

# Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value

## What are Forests with Exceptional Conservation Value (FECV)?

Forests might be home to a globally rare plant, animal or community. If a plant, animal or community is found to be very rare in the world and especially vulnerable to extinction, then it may be classified as imperiled or critically imperiled. These designations are similar to the threatened and endangered designations afforded to species protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). It is not unusual for imperiled or critically imperiled species and communities with no protection under the ESA to be rarer than some of the species that are protected under the ESA. For example, the wayside aster is listed as a federally threatened species protected under the ESA, but is not classified as globally imperiled or critically imperiled. On the other hand, the Pacific walker mussel is globally critically imperiled, but is not protected under the ESA.

## How do you know if you have rare species inhabiting your land?

Threatened and endangered species can thrive in managed forests. In fact, active management is necessary for the survival of some species. It is up to landowners to take the steps necessary to identify and conserve the habitat that these species need. Being able to recognize habitat characteristics can be as important as or even more important than being able to identify the threatened or endangered plant or animal. On-line resources can help you find out which rare, threatened, endangered or imperiled species may be found on your land. Please consult the links at the end of this document for further information.

## What do you have to do if you have rare species inhabiting your land?

You are not required by law to do anything for imperiled or critically imperiled species and communities unless that species is listed under the Endangered Species Act, and/or listed under applicable state laws requiring protection. Many of these rare species and communities can thrive in managed forests with no special considerations. Others however may require specific management actions. At a minimum, when planning a harvest or other forest management activity where imperiled or critically imperiled species and communities occur, you should communicate the location and protection measures associated with these sites to your logger or contractor. To learn more about threatened/endangered species and what you may be required to do, and imperiled/critically imperiled species and communities that may occur on your land, contact the corresponding authorities listed in the document links below.

## Definitions

Conservation – 1. Protection of plant and animal habitat; 2. The management of a renewable natural resource with the objective of sustaining its long-term productivity in perpetuity while providing for human use compatible with sustainability of the resource.

Critically Imperiled – A plant or animal or community that is globally extremely rare or, because of some factor, especially vulnerable to extinction or elimination.

Imperiled – A plant or animal or community that is globally rare or, because of some factor, very vulnerable to extinction or elimination.

Threatened and Endangered – Listed under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, and/or listed under applicable state laws requiring protection.

## Characteristics of special sites

Your land may hold sites that have ecological, geological, cultural or historical significance and which should be protected for future generations. Such sites may include cemeteries, waterfalls, Indian mounds and unusual plant communities or habitats. By preserving these special sites you can enhance the biodiversity of your property for all who enjoy it, including humans, plants and animals, while ensuring these sites will not disappear from the landscape. Your resource professionals can assist you in identifying and protecting these special sites.

Some examples of non-forested sites that you may want to consider protecting as special sites are caves, seepage slopes, rock outcrops, riparian areas, water bodies (creeks, rivers, pools and ponds) and natural openings in the forest such as prairies, glades and dry sand hills. These sensitive sites harbor many of the critically imperiled and imperiled aquatic and terrestrial species. Temporary pools that fill up with water in the spring are especially important features that may contain rare, threatened and endangered species. All of these areas are important and are often very easy to work around.

## Sources

Murphy Company typically purchases and harvests timber from three states: California, Oregon and Washington. All three states have Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) implementation committees. This document was derived from the Oregon version:

[http://www.oregonsfi.org/documents/090811\\_oregon\\_landowners.pdf](http://www.oregonsfi.org/documents/090811_oregon_landowners.pdf)

Here are the links for the three states:

California:

<http://www.caltreefarm.com/California-SFI-Implementation.html>

Oregon:

<http://www.oregonsfi.org>

[http://www.oregonsfi.org/documents/090811\\_oregon\\_landowners.pdf](http://www.oregonsfi.org/documents/090811_oregon_landowners.pdf)

Washington:

<http://www.wasfi.org>

[http://www.wasfi.org/Landowner%20Brochure%20WA\\_02142013.pdf](http://www.wasfi.org/Landowner%20Brochure%20WA_02142013.pdf)