

# Purpose and Need



The purpose of the project is to rehabilitate the Greater Prairie Creek (GPC) watershed and restore ecosystem processes that have been degraded by historical land use. Rehabilitation would be accomplished through thinning second growth forests to reduce stand density and alter species composition to promote growth of remaining trees, understory vegetation, and development of multi-story canopy; removing or repairing roads to reduce the potential for erosion and sedimentation into streams; restoring in-stream habitat complexity; and augmenting riparian corridors by planting native vegetation.

These actions are needed to accelerate development of forest characteristics more typical of late-seral forests, prevent chronic and catastrophic sediment inputs to creeks, and enhance habitat for populations of aquatic and terrestrial species.

The National Park Service and California State Parks have identified the following project objectives:

- Forest restoration objectives: reestablish old growth connectivity in the GPC watershed; enhance structural complexity of the forest; encourage the development of the forest understory; establish multi-aged stands; recover desired composition of overstory tree species; and increase resilience to environmental stressors (e.g., severe wildfire and drought)
- Aquatic restoration objectives: increase in-channel complexity; maintain habitat values, ecological health, and function while long-term recovery occurs; reestablish riparian function; and manage highly invasive plant species
- Road removal objectives: reduce erosion and sediment delivery from existing infrastructure into streams; and reestablish natural stream morphology, hydrology, stream function and fish passage



Fragmented old growth rises above the surrounding second growth in Redwood National and State Parks.



Northern spotted owl



Marten



Marbled murrelet



Coho salmon