

**2008 Humboldt Redwood Company (HRC) Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)  
Peregrine Falcon Annual Report (HCP 6.5)**  
HRC Forest Sciences Department  
1 February 2009

**Summary**

In 2008, we surveyed three traditional sites (Scotia, Holmes Bluffs, and Tom Gulch) for peregrine falcon activity. The Scotia Bluff and the Tom Gulch sites were both occupied this year with the Tom Gulch site fledging two young. The Scotia site was occupied but non-nesting. No nesting activity was documented at the Holmes site.

**Introduction**

The American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*) is a covered species under the HRC HCP and is currently listed as endangered under the California State Endangered Species Act. It is also a Board of Forestry Sensitive species and a California Fully Protected Species. The objective of surveying for peregrine falcons on HRC lands is to monitor traditional eyrie sites, identify potential habitat and protect any nest sites that are found.

**Methods**

In 2008, HRC Biologists Michael Dunkelberger, Mark Freitas and Laura Bradley were the primary surveyors for this species. All surveyors have excellent raptor identification skills and are familiar with peregrine falcon behavior. Surveys were conducted according to section 6.5.2.1 of PALCO's HCP and followed guidelines detailed in Pagel's (1992),

Protocol for Observing Known and Potential Peregrine Falcon Eyries in the Pacific Northwest.

**Results**

The Scotia Bluffs site was occupied by a pair of falcons again this year. (Appendix I – survey forms). No nesting was observed and was attributed to the presence of a subadult female now occupying the site. At the Holmes Bluff, a peregrine was observed utilizing the bluff as a hunting area but no courtship or other nesting activity was documented.

The new Tom Gulch nest site discovered in 2007 by a HRC biologist was again occupied in 2008 and fledged two young.

*Peregrine Survey Summary*

Scotia Bluffs

Date	Surveyor
5/17/08	Mark Freitas
6/11/08	Laura Bradley

Holmes Bluff

Date	Surveyor
1/15/08	Michael Dunkelberger
3/18/08	Michael Dunkelberger
5/20/08	Michael Dunkelberger
6/10/08	Michael Dunkelberger
6/20/08	John Fraley

Tom Gulch

Date	Surveyor
3/31/08	Michael Dunkelberger
4/15/08	Michael Dunkelberger
5/20/08	Mark Freitas
6/17/08	Laura Bradley

## **Discussion**

*Scotia Bluffs* – In 2008, as in 2002-2007 a pair of peregrine falcons occupied this site. A subadult female and adult male were observed during surveys but evidence of nesting was not noted. Once the female reaches adult age perhaps the site will once again be categorized as “nesting” with regard to status. No timber operations occurred within 0.5 mile of the 2002-2007 eyrie prior to October 21, 2008.

*Holmes Bluffs* – As in previous years this site was used only as a peregrine hunting area.

*Tom Gulch* - The Tom Gulch nest site was occupied again this year. Adult peregrines were first observed during surveys in March and had fledged two young by 17 June 2008. Operating restrictions were lifted three weeks post-fledging (8 July 2008).

### *Future surveys*

Future surveys will be limited to traditional sites (Scotia, Holmes Bluffs and Tom Gulch) if timber harvest operations require that surveys be conducted. All forestry and science staff will continue to report incidental peregrine sightings to the appropriate wildlife staff and follow-up surveys will be conducted when necessary.