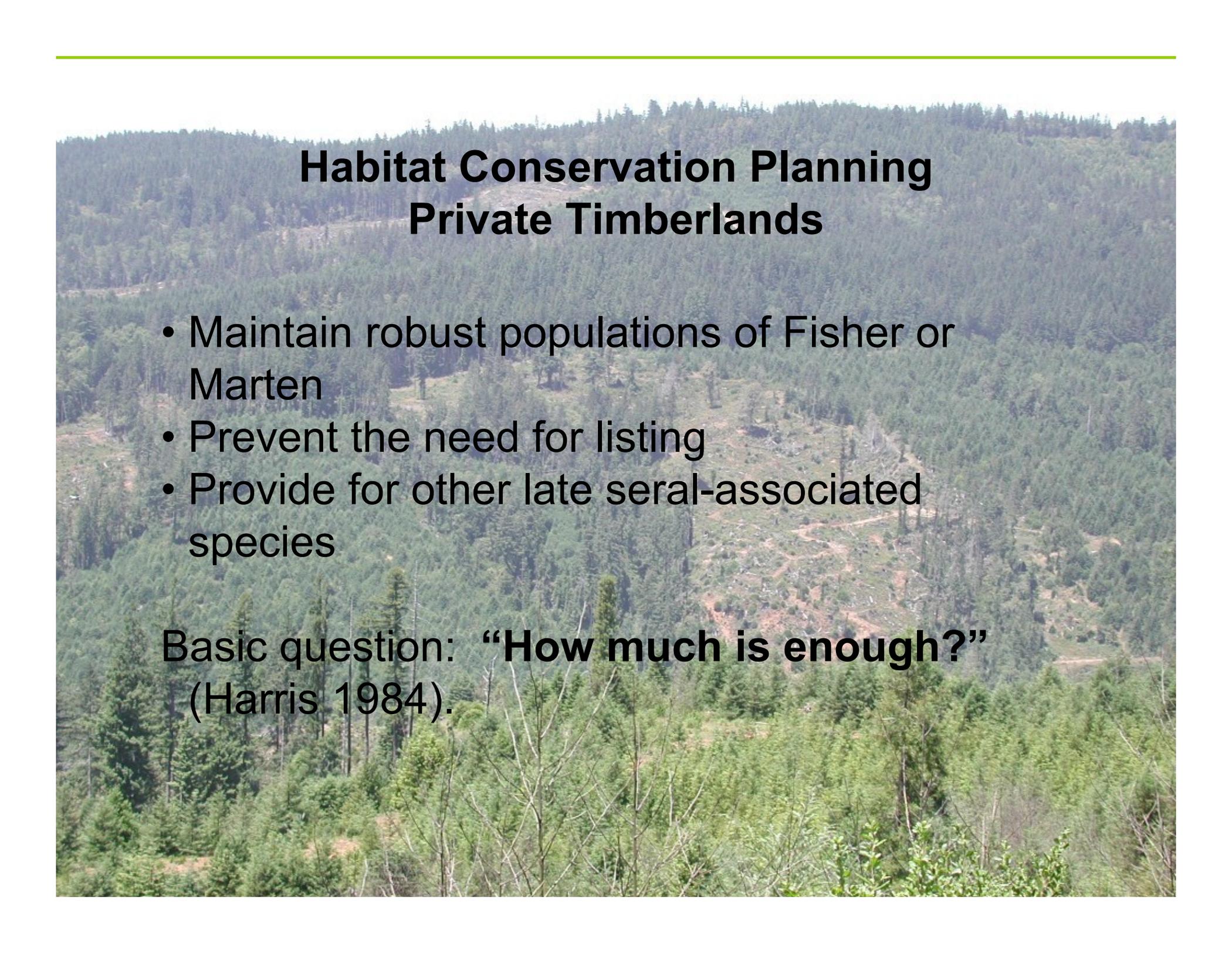
Timber Harvest Plan Review

Information Needs	F	M
What information should be disclosed in a Timber Harvesting Plan?	+	+
What are the thresholds and scale for identifying significant adverse impacts on the environment?	+	+
Are there silvicultural prescriptions compatible with (1) production of high quality wood products and (2) maintenance of fisher and marten populations?	+	+

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Overview of Information Needs

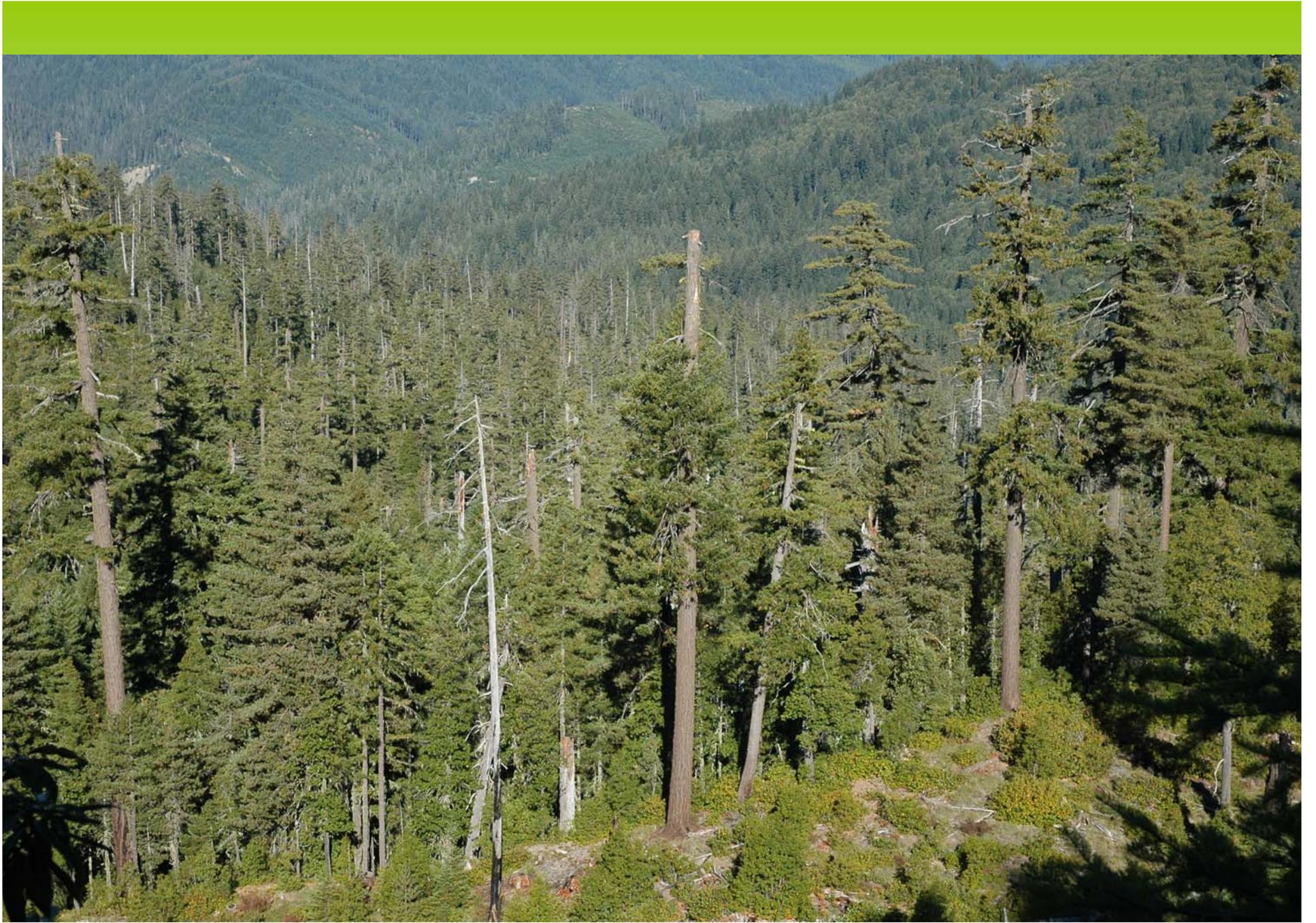
1. Species Status Assessment
2. Wildlife Management
3. Project Review (CEQA/FPA/NEPA)
4. **Habitat Conservation Planning**

An aerial photograph of a forested hillside. The majority of the area is covered in dense, green forest. In the center of the image, there is a large, irregularly shaped area where the forest has been cleared, showing brown earth and some remaining tree stumps. The background shows more forested hills under a clear sky.

Habitat Conservation Planning Private Timberlands

- Maintain robust populations of Fisher or Marten
- Prevent the need for listing
- Provide for other late seral-associated species

Basic question: **“How much is enough?”**
(Harris 1984).



Habitat Conservation Planning Private Timberlands

	Silviculture	Seral Stage Distribution	Snags & Green Wildlife Trees
GDRCo	Primarily clearcuts with selection in riparian zones (WLPZ). Harvest rotation period from 50 to 80 years.	NSO Set-Asides (13,000 ac). WLPZs.	Retain most/all snags. Retain high wildlife value green trees. If WLPZ < 15% of unit area, then retain 1 tree/acre or 2 trees/acre.
PALCO		≥ 10% late seral forest on PALCO forest lands in each WAA.	Retain all snags. Retain 4.8 snags+green trees/acre. Retain 4 “live cull” trees/acre. Retain hardwoods ≥ 30” dbh.
SPI		Option (a) WLPZs.	Snags: at least 1.3/ac ≥ 15” dbh and 0.02/ac ≥ 24” dbh Retention areas: ~2% of unit area
Non-Industrial	Clearcut or selection.	Closed canopy forest continuously available under selection regimes.	Retain snags except for safety, fire hazard, or merchantability. No requirement for green tree retention (except WLPZs).

Habitat Conservation Planning Private Timberlands

Information Needs	F	M
What are the target quantities for seral stage distribution and rest/den site density in a planning area?	+	+
What is the appropriate scale for landscape planning efforts?	+	+
Are snag dynamic models an appropriate tool for assessing recruitment and loss of rest/den structures?	?	?
Are cavity creation techniques useful where rest/den sites are limiting?	-	-
What characteristics are needed for movement corridors between habitat patches? Are WLPZs enough?	+ -	+ -
How should landscape plans be monitored to assess their effectiveness?	+	+

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Summary

- I think we know more than we think we know!
- DFG could be working more with other stakeholders to address issues of:
 - Fisher and Marten status
 - Assessment and disclosure of potential impacts of projects
 - Landscape or regional conservation planning
- All of these should be folded into State-wide Conservation Strategies for Fisher and Marten
 - Management recommendations for habitat conservation
 - Research to further refine our knowledge
 - Direct management projects as needed and appropriate
 - Monitoring to ensure strategies are working

A man in a forest, wearing a tan shirt, orange vest, and green pants, is pointing towards a large tree trunk. The tree trunk has a thick, horizontal band of blue paint around it. The background is a lush green forest with many trees and foliage.

Thank you!

Tina Bartlett
Marty Berbach
Esther Burkett
Lowell Diller
Gary Falxa
Keith Hamm
Linda Miller
Kenneth Moore
Keith Slauson
Susan Sniado
Brad Valentine
Bill Zielinski