



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 (DNS)

Name of Proposal: DAVIS LAKE UNIT FIELD DRAINAGE HPA MODIFICATION

Description of Proposal:

Unusual flooding the last two winters erased all work that had been done on this project. FEMA has agreed to fund this project and the work will be conducted by WDFW engineers. The original HPA addresses the work that needs to be done but does not provide for the necessary measures to complete this project as it now needs to be conducted. Additional SEPA review is necessary to make these modifications. Below is the proposed project description from the original JARPA.

The work will be conducted on that portion of Unnamed Channel (a channelized creek) that flows across wildlife area lands to its confluence with Minnie Creek (see map) and on the agricultural ditches local to the affected fields. The work will be performed using a backhoe and/or a track hoe to remove vegetative debris, debris dams and soil/silt deposits down to historical depth. In addition bank integrity has been compromised in several locations causing high flows to breach the bank and flow into the fields. In those locations we plan to restore the bank to a stable condition using bioengineering techniques.

The purpose of this project is to recover the use of historic agricultural fields. The land was purchased by Tacoma Power to mitigate for the loss of habitat to such wildlife as elk and waterfowl when Mayfield and Riffe Lakes were impounded. The Cowlitz Wildlife Area has a mandate to manage this site for the benefit of area wildlife. Currently, the fields are dominated by reed canarygrass that has interrupted the hydrologic flow, raised the water table, and has made the fields unworkable. In its current state the land provides poor habitat for wildlife and subsequently elk damage complaints on adjacent properties is increasing. This project will facilitate the management of the fields to restore vigor and palatability of the fields encouraging elk use on wildlife area lands and provide optimal migratory waterfowl habitat.

In addition the site's drainage is part of the Lewis County Drainage District #1. It is important that we manage these lands in a way that does not impact adjacent landowners. Since, the drainage no longer functions as historically intended, flooding is normal and landowners up gradient are being negatively impacted in that they can't drain their ground.

The modifications being proposed to the HPA will allow for the removal of up to 2500 cubic feet of material from within 4000 linear feet of Unnamed Channel and L Allen Channel collectively. The material removed (hydric soils) will be side cast, spread out on the field to be reincorporated and finally seeded to prevent future erosion. Since the agricultural fields are composed of hydric soils, soil composition will not be altered. In the upland portion of the Unnamed Channel the removed material (rocks, cobbles and alluvium) will be used to construct a bank to prevent future diversions of the channel into the adjacent agricultural fields. The rest of the provisions of the HPA will remain unaltered.

Proponent/Applicant:

Cowlitz Wildlife Area
Mark Grabski
PO BOX 758
Morton, WA 98356

Location of Proposal, including street, if any: The project is located just east of Morton, WA on Davis Lake Road (see map) Washington, Lewis County; Section 7, Township 12 North, Range 5 EastWM

Lead Agency: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

WDFW has determined that this proposal will likely not have a significant adverse impact on the environment. Therefore, state law¹ does not require an environmental impact statement (EIS). WDFW made this determination of nonsignificance (DNS) after we reviewed the environmental checklist and other information on file with us.

We issued this DNS according to state rules.² We will **not act on this proposal for 14 days** from the date we issued the DNS. Agencies, affected tribes, and members of the public are invited to comment on this proposal or DNS. We must receive your comments within 14 days of the date of this letter. This means we must receive your comments by **July 2, 2009**

You can submit your comments by email to SEPAdesk2@dfw.wa.gov, through the WDFW SEPA website comment link at <http://www.wdfw.wa.gov/hab/sepa/sepa.htm>, fax to (360) 902-2946, or mail to the address below. When you send us your comments, please provide the name of the proposal in your comment letter.

Responsible Official: Teresa A. Eturaspe

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

Address: 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, WA 98501-1091

After the comment period closes, applicants may view the updated status of this proposal on the WDFW SEPA website: <http://www.wdfw.wa.gov/hab/sepa/sepa.htm>. Once the status is posted as final, applicants and permittees may take action on the proposal. When a proposal is modified or withdrawn, notice will be given in accordance with state law.¹

If you have questions about this DNS or the details of the proposal, contact Teresa Eturaspe at the address, e-mail, or fax number above; you can also call her at (360) 902-2575.

DATE OF ISSUE: June 18, 2009 **SIGNATURE:** 

Footnotes

1. RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c)
2. WAC 197-11-340(2).

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