

William Ritchie, Chair, PSG Marbled Murrelet Committee
Biography

I attended the State University of New York as part of my undergraduate studies, and completed a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Science at The Evergreen State College. I will undoubtedly return to complete a Master's degree, sometime in the future, probably in the Pacific NW or Alaska.

I am a life member of PSG, having joined the membership in 1991. I have attended the PSG annual meetings each year since my first in Charleston, Oregon in 1992. I coauthored the current Marbled Murrelet inland survey protocol. I currently lead the MMTC Inland Survey Protocol subcommittee, and the survey training working group. I have also represented the interests of Washington State on the marbled murrelet statistical analysis working group, the Marbled Murrelet marine survey methods group, and as a representative at the Marbled Murrelet Recovery Team meetings, and at the NW Forest Plan meetings.

I am currently a Wildlife Biologist for the US Fish and Wildlife Service at Willapa National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge, in conjunction with The Nature Conservancy, is engaged in a landscape-level forest restoration project that aims to accelerate development of old forest characteristics and enhance habitat conditions for late seral species, including marbled murrelets. I was previously employed as a Wildlife Biologist and marbled murrelet specialist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, where I had worked since 1990 on Marbled Murrelet research, marine and terrestrial surveys, conservation, and surveyor training. I was involved in development of the state Forest Practice rules requiring survey of suitable Marbled Murrelet nesting habitat, and protection of nesting sites, on non-federal lands in Washington. In 1993 I designed and implemented one of the first fisheries observer programs to monitor seabird bycatch in Puget Sound salmon fisheries. My responsibilities also include threatened and endangered avian species conservation and habitat management. Past experience includes coastal marine and waterbird surveys, oil spill response and oiled bird treatment, and fisheries sampling.

Among my current interests are: the investigation of effects and implications of ecosystem change on Marbled Murrelet breeding success and recruitment; a community-level study of zooplankton in Hood Canal to examine the possible effects of hypoxia; and a collaborative forest restoration project with The Nature Conservancy and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to enhance, and accelerate the formation of, Marbled Murrelet nesting habitat. I am also responsible for surveying a Pacific coastal beach on the Olympic Peninsula as part of the COASST program based at the University of Washington.

In my free time, which is somewhat scarce during the summer months, I enjoy outdoor recreational activities such as mountain biking, hiking, and kayaking. During the winter I enjoy snow sports, and birding trips to warm destinations such as Central America, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. One of my most memorable trips was to Midway Atoll.