



File Code: 2670

Date: August 27, 2013

Bob Zeigler
SEPA/NEPA Coordinator
WDFW Regulatory Services Section
600 Capital Way North
Olympia, WA 98501-1091

Dear Mr. Zeigler:

Thank you for providing an opportunity for the Olympic National Forest to comment on Washington Department of Wildlife's (WDFW) Clallam County Taylor's Checkerspot Butterfly Habitat Restoration Proposal.

We have worked closely with WDFW on planning and implementing habitat enhancement projects for Taylor's checkerspot on the National Forest. We agree that the tree and shrub removal activities in the proposal are an important and necessary management tool for the maintenance and restoration of Taylor's checkerspot habitat and populations on the Olympic Peninsula.

This subspecies has been proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act, with the final rule due to be published by November 2013. The Forest is already coordinating with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on these habitat restoration activities, as well as completing National Environmental Policy Act requirements for this work.

Checkerspot sites occur in the Late-Successional Reserve designation, which provides specific management prescriptions within its boundary. Given the land management direction, the maximum size of created openings will be limited.

Monitoring of vegetation management activities is very important since there are little data on the effectiveness of such projects on a rare species such as the Taylor's checkerspot. We support population monitoring that includes adult and larval searches. The Olympic National Forest has coordinated closely with WDFW to monitor the species, and anticipates continuing with the monitoring after the restoration activities are underway.

We request that data collected on National Forest System lands by WDFW be provided to Karen Holtrop at the Olympic National Forest who has been working closely with WDFW staff.

The Forest looks forward to working closely with WDFW as we implement habitat restoration and population monitoring for the Taylor's checkerspot butterfly.

Sincerely,

/s/ Reta Laford
RETA LAFORD
Forest Supervisor



cc: Susan D Piper
Karen K Holtrop