



**WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH AND WILDLIFE  
FINAL DETERMINATION OF  
NON-SIGNIFICANCE  
June 16, 2006**

State of Washington

**DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**

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Main Office location: Natural Resources Building - 1111 Washington Street SE - Olympia, WA

**DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE**

**Name of Proposal:** STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF MINERAL PROSPECTING DREDGING ON FRESHWATER MUSSELS IN THE SIMILKAMEEN RIVER AND PALMER CREEK

**Description of Proposal:** The proposed project is a research project to assist WDFW in determining the impact on freshwater mussels from mineral prospecting dredging with a 4" suction dredge. The project is proposed to occur between July 10, 2006 and September 30, 2006. The project will entail identifying locations in the Similkameen River and Palmer Creek containing freshwater mussels and using small numbers (likely less than 400 animals) of these as test subjects. Tests will include removing mussels from the streambed, marking them with plastic tags and returning them to the bed; burying them at varying depths with native streambed substrate to determine their ability to survive and extract themselves from burial; dredging mussels from the streambed and monitoring their survival over time. With the exception of the use of a single 4" suction dredge, all manipulations of mussels and streambed materials will be by hand or with hand tools. Mussels used in these tests will be held for up to a month and a half in netting enclosures secured to the bed by weighting with native rocks or rebar stakes. Mussels will be monitored for survival following test exposures. All nonnative materials used in the tests will be removed from test sites following test completion and mussels will be replaced in appropriate habitat following study completion. If funding and staff time allows, follow-up examinations of mussels used in the tests may take place later in 2006 or in 2007. Those examinations will entail brief removal of mussels from the streambed, observation for tag retention and mussel condition, and then replacement of mussels in the streambed.

**Proponent:** Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Attn: Patrick Chapman  
600 Capitol Way N., Olympia WA 98501 (360) 902-2571

**Location of Proposal, including street, if any:** Similkameen River, Palmer Creek,  
Washington, Okanogan County;

The downstream extent of the study area on the Similkameen River is approximately Sec. 9,  
Township 39N, Range 27E.WM

The upstream extent of the study area on the Similkameen River is approximately Sec. 4,  
Township 40N, Range 25E.WM

The location of the Palmer Creek sites is Sec. 35, Township 40N, Range 25E.WM

**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: **June 15, 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:** June 1, 2006

**SIGNATURE:**



SEPA Log Number: 06 -035 dns

**Distribution of Environmental Document:**

Department of Ecology, Environmental Review Section, Olympia  
Department of Natural Resources, SEPA Center, Olympia  
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