

Spotted owl numbers not only down but also at faster rate

June 10 2015, by Tim Fought

Scientists report that after 20 years of attempts to save the species, northern spotted owl numbers in the Northwest are still on the decline—and at a faster rate.

The threatened [bird nests](#) in [old trees](#) and is at the heart of a decades-long struggle over the fate of the region's old-growth forests.

A Forest Service spokesman, Glen Sachet (SATCH'-et), says scientists at a conference Tuesday reported that owl numbers are now dropping at an annual rate of 3.8 percent. Five years ago, the rate was 2.8 percent.

Besides losing habitat, spotted [owls](#) in recent years have been pushed out by barred owls, an aggressive invader from the Midwest.

Environmentalist Andy Stahl says isolation is now becoming a problem: With thinning populations, owls can't find each other to mate.

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