

# Status of three threatened state species reviewed, unchanged

The tufted puffin, northern spotted owl and monarch butterfly – all prevalent species in Oregon – recently have had their federal protected statuses reviewed.

While none showed progress, their status remained unchanged.

## TUFTED PUFFIN

The puffin, a charismatic seabird with flamboyant facial features, doesn't warrant listing as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"The tufted puffin is an essential member of the coastal and marine ecosystems in which it resides," said Stewart Cogswell, a supervisor for Fish and Wildlife. "Although the species does not warrant listing under the Endangered Species Act, we will continue to work with others to monitor and conserve this iconic seabird throughout its range."

The finding follows a comprehensive review, Cogswell said.

The tufted puffin fishes the deep open ocean for much of the year, but in summer can be seen nesting in burrows on islands and cliffs along the coast from California to Alaska.

The most recent population estimate is 3 million birds.

Most of the population appears to demonstrate stable or increasing trends, according to the agency. But it's impacted by climate change, oil spills and other threats, Cogswell said.

The service's status review found that there are fewer puffins in the southern end of its range, but the species continues to be widely distributed across the northern part of its range and maintains high overall abundance.

## NORTHERN SPOTTED OWL

The owl's status as "threatened" will remain, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service decided.

The agency gave it a "warranted but precluded" finding, which means a reclassification from threatened to endangered is warranted, but the service won't make the change because other endangered species have been given higher priority.

This decision is based on a scientific report reviewed by academic, industry and resource agency experts. The primary threat is competition from the aggressive and invasive barred owl. Ongoing habitat loss, primarily from wildfire, constitutes an additional threat.

A change in status from threatened to endangered would not result in any additional regulatory restric-

## County has open budget panel seats

If you've got a head for numbers, Clatsop County has a spot for you.

The county needs citizens to serve on several local budget committees.

The citizen committees review proposed budgets and make recommendations to the county commission. Each committee is made up of five county commissioners and five residents.

The committees generally meet in May to review the proposed budgets.

Open seats:

- Clatsop County Budget Committee: One full term ending Feb. 28, 2024, representing District 3 and a one unexpired term ending Feb. 28,



Ram Papish, USFW

Tufted puffin



Monarch butterfly



USFW

Northern spotted owl

tions under the Endangered Species Act, nor substantially impact the conservation of spotted owls.

Fish and Wildlife vowed to continue working with federal and state agencies, timber interests, and other stakeholders to conserve the spotted owl's territory while supporting timber harvest and rural communities, the agency said.

An experiment was initiated in 2013 to test whether the removal of barred owls is feasible. Preliminary results have been promising.

## MONARCH BUTTERFLY

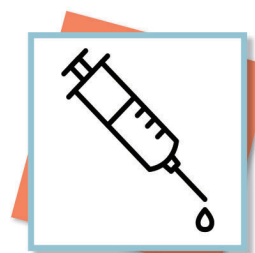
As with the spotted owl, the assessment of the butterfly's status will be "warranted but precluded."

During the past 20 years, scientists have noted declines in North American monarchs overwintering in Mexico and California, where the butterflies cluster.

The agency has added the monarch butterfly to the endangered candidate list and assigned it a listing priority number that indicates threats are moderate yet imminent.

Monarchs are known for their phenomenal spring and fall migrations, traveling across the continent to and from wintering sites.

## Let's End the Pandemic



Get vaccinated when you can.



Wear a mask.



Stay 6-feet away from others and avoid crowds.



Wash hands often.

