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Abstracts

COMMENTARY

REDEFINING THE DISTRIBUTIONAL BOUNDARIES OF THE NORTHERN AND CALIFORNIA SPOTTED OWLS: IMPLICATIONS FOR CONSERVATION

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Abstract. The Northern Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*) is listed as a threatened species. However, the range description given at the time of listing is inconsistent with the range delineation given by the American Ornithologists' Union checklist of North American birds. Despite the quandary that this inconsistency represents regarding the area of protection afforded the Northern Spotted Owl, the range used in listing is consistent with the actual range suggested by mtDNA haplotypes diagnostic for the subspecies. The range description used in the listing decision of the Northern Spotted Owl and in many conservation plans have been repeated through time without a formal revision or basis for support. Based on current knowledge of Spotted Owl locations we revise the range limits for both Northern and California (*S. o. occidentalis*) Spotted Owls.

Key words: California Spotted Owl, distribution, Northern Spotted Owl, *Strix occidentalis caurina*, *Strix occidentalis occidentalis*.