

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation is the largest land-based reservation in California, and is located in Humboldt County, approximately 300 miles North of San Francisco and 90 miles from the Oregon border. The Reservation, containing 90,000 acres, is surrounded by the Klamath-Trinity mountains within the Klamath geographic province. The Trinity River flows through the valley and effectively divides the Reservation into east and west halves.



The Tribe has a membership of 2,200 people of which approximately 1700 reside on the Reservation. The Tribal economy is nearly entirely timber based and the Tribe continues to log old growth at the rate of 9.3 million board feet annually under a Tribal Forest Management Plan (FMP) which has been certified as ecologically sustainable by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Smartwood. The Tribe is committed to excellence and sustainability in its management of the Reservation's natural resources because of the obvious responsibility to future generations. The protection of fish, wildlife and plants as well as important cultural areas has shaped the FMP. There is a need however, for the development of a long term ecological monitoring program to ensure that current management will result in the desired conditions identified in the FMP vision statement.

Approval of funding for the goals of this project proposal will advance the Tribe's capacity to protect habitat elements critical to T&E, Sensitive, and cultural wildlife and plants and will improve the Tribe's ability to make informed forest management decisions. This may lead to minor adjustments to the Tribe's FMP to protect key wildlife habitat elements. The total request of Federal funds to implement all the goals of this project is \$176,338 and the Tribal share is estimated to be \$77,373.

The northern spotted owl was listed as a threatened species on July 23, 1990 (U. S. Department of Interior, 1992). The Hoopa Tribe began intensively surveying for northern spotted owls in 1991 and began an intensive demographic monitoring and banding program in 1992. The Tribe's FMP allows for protection of core nesting and roosting stands for the current and future benefit of spotted owls. In addition, the FMP allows for the retention of significant stand structure within all types of silvicultural prescriptions allowed by the FMP. Key habitat elements for spotted owls is well defined in the existing literature.

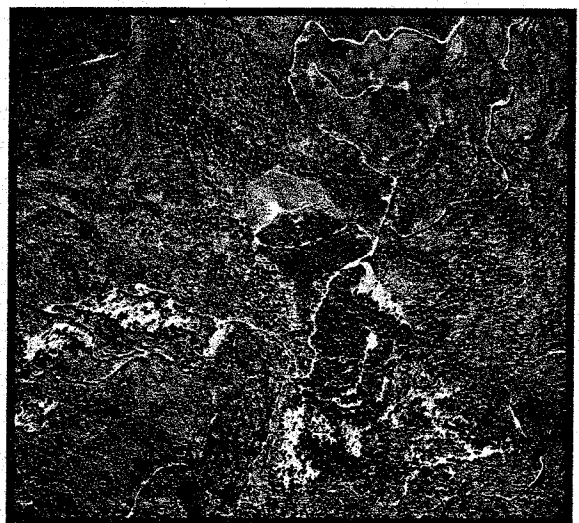
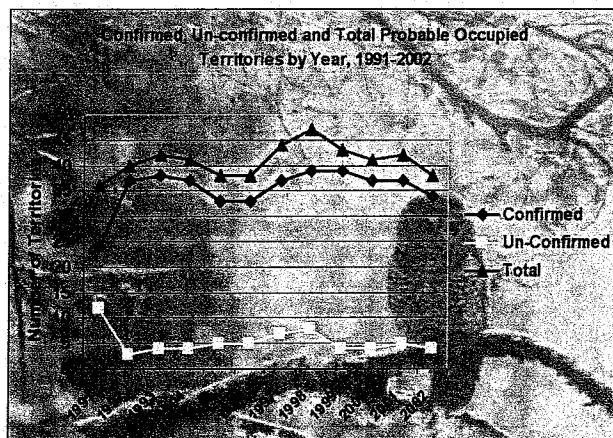
A distinct population segment (DPS) of the pacific fisher has been petitioned to be listed as an endangered species under the Endangered Species Act and is currently under going a 12 month status review by the Service (Center for Biological Diversity et al. 2000, Federal Register Vol. 68, No. 132 July 10, 2003 pp 41169-41174). The fisher and pileated woodpecker are also a culturally significant species to the Hupa people and still occur in relatively large numbers on the Reservation. Since the Tribe's economy is nearly entirely based on timber harvest and because the fisher and pileated woodpecker are dependant at least in part upon forests with old growth characteristics, it would be

beneficial to all involved to carefully select the trees and other forest structures for retention while implementing the Tribe's forest management plan.

The Tribal Biologist is allowed to select leave trees and leave tree groups in timber sale units, but due to time and funding constraints, is only able to participate in these activities on rare occasion. The first Goal of this proposal is to hire a qualified and capable Habitat Biologist/Project Director to work closely with the silviculturist and layout foresters to ensure that the best habitat elements possible within each timber sale unit are selected for protection. With the aid of a Biological Technician, the Habitat Biologist will preview and comment on every timber sale unit during sale layout in 2004 and 2005. They will also develop an effectiveness monitoring program to track the fate of designated leave trees or groups through all stages of logging and site preparation and immediately following completion of the logging. Information gathered through this monitoring will be useful in making improvements in forest management practices in the future. In addition, the Habitat Biologist will develop educational and materials which can be used in the field by timber sale layout crews and presented to layout crews and loggers. These materials will be available for use in the future regardless of whether or not continued funding is available for these positions. Finally, the Tribal Biologist will work in conjunction with a qualified consultant(s) to develop long term ecological monitoring elements with standardized protocols which could be used for monitoring the effects of the Tribe's forest management. The total cost of this Goal is \$159,338 for a 20 month period.

The second goal would be to use existing fisher rest site habitat data (134 plots) and random plot data (134 plots) collected in 1996-98 to develop a predictive model of fisher rest site selection. Data collected on these 1/5 acre plots included many variables useful for describing rest site trees or other structures and micro habitat conditions surrounding these structures. We propose to hire a consultant to complete the data analysis and model testing and then use the results to improve habitat protection guidelines for fishers. Total Federal cost of implementation of this goal is \$17,000 and the Tribal share is estimated at \$9,923.

Implementation of this project is expected to greatly benefit fisher, spotted owl and pileated woodpeckers on the Reservation, while also helping to define rest site habitat for fisher throughout the region.



A large number of n. spotted owl territories are occupied on the Reservation each year (left). Current forest management practices retain many trees in harvested units (above).