



Rivers and Habitat Open Space Program

FACT SHEET

The Rivers and Habitat Open Space Program (RHOSP) ensures the long-term conservation of aquatic resources and upland habitats by acquiring conservation easements on lands and timber within a specific type of channel migration zone and habitat of threatened and endangered species. This program is administered by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), but it requires funding from the State Legislature. DNR screens applications, prioritizes qualifying applications, and acquires land based on available funding. Since 2002, when funding first became available, there were 16 easements purchased that protect important habitat. At this time RHOSP is unfunded.

Channel Migration Zone



A channel migration zone (CMZ) is the area where the active channel of a stream is prone to move in the near term. CMZs are generally large rivers, have less than 2 percent gradient, and are found in a valley more than four times wider than the bankfull width of the channel. These areas typically have very high ecological value as spawning and rearing habitat for salmon and other fish species. Under the forest practices rules, no timber harvesting or road construction may occur within channel migration zones due to their ecological importance.

Critical Habitat

The Forest Practices Board recognizes and protects in the forest practices rules critical habitat of ten upland species, two of which are the northern spotted owl and the marbled murrelet. Critical habitat is a designation that makes a special effort to protect the important characteristics that will assist in the recovery of the threatened and endangered species. Landowners that own forestland that is habitat for these species protected in the rules are eligible to grant to the State a conservation easement under RHOSP.

Notice of Intent to Apply

DNR would like to provide an opportunity for property owners to show the level of interest in this program. DNR is asking landowners that may be interested in applying to RHOSP to submit a "Notice of Intent" form. DNR will gather this information to gauge the level of interest and provide that information to the State budget makers.

Submit a Notice of Intent Online

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/RHOSP> ,

Or contact Dan Pomerenk at 360.902.1427

Email: dan.pomerenk@dnr.wa.gov

CONTACTS:

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