



State of Washington

## DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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

### NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL OF DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE

**Name of Proposal:** #11-089 WEAVER HIGH VALLEY RANCHES SHOOTING PRESERVE

**Description of Proposal:** Shooting Preserve and Dog Training Center

**Proponent:**

Rob Weaver  
904-B Speyers Road  
Selah, WA 98942  
(509) 580-0470

**Location of Proposal:** Washington, Yakima County; In Sections 15, 20, 21, 22, Township 14 North, Range 16 East WM.

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

**Environmental Document Being Withdrawn:** Determination of Nonsignificance for WEAVER HIGH VALLEY RANCHES SHOOTING PRESERVE issued November 14, 2011.

The proposal does qualify as a shooting preserve. Reasons are listed below:

In WAC 232-12-037 (3), Shooting preserves cannot be over 1,000 acres or within ½ mile of water bodies greater than 2 acres. The application is for over 1,500 acres and is within ~1/4 mile of a reservoir in excess of two acres. In WAC 232-12-037(5), Shooting preserves cannot be within 1 mile of WDFW land. The Weaver property adjoins WDFW land.

The application refers to feeding the birds to increase survival. Since a shooting preserve is open 365 days a year, this would appear to fall under the definition of hunting over bait which is a prohibited practice/ method.

Use of the area during nesting season (April, May, June, and July) and into the brood rearing season presents a conflict for use by native imperiled species such as sage grouse, listed as threatened in Washington State.

## Sage Grouse Recovery

This location has been identified in the Greater Sage- Grouse Recovery Plan as the last remaining corridor of shrub steppe habitat west of the City of Yakima. Sage grouse are a shrub steppe obligate and require shrub steppe to live. This area connects grouse habitat north and south. We are concerned that the almost continual disturbance and activity that specifically targets ground dwelling birds would render the area inhospitable to grouse and would be incompatible with agency efforts to recover the listed species.

Additionally, species such as sage sparrow, sage thrasher and loggerhead shrike are shrub steppe obligates and are declining in abundance and distribution due to loss of shrub steppe. This level of use and disturbance would negatively impact use by these sensitive species.

**Responsible Official:** Bob Zeigler

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

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

If you have questions about this action, please contact:

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**DATE OF ISSUE:** December 20, 2011

**SIGNATURE:**

