



**NEWS RELEASE**

No. 06-061

May 18, 2006

Contact: Patty Henson, 360-902-1023, [patty.henson@wadnr.gov](mailto:patty.henson@wadnr.gov)

## **State Forest Practices Board to Conduct Hearings on Spotted Owl Rules**

OLYMPIA – The State Department of Natural Resources announced today that the Washington Forest Practices Board will conduct four public hearings in late May and early June about two proposed amendments to Forest Practices Rules for conserving Northern Spotted Owl habitat in Washington State.

The hearings will be open to the public, and held at the following locations and times:

**May 25, 2 p.m.**

Red Lion Hotel, Kelso  
360.578.4007

**June 1, 2 p.m.**

DNR Region Office, Forks  
360.374.6131

**June 6, 2 p.m.**

Red Lion City Center Hotel, Yakima  
509.248.5900

**June 8, 2 p.m.**

Best Western Cottontree Inn, Mt. Vernon  
800.662.6886

One of the rule amendments would ensure that no spotted owl sites will be decertified through June 30, 2007, coincidental with the anticipated release of the federal recovery plan now underway. The other amendment would discontinue a provision that has allowed landowners to count as habitat land that has been harvested under an adjacent landowner's habitat conservation plan.

Out of concern regarding the challenges facing the Northern Spotted Owl, the proposal was originally adopted as emergency rules in November of 2005 and then re-adopted in February and early May 2006 to prevent them from expiring in July, which would have left a time gap without this protection prior to the Board acting on a permanent rule in August.

Following the public hearings, recommendations for permanent rule adoption will be brought back to the Forest Practices Board at its August 9th meeting.

(MORE)

## **DNR Protects Natural Resources**

DNR provides wildfire protection and supports the Forest Practices Board in protecting public resources on 12.7 million acres of private and state-owned forestland.

The 12-member Forest Practices Board is an independent state agency established in 1975 by the Legislature under the state Forest Practices Act. By law, the board is charged with establishing rules to protect the state's natural resources while maintaining a viable timber industry.

A forest practice is defined as an activity carried out on forestland which relates to the growing, harvesting or processing of timber. Some examples include: logging, thinning, road construction, brush control, fertilization, and land conversions.

The Governor appoints seven members of the Forest Practices Board. The remaining members are designated by law, including the Commissioner of Public Lands. The other members are the heads of the Departments of Community, Trade, and Economic Development; Agriculture; Ecology; and Fish and Wildlife, or their designees.

Because the Commissioner of Public Lands both administers DNR and chairs the Forest Practices Board, DNR provides staff support for the Board. The Forest Practices Act also requires DNR to administer and enforce all board-adopted rules.

Commissioner Sutherland is the 12<sup>th</sup> Public Lands Commissioner since statehood in 1889.

###