



**WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH AND WILDLIFE  
FINAL DETERMINATION OF  
NON-SIGNIFICANCE  
May 17, 2006**

State of Washington

**DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**

Mailing Address: 600 Capitol Way N - Olympia, Washington 98501-1091 - (360) 902-2200, TDD (360) 902-2207  
Main Office location: Natural Resources Building - 1111 Washington Street SE - Olympia, WA

**DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE**

**Name of Proposal:** RED SALMON SLOUGH AND NISQUALLY ESTUARY RESTORATION

**Description of Proposal:**

This project will restore approximately 100 acres of diked pasture in the Nisqually Delta and return it to its original estuarine condition. The result will be an approximately 18% increase of total saltmarsh and fresh/salt transitional habitat in the Nisqually Estuary. The project will be accomplished by removing the dikes, which impede the tides from inundating the southern areas of Red Salmon Slough. This is the second and largest phase of the Tribes' plan to restore natural estuarine functions on their land. The successful first phase, which opened up 32 new acres to the tides, fish and other wildlife, was completed in 2002. All phases of this project were inspired by a very successful 11-acre mitigation project nearby, which was completed in 1996.

In addition to tidal wetland restoration, this project will also improve fish access to a 34 acres wetland by re-routing drainage from the wetland.

The project will remove approximately 9500 feet of dike and fill 14,100 feet of ditches to restore unimpeded tidal access (Appendix A-2). At this point, only the northernmost dike excludes the tides, the other dikes are remnant out dikes left in place. The southernmost dike excludes the river backwater during extreme high tides and floods. Inside the area is a network of ditches that effectively drains the pasture areas. All ditches will get filled with the dike material. In the case of more void area to fill than dike material available, pasture will be scraped and extra material will be gained.

Remnant historic tidal channel will be reconnected to the tidal channel in the salt marshes of Red Salmon Slough. In most cases, that will require the construction of new connections between the outside active tidal channel and the historic channel on the inside. In cases where the historic connection is unclear, the areas will be scarped lower therefore the new connection can form naturally over time.

Several tide gates will be removed with drain the inside ditches to the outside. The access road from Mounts Road will be moved to the south to allow for most impeded tidal restoration, which will require about 800 feet of road construction near the toe of Interstate 5 dike.

The anticipated outcome will be that the estuarine processes will restore the area to a mosaic of low and high salt marshes, transitional salt-fresh wetlands.

The function of palustrine and transitional wetlands in the area will be restored by the construction a river tidal channel to connect the overflow from the 34 acre "Interstate Wetland" through the flood relief bridge to the river. Currently  $2/3^{\text{rd}}$  of the outflow drains through a fish-blocking culvert and  $1/3^{\text{rd}}$  outflow drains underneath a flood relief bridge. By blocking the culvert, this project will divert 100% of the outflow under the bridge and therefore giving juvenile fish access to this important flood refuge habitat. The constructed channel will expand on existing riverine tidal slough and act as the migration to and from the wetland. Riparian restoration along the newly constructed channel and in the upland areas along the river is planned for the future.

Construction activities associated with

**Proponent:** Nisqually Indian Tribe-Natural Resources Department-Florian Leischner contact  
12501 Yelm Hwy. SE., Olympia, WA 98513

**Location of Proposal, including street, if any:** Nisqually Delta, Red Salmon Slough, End of Mounts Road, Washington, Pierce County; Section 39, Township 19 North, Range 01 WestWM

**Lead Agency:** Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

The lead agency for this proposal has determined that it does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c). This decision was made after review of the completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public on request.

This DNS is issued under WAC 197-11-340(2); the lead agency will **not act on this proposal for 14 days** from the date of issue below. Comments must be submitted by: **May 16, 2006**

**Responsible Official:** Teresa A. Eturaspe

**Position/Title:** SEPA/NEPA Coordinator, Regulatory Services Section

**Address:** 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, WA 98501

**Please contact:** Teresa A. Eturaspe **Phone:** (360) 902-2575 **Fax:** (360) 902-2946 or  
**e-mail:** habitatSEPA@dfw.wa.gov if you have questions or comments about this determination.

**DATE OF ISSUE:** May 2, 2006 **SIGNATURE:**



SEPA Log Number: 06-030dns

**Distribution of Environmental Document:**

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