

Los Padres National Forest's 1988 commitment to manage Mt Pinos Sooty Grouse as a "Forest Species of Special Emphasis." To date, I have found no evidence that any of these actions were taken.

Los Padres National Forest Land and Resources Management Plan - Final Plan, 1988, pg 4-10:

10. Forest Species of Special Emphasis, Identified in Chapter 3, shall be managed using guidance from FSM 2670 as though listed as Forest Service Regionally Sensitive Species. Specific guidelines for management are to be developed for each species following implementation of the Plan.

Final environmental impact statement, land and resources management plan, Los Padres national Forest, 1988, pg 7G-6:

G8.0 Forest Species Of Special Emphasis

In response to the requirements of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 to maintain viable populations of all native vertebrate species, the Los Padres National Forest has identified the following species to be of concern and to receive special emphasis in Forest and project planning and implementation.

As with regionally designated Sensitive Species, the main intent of this listing is to prevent the need for these species to be placed on Federal lists of threatened or endangered species.

In furtherance of this goal the below listed species will receive special management, as needed, to protect their essential habitats from adverse modification or destruction and protect individual organisms from harm or harassment as appropriate. They are to be managed per FSM 2670 as though listed as Regionally Sensitive.

Birds

1. Mt. Pinos Blue Grouse (*Dendragapus obscurus howardii*). This is a subspecies whose isolated populations and low numbers create a viability concern. It is a unique species especially for the geographic area on the Los Padres and one which is likely to receive added impact with projected increases in recreational uses and timber management. It is recommended for relisting.

Forest Service Manual (FSM), 2005 version, Chapter 2670, Threatened, endangered, and sensitive plants and animals (www.fs.fed.us/im/directives/fsm/2600/2670-2671.doc):

2670.22 - Sensitive Species

1. Develop and implement management practices to ensure that species do not become threatened or endangered because of Forest Service actions.
2. Maintain viable populations of all native and desired nonnative wildlife, fish, and plant species in habitats distributed throughout their geographic range on National Forest System lands.
3. Develop and implement management objectives for populations and/or habitat of sensitive species.

2670.32 - Sensitive Species

1. Assist states in achieving their goals for conservation of endemic species.
2. Review programs and activities as part of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 process through a biological evaluation, to determine their potential effect on sensitive species.
3. Avoid or minimize impacts to species whose viability has been identified as a concern.
4. Analyze, if impacts cannot be avoided, the significance of potential adverse effects on the population or its habitat within the area of concern and on the species as a whole. (The line officer, with project approval authority, makes the decision to allow or disallow impact, but the decision must not result in loss of species viability or create significant trends toward federal listing.)
5. Establish management objectives in cooperation with the states when projects on National Forest System lands may have a significant effect on sensitive species population numbers or distributions. Establish objectives for federal candidate species, in cooperation with the FWS or NOAA Fisheries and the states.

2670.45 - Forest Supervisors

1. Ensure that legal and biological requirements for the conservation of endangered, threatened, and proposed plants and animals are met in forest land and resource management planning; ensure compliance with procedural and biological requirements for sensitive species.
2. Develop quantifiable recovery objectives and develop strategies to effect recovery of threatened and endangered species. Develop quantifiable objectives for managing populations and/or habitat for sensitive species.
3. Make recommendations to the Regional Forester for critical or essential habitat designation on National Forest System lands.
4. Determine distribution, status, and trend of threatened, endangered, proposed, and sensitive species and their habitats on forest lands.
5. Coordinate forest programs with other federal agencies, states, and other groups and individuals concerned with the conservation of threatened, endangered, proposed, and sensitive species.

2670.46 - District Rangers

1. Ensure compliance with legal and biological requirements for the conservation of threatened, endangered, and proposed species in district land management and project planning; ensure compliance with procedural and biological requirements for sensitive species.
2. Identify, manage, and protect essential and critical habitats to meet legal requirements and recovery objectives for federally listed species; identify, protect, and manage habitat necessary to meet sensitive species objectives.
3. Coordinate district activities with interested state and federal agencies, groups, and individuals concerned with the conservation of threatened, endangered, proposed, and sensitive species.