

C. FOREST-WIDE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR FEDERAL AND STATE  
THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

- ALL SPECIES Habitat management for Federally listed species will take precedence over unlisted species. Habitat management for endangered species will take precedence over threatened species. Habitat management for sensitive species will take precedence over all other species.
- 1/ Protect and manage essential and critical habitats of threatened, endangered, and sensitive species through ensuring that legal and biological requirements of designated plant and animal species are met; further, identify data needs for threatened, endangered, and sensitive species.
- 1/ Identify, protect and enhance existing and potential habitat of all T&E and sensitive species.
- 1/ Activities likely to cause disturbance, including public use, will be prohibited in the vicinity of any essential habitat for T&E species.
- C00, C02 Evaluate the need for consultation with the U.S. Fish and  
C01, C12 Wildlife Service when management practices are proposed  
which are likely to cause disturbance to T&E species and/or  
their habitat.
- C01, C02 Provide for bald eagle winter roost requirements in known.  
C03, E00 eagle habitat by retaining or recruiting snags in those.  
E03, E05 areas.  
E07, J01, P11  
P12, P13
- C01, C02 Discourage fuel wood gathering activities within salamander  
C12, E05 habitat.  
E07, E00, P11  
P12, P14
- C01, C08 Manage T&E species habitats in a manner consistent with all  
C1, C12 Management, Recovery Plans and Action Plans.
- C02,C12 Consult and cooperate with New Mexico Department of Game and  
Fish to achieve management objectives for State listed T&E species.
- C02,C05 Manage T&E species to attain total recovery levels overtime.  
C08,C11 Existing and proposed T&E species that have been found on  
C12,E05 the forest are noted by Management Area.  
E07 Evaluations will be made to ascertain desirability or re-introduction of  
endangered native species to suitable habitat not presently occupied.

C02, C08 C11, C12 E07  P14	In cooperation with other agencies, determine habitat requirements for Sacramento Mountain Salamander affected by timber harvest, including canopy cover and density E02, of down logs and small residual material. Until specific requirements are determined P11, P12 and appropriate standards established, areas occupied by Salamander will be evaluated on a site-specific basis and addressed through the integrated resource management process
C06, C07 C10, C11	Protect and improve riparian and wetland areas to provide suitable aquatic environment for threatened and endangered species using measures such as log F05, F06 dams, rock fence structures, trees, shrub, and hydrophyte plantings, etc.
C06, C07 C10, F03 F04, F05 F06	Determine sources of water quality degradation when water quality may affect threatened and endangered species habitat. Remedy the situation where needed.
C11, C12 P35, P36	Prohibit use of pesticides, herbicides, or other contaminants harmful to any T&E species present on the project area or areas affecting prey base.

In the event new species or new populations of known species are identified to occur in the planning area, the Forest Plan will be modified to accommodate protection or enhancement of such species and/or their habitats.

#### Mexican Spotted Owl Standards and Guidelines

Standards and guidelines to be added to each forest plan for Mexican spotted owl habitat, northern goshawk habitat, grazing utilization, and old growth designation follow. Standards and guidelines are the bounds or constraints within which all management activities are to be carried out in achieving forest plan objectives. The following standards and guidelines are packaged in parallel format. Parallel format means that a set of standards is described first which gives the primary constraint. Following the standards are guidelines that provide additional details on how each standard will be implemented. For example, one of the Mexican spotted owl standards is to "Establish a protected activity center at all Mexican spotted owl sites located during surveys and all management territories established since 1989."

The corresponding guidelines read, "Delineate an area of not less than 600 acres around the activity center using boundaries of known habitat polygons and/or topographic features. Written justification for boundary delineation should be provided."

"The Protected Activity Center boundary should enclose the best possible owl habitat configured in as compact a unit as possible, with the nest or activity center located near the center."

"The activity center is defined as the nest site. In the absence of a known nest, the activity center should be defined as a roost grove commonly used during breeding. In the absence of a known nest or roost, the activity center should be defined as the best nest/roost habitat."

"Protected Activity Center boundaries should not overlap."

"Submit protected activity center maps and descriptions to the recovery unit working group for comment as soon as possible after completion of surveys."

As the foregoing example shows, the guidelines are the detailed information about implementation of the standards. While standards and guidelines both specify the management bounds and constraints, the standards contain no discretionary elements and the guidelines may occasionally contain discretionary elements. For example, one of the Mexican spotted owl guidelines is "The Protected Activity Center should enclose the best possible owl habitat..." The terms "should" and "best" imply some discretion on the part of the person implementing the guideline,

### MEXICAN SPOTTED OWL

Standards: Provide three levels of habitat management -protected, restricted, and other forest and woodland types to achieve a diversity of habitat conditions across the landscape.

Protected areas include delineated protected activity centers; mixed conifer and pine-oak forests with slopes greater than 40% where timber harvest has not occurred in the last 120 years; and reserved lands which include wilderness, research natural areas, wild and scenic rivers, and congressionally recognized wilderness study areas.

Restricted areas include all mixed-conifer, pine-oak, and riparian forests outside of protected areas.

Other forest and woodland types include all ponderosa pine, spruce-fir, woodland, and aspen forests outside protected and restricted areas.

Survey all potential spotted owl areas including protected, restricted, and other forest and woodland types within an analysis area plus the area 1/2 mile beyond the perimeter of the proposed treatment area.

Establish a protected activity center at all Mexican spotted owl sites located during surveys and all management territories established since 1989.

Allow no timber harvest except for fuel wood and fire risk abatement in established protected activity centers. For protected activity centers destroyed by fire, windstorm, or other natural disaster, salvage timber harvest or declassification may be allowed after evaluation on a case-by-case basis in consultation with US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Allow no timber harvest except for fire risk abatement in mixed conifer and pine-oak forests on slopes greater than 40% where timber harvest has not occurred in the last 20 years.

Limit human activity in protected activity centers during the breeding season.

In protected and restricted habitat areas, when activities conducted in conformance with these standards and guidelines may adversely affect other threatened, endangered, or sensitive species or may conflict with other established recovery plans or conservation agreements, consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to resolve the conflict.

Monitor changes in owl populations and habitat needed for de-listing.

Guidelines:

A. GENERAL

Conduct surveys following Region 3 survey protocol.  
Breeding season is March 1 to August 31.

B. PROTECTED AREAS

**Protected Activity Center:** Delineate an area not less than 600 acres around the activity center using boundaries of known habitat polygons and/or topographic features. Written justification for boundary delineation should be provided.

The Protected Activity Center boundary should enclose the best possible owl habitat configured in as compact a unit as possible, with the nest or activity center located near the center.

The activity center is defined as the nest site. In the absence of a known nest, the activity center should be defined as a roost grove commonly used during breeding. In the absence of a known nest or roost, the activity center should be defined as the best nest/roost habitat.

Protected Activity Center boundaries should not overlap.

Submit protected activity center maps and descriptions to the recovery unit-working group for comment as soon as possible after completion of surveys.

Road or trail building in protected activity centers should be avoided but may be permitted on a case-by-case basis for pressing management reasons.

Generally allow continuation of the level of recreation activities that was occurring prior to listing.

Require bird guides to apply for and obtain a special use permit. A condition of the permit shall be that they obtain a sub-permit under the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service Master endangered species permit. The permit should stipulate the sites, dates, number of visits, and maximum group size.

Harvest fuel wood when it can be done in a way that effects on the owl are minimized. Manage within the following limitations to minimize effects on the owl.

Retain key forest species such as oak.

Retain key habitat components such as snags and large downed logs.

Harvest conifers less than 9FSS   
 fire risk as described below.

Treat fuel accumulations to abate fire risk.

- **In Mexican spotted owl protected activity centers (PAC), vegetation treatments will only be considered after all appropriate NEPA analysis and consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been completed. When vegetation treatment within a PAC is deemed necessary, the PAC will be monitored for effects of treatment.**

Amendment 10: For the Rio Peñasco, La Luz Watersheds, 38 total protected activity centers will have vegetative treatments and will be monitored for effects of treatment.

**Amendment 12: A total of 19 protected activity centers in the Elk Canyon Watershed will have vegetation treatments and will be monitored for effects of treatment.**

- Designate a 100-acre "no treatment" area around the known nest site of each selected protected activity center. Habitat in the "no treatment" area should be as similar as possible in structure and composition as that found in the activity center.
- Use combinations of thinning trees less than 9 inches in diameter, mechanical fuel treatment and prescribed fire to abate fire risk in the remainder of the selected protected activity center outside the 100-acre "no treatment" area.

Amendment 10: The nine-inch diameter limit is exempted in the Rio Peñasco/La Luz Watershed study where scientific studies are designed to test the best fuels management prescriptions in MSO protected activity centers.

- Retain woody debris larger than 12 inches in diameter, snags, clumps of broad-leafed woody vegetation, and hardwood trees larger than 10 in. in diameter at the root collar.
- Use light prescribed burns in non-selected protected activity centers on a case-by-case basis. Burning should avoid a 100-acre "no treatment" area around the activity center. Large woody debris, snags, clumps of broad-leafed woody vegetation should be retained and hardwood trees larger than 10 inches diameter at the root collar.
- Pre and post treatment monitoring should be conducted in all protected activity centers treated for fire risk abatement. (See monitoring guidelines)

Replacement Page 206C  
Amendment 9, June 5, 1996  
Amendment 10, Dec. 5, 2002  
**Amendment 12, Jun. 30, 2005**

*Steep Slopes (Mixed conifer and pine-oak forests outside protected activity centers with slopes greater than 40% that have not been logged within the past 20 years): No seasonal restrictions apply.*

Treat fuel accumulations to abate fire risk.

- Use combinations of thinning trees less than 9 inches in diameter, mechanical fuel removal, and prescribed fire.
- Retain woody debris larger than 12 inches in diameter, snags, clumps of broad-leaved woody vegetation, and hardwood tress larger than 10 inches in diameter at the root collar.
- Pre- and post-treatment monitoring should occur within all steep slopes treated for fire risk abatement. (See monitoring guidelines)

Reserved Lands (Wilderness, Research Natural Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and Congressionally Recognized Wilderness Study Areas): Allow prescribed fire where appropriate.

**C. RESTRICTED AREAS** (Mixed conifer, pine-oak, and riparian forests)

Mixed Conifer and Pine-oak Forests (See glossary definition): Manage to ensure a sustained level of owl nest/roost habitat well distributed across the landscape. Create replacement owl nest/roost habitat where appropriate while providing a diversity of stand conditions across the landscape to ensure habitat for a diversity of prey species. The following table displays the minimum percentage of restricted area that should be managed to have nest/roost characteristics. The minimum mixed conifer restricted area includes 10% at 170 basal area and an additional amount of area at 150 basal area. The additional area of 150 basal area is + 10% in BR-E and + 15% in all other recovery units. The variables are for stand averages and are minimum threshold values and must be met simultaneously. In project design, no stands simultaneously meeting or exceeding the minimum threshold values should be reduced below the threshold values unless a district-wide or larger landscape analysis of restricted areas shows that there is a surplus of restricted area across simultaneously meeting the threshold values. Management should be designed to create minimum threshold conditions on project areas where there is a deficit of stands simultaneously meeting minimum threshold conditions unless the district-wide or larger landscape analysis shows there is a surplus.

Variable	MC All RU	MC BR-E RU	MC Other RU	Pine-Oak
Restricted area %	+10%	+10%	+15%	+10%
Stand Averages for:				
Basal Area	170	150	150	150
18" +trees/acre	20	20	20	20
Oak Basal Area	N/A	N/A	N/A	20
Percent total existing stand density index by size class:				
12"-18"	10	10	10	15
18"-24"	10	10	10	15
24"- +	10	10	10	15

Attempt to mimic natural disturbance patterns by incorporating natural variation, such as irregular tree spacing and various patch sizes, into management prescriptions.

Maintain all species of native trees in the landscape including early seral species.

Allow natural canopy gap processes to occur, thus producing horizontal variation in stand structure.

Emphasize uneven-aged management systems. However, both even-aged and uneven-aged systems may be used where appropriate to provide variation in existing stand structure and species diversity. Existing stand conditions will determine which system is appropriate.

Extend rotation ages for even-aged stands to greater than 200 years. Silvicultural prescriptions should explicitly state when vegetative manipulation would cease until rotation age is reached.

Save all trees greater than 24 inches dbh.

In pine-oak forests, retain existing large oaks and promote growth of additional large oaks.

Encourage prescribed and prescribed natural fire to reduce hazardous fuel accumulation. Thinning from below may be desirable or necessary before burning to reduce ladder fuels and the risk of crown fire.

Retain substantive amounts of key habitat components:

- Snags 18 inches in diameter and larger
- Down logs over 12 inches midpoint diameter
- Hardwoods for retention, recruitment, and replacement of large hardwoods

Riparian Areas: Emphasize maintenance and restoration of healthy riparian ecosystems through conformance with forest plan riparian standards and guidelines. Management strategies should move degraded riparian vegetation toward good condition as soon as possible. Damage to riparian vegetation, stream banks, and channels should be prevented.

Domestic Livestock Grazing: Implement forest plan forage utilization standards and guidelines to maintain owl prey availability, maintain potential for beneficial fire while inhibiting potential destructive fire, maintain and restore riparian ecosystems, and promote development of owl habitat. Strive to attain good to excellent range conditions.

Old Growth: Except where other wise noted, implement forest plan old growth standards and guidelines to maintain and promote development of owl habitat.

#### D. OTHER FOREST AND WOODLAND TYPES

Apply ecosystem approaches to manage for landscape diversity mimicking natural disturbance patterns, incorporating natural variation in stand conditions and retaining special features such as snags and large trees, utilizing appropriate fires, and retention of existing old growth in accordance with forest plan old growth standards and guidelines.

## E. GUIDELINES FOR SPECIFIC RECOVERY UNITS

Basin and Range-East: Emphasize restoration of lowland riparian habitats

Management activities necessary to implement the Sacramento Mountain thistle recovery plan, which may conflict with standards and guidelines for Mexican spotted owl, will take precedence and will be exempt from the conflicting Mexican spotted owl standards and guidelines.

## F. MONITORING GUIDELINES

Population and habitat monitoring and evaluation, collaboratively planned and coordinated with Involvement from each national forest, USFWS Ecological Services Field Office, USFWS Regional Office, USFS Regional Office, Rocky Mountain Research Station, recovery team, and recovery unit working groups, should be implemented on the Lincoln National Forest.

Prepare an annual monitoring and evaluation report covering all levels of monitoring done in previous years. The annual report should be forwarded to the Regional Forester with copies to the recovery unit working group, USFWS Ecological Services field office, and the USFWS Regional Office.

## PEREGRINE FALCON

The American Peregrine Falcon Recovery Plan (see references) contains habitat requirements for the peregrine falcon which will be incorporated into the guidelines on the Forest. Additional standards and guidelines for the Forest are as follows:

- 1/ Monitor management practices within occupied and potential peregrine falcon habitat and ensure that there are no adverse impacts.
- 1/ Prohibit land-use practices and development that significantly alter or eliminate the character of essential peregrine falcon hunting habitat or prey base (generally within four miles of nest sites) will be prohibited. All activities proposed within four miles of potential or existing nesting habitat will be carefully evaluated for potential effects.



1/ Prohibit activities likely to cause disturbance, including public use in the vicinity of essential peregrine falcon nesting habitat between March 1st and May 20th. This may mean having a seasonal closure between those dates unless other mitigating measures are determined. Should peregrines remain strongly attached to nest sites after May 20th this period will be extended; alternately, should peregrines disperse earlier than May 20th this period may be shortened. Seasonal restrictions will be applied to all essential habitat unless the Forest Biologist determines that a site is not occupied. Activities likely to cause a disturbance include, but are not limited to, human presence within  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile, light motorized vehicle or equipment within 1 mile and heavy motorized equipment within 2 miles. If peregrine falcons are found occupying habitat in other known areas, similar restrictions on activities will be imposed.

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| C01, C02                    | Continue to identify existing and potential habitat for peregrine falcons as outlined in the Species Recovery Plan.  |
| C01, A05                    | Locate and develop recreation facilities at least 1-1/4 miles from essential peregrine falcon nesting habitat.   |
| E05, E07                    | Discourage fuel wood gathering activities at least $\frac{3}{4}$ miles of essential peregrine falcon habitat.  |
| E05, E07                    | Manage areas within 200 feet of canyon rims in essential peregrine falcon hunting habitat under a modified silvicultural prescription jointly determined by the Forest Biologist and District TMO.   |
| P02, P03<br>P07, P08<br>P09 | Make all reasonable efforts during fire detection and suppression or other emergency activities, such as search and rescue operations, from March 1 through August 15th to protect peregrine falcon nesting sites, consistent with jeopardy to human life and property and confidentiality of nest sites. Other activities will be limited in critical nesting habitat as appropriate during nesting season. |