October 25, 2013

TO: Forest Practices Board

FROM: Andrew Hayes and Lauren Burnes, DNR on behalf of the Northern Spotted Owl Implementation Team

SUBJECT: Update on Activities of the Northern Spotted Owl Implementation Team (NSOIT)

Since our last meeting to the Board, the NSOIT has met four times (August 16th, September 18th, October 8th, and October 22nd), and has at least one additional meeting scheduled on October 30th.

Last November, the Board directed the NSOIT to, "in addition to its duties assigned in February, 2010 and in accordance with its approved Charter…, Investigate and make recommendations to the Board not later than the August, 2013 Board meeting, as to whether the State should consider seeking: Voluntary "opt-in" federal assurances for forest landowners, designed to promote the establishment, use and operation of a Northern Spotted Owl conservation bank or other voluntary conservation incentive planning tools; or, a programmatic Habitat Conservation Plan, Safe Harbor Agreement or other federal assurance mechanisms…" Last August, the Board unanimously passed a motion allowing the NSOIT "until November 2013 to complete developing recommendations as assigned by the Board at the November 2012 meeting." In addition, an interim report was completed and distributed to the Board on August 23, 2013. Addressing this directive has been the primary focus of the NSOIT. Maintaining momentum on ongoing priority work plan tasks – particularly the work of the Technical Team to identify the most effective and efficient places to incentivize northern spotted owl conservation – has been key to this effort. As of the date of this memo, the team continues to receive and evaluate Technical Team work products and develop policy recommendations in anticipation of the November deadline.

The Technical Team has made significant progress since our last update to the Board, and is nearing completion of the third and final phase of their analysis. The Technical Team continues to meet weekly to complete their modeling runs on a demanding timeline and is interacting regularly with the NSOIT for guidance. On August 16th and September 18th, the NSOIT met with the Technical Team to understand the proposed scenarios, provide guidance on issues to be resolved, and provide approval of the framework for alternative conservation scenarios being analyzed. On October 8th and October 22nd, the Technical Team presented results of conservation scenario modeling runs and discussed the results with the NSOIT with the aid of custom-developed data metrics.

The process is nearing completion, and the NSOIT has requested additional analyses to be completed prior to the November Board meeting. The Technical Team continues to work vigorously to: create and analyze simulated habitat maintenance and recruitment and associated demographic responses; and complete their analysis of the economic costs of implementing specific incentive proposals. The NSOIT will use results from the Technical Team analysis to inform their recommendations to the Board. On October 30th, the NSOIT will meet to review the pending technical team data and continue their effort to reach consensus on recommendations to the Board by the November deadline. We greatly appreciate the tremendous commitment the Technical Team and contracted modelers have made to complete this analysis on a demanding timeline.

We will be available during the November Board meeting should you have any questions.