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# News Release

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## Scientists, stakeholders discuss marbled murrelet challenges on forest field trip

**Waldport, OR** – Last Friday, a group of scientists, forest managers from multiple agencies, and representatives of environmental groups, the timber industry, and forest stewardship groups spent a day in the woods talking about marbled murrelets, the elusive seabird that nests in coastal forests and whose population is declining along the west coast.

Marbled murrelets, which have been listed as threatened since 1992, nest on large branches of old-growth or mature trees. While efforts have been made in Oregon to protect existing nesting habitat and accelerate the development of habitat through forest restoration projects, scientists suspect that high numbers of predators like jays, crows, and ravens (known as corvids) may be one of the primary reasons murrelet populations are not recovering.

The recent field trip was an opportunity for individuals and groups involved in forest management to learn about the latest murrelet research and to discuss related management opportunities and challenges. “There is no simple solution to the marbled murrelet challenge, but field trips like this one, where we have agency staff, scientists, industry folks, and environmental groups all engaging in constructive, positive dialogue about how to address the problem, inspire me,” said Jerry Ingersoll, Siuslaw National Forest Supervisor.

Topics that were discussed include how thinning may influence the ability of corvids to prey on murrelet nests; if forested buffers are a good tool to reduce the risk of predators to murrelet nests; what other actions, such as covering dumpsites and lidding dumpsters, are needed in neighboring communities to reduce the local corvid population; and, how does human activity and recreation impact murrelets.

While no management decisions were made on the field trip, the conversations and networking it facilitated is a great step forward for a complex management challenge. “Improving murrelet habitat will be a long term effort that’s going to require collaboration to be successful,” said Paul Engelmeyer, Audubon’s Ten Mile Creek Sanctuary Manager. “I was pleased with the constructive dialogue we had on the field trip and feel optimistic that as long as we continue in the same spirit we’ll be on the right track.”

Andy Geissler, Western Oregon Field Forester with the American Forest Resource Council, shared that sentiment, saying, “AFRC is always happy to join together with diverse stakeholders to address challenging issues. We look forward to participating in finding a practical path forward that will accommodate the much needed restoration work on our federal lands.”



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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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Along with its partners, the Siuslaw National Forest looks forward to future opportunities to bring scientists and stakeholders together to learn from each other and share ideas related to our mutual goals of restoring and managing a healthy forest ecosystem while maintaining healthy communities.

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