WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
Natural Resources

PR 14-004-240

Protecting Common Loon Nests

Date: August, 1999
Application: All west-side forested ecosystems covered by the Habitat Conservation Plan, including the Olympic Experimental State Forest Planning Unit.

DISCUSSION

One of the department's overall objectives is to help maintain the geographic distribution of unlisted species that have small home ranges, which applies to the common loon. This procedure describes the management strategies for activities that are next to or around a known common loon nest. The common loon is an unlisted species of concern. The protection strategy for the common loon is to minimize disturbance to known loon nest sites. Protection will be achieved through implementing the riparian buffer strategy and by providing additional protection for identified nest sites.

The riparian strategy as well as the landscape's habitat objectives, are expected to provide the measures necessary to protect the common loon's nest sites. However, this procedure identifies additional requirements for protecting known active loon nests.

Action

1. If a common loon nest is found within 500 feet of the proposed management activity, obtain assistance from a region or division wildlife biologist to determine if the nest is active (i.e., currently in use or likely used in the most recent breeding season).

   (a) If the nest is inactive, end the procedure.

   (b) If the nest is active, restrict any part of a proposed activity that would disturb resting habitat. Restricted activities would include, but are not limited to, tree removal, herbicide application, broadcast burning, and road construction within 500 feet of a known active nest between April 1 and September 1.

APPROVED BY: Michael Perez Gibson, Manager
Forest Resources Division
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