

ENDANGERED SPECIES LAW & POLICY



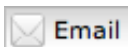
Northern Spotted Owl Listed As a Threatened Species Under the California Endangered Species Act

By Liz Klebaner on August 30th, 2016

On August 25, 2016, the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) voted unanimously to list the northern spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*) as a threatened species under the California Endangered Species Act. The owl is already listed as a threatened species under the Federal Endangered Species Act. The Commission's action increased protections for the species by allowing for state and citizen enforcement actions through the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the state courts.

In California, the northern spotted owl's range extends south along the coast from the Oregon border to Marin County, and across the Klamath Mountains to the Cascade Range near the Pit River. According to the species status review prepared by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the primary threats to the continued existence of the northern spotted owl are the rapid expansion of the barred owl into the range of the spotted owl and a rapid and accelerating decline in northern spotted owl population size and habitat from wildfire and timber harvest. Additional threats include potential increases in the frequency and severity of wildfires, widespread occurrence of marijuana cultivation on public and private lands, changes in weather patterns, effects of climate change on wildfire patterns and forest vegetation distribution, and the spread of the non-native fungus-like pathogens.

The Environmental Protection Information Center filed its petition to list the owl as threatened or endangered in September 2012. The documentation provided to the Commission in advance of the hearing and a video of the proceeding may be accessed [here](#).



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