



30 March 2020

RE: Purpose of the PSG Marbled Murrelet Inland Survey Protocol

To the Marbled Murrelet Technical Committee ISP Committee:

The Pacific Seabird Group (PSG) Executive Council (EXCO) has been asked to provide a letter explaining what the Marbled Murrelet Technical Committee (MMTC) Inland Survey Protocol (ISP) means to PSG and what the purpose of the protocol should be.

The PSG is an international, non-profit, scientific organization that was founded in 1972 to promote the knowledge, study, and conservation of Pacific seabirds. It has a membership drawn from the entire Pacific basin. Among PSG's members are biologists and scientists who have research interests in Pacific seabirds, government officials who manage seabird refuges and populations, and individuals who are interested in marine conservation. PSG members serve as scientific experts and conservation leaders within their local communities, nationally and around the world.

The principal goals of PSG are to increase the quality and quantity of seabird research through facilitating the exchange of information, to identify and assess the importance of threats to seabird populations, to advocate for the conservation of seabirds, and to provide land managers and researchers with guidance on understanding and to manage seabird populations and threats to their populations.

The PSG MMTC was created in 1986 to identify and facilitate research on Marbled Murrelets, address conservation problems related to the species, and act as a liaison between research and government. Since that time, PSG has served as an unbiased forum for government, university, and private sector biologists to discuss and resolve issues related to Marbled Murrelet conservation along the Pacific coast of North America. PSG continues to be extremely concerned about the conservation status of murrelets due to historical and current population declines and identified terrestrial and marine threats. Terrestrially, historic and ongoing loss and fragmentation of their inland nesting habitat are significant threats. At sea, recent changes in marine conditions and the consequences of climate change are growing concerns.

The ISP, in its different versions, has played a significant role in the identification and preservation of occupied murrelet breeding areas since 1988. The ISP has been and continues to be a critical document. PSG is proud to have contributed to the most recent versions to


provide habitat managers and researchers with the best available scientific methods for surveying and preserving murrelet habitat.

Given the goals of PSG, our position is that the PSG ISP should provide a rigorous scientific and statistical method for accurately assessing the status of an area and allowing for a high probability of detecting the presence of murrelets. The sampling design of the ISP should also be constructed in such a way as to ensure the conservation of murrelet nesting areas. Habitat fragmentation and predation are critical threats to the long-term survival of the murrelet population. As such, we advocate that every effort be made to preserve the entire nesting area.

Thank you for considering our comments, and please let us know if we can be of further assistance.

I am submitting this letter on behalf of the PSG EXCO and the membership of PSG.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Peter J. Hodum".

Peter Hodum  
Vice-Chair for Conservation

PSG Executive Council Officers

Rob Suryan, PSG Chair  
David Craig, PSG Past-Chair  
Roberta Swift, Chair-Elect

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Kim Nelson, MMTC Chair