



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: WASHINGTON STATE AMPHIBIAN AND WATER QUALITY MONITORING PROJECT

Description of Proposal:

General amphibian and water quality sampling conducted on forestlands throughout Washington State. At this time research is focused on western Washington (west of the Cascade crest) in headwater streams (generally orders 1 through 3), including both fish-bearing and non-fish-bearing waters on lands managed for timber production, including state (DNR), federal, and private. This research addresses amphibian and water quality sampling methods, the most stream disturbing of which involves removal and replacement of streambed materials (cobble, debris, large woody debris, sand, gravel) from randomly selected units (generally ranging in total length from 1-3 m of consecutive streambed).

This method is conducted during the hydrologic low flow period. Another sampling method requires surveyors to walk in or along the stream channel turning only the surface layer of moveable cover objects in search of amphibians. Cover objects are returned to their original position. These methods are being used to quantify stream-associated amphibian presence and abundance, woody debris loading, and/or water quality as part of research studies designed to assess the effectiveness of Forests and Fish rules in protecting resources on managed landscapes in Washington State, or to inform other regulations and/or policies.

Permanent monitoring stations may be installed at some sites. This may include installation of rebar for the purpose of holding periphyton tiles in water in order to quantify primary productivity through *chlorophyll a* and ash free dry mass analyses (approx. 8 rebars per stream). It may also include rebar installation along the valley wall (outside of the ordinary high water width) for permanent photo points. As these research studies are designed to evaluate the effectiveness of timber management regulations on managed forestlands, we make every attempt to minimize in-stream and site disturbance so that our research results are not confounded by study design (i.e., sampling methods).

Our experience with the proposed sampling methods indicates that sampling activities result in minimal impacts to water quality. If a decline in water quality were observed (or measured) in association with our activities we would cease all sampling at all sites until the cause could be identified and addressed.

Proponent/Applicant:

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
600 Capitol Way N, Habitat Program, Mailstop 43143
Olympia WA 98501-1091
Contact: Aimee McIntyre, Wildlife Biologist, Science Division, Habitat Program

Location of Proposal: Statewide in Washington, initially in western Washington but eventually sampling in eastern Washington as well.

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 **December 12, 2012**.

Method of Comment:

The following procedures shall govern the method to comment on agency SEPA proposals. Comments received through these procedures are part of the official SEPA record for this proposal.

You can submit your comments any one of the following ways:

- Email to SEPAdesk2@dfw.wa.gov
- Online at the WDFW SEPA website comment link at: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/sepa/>
- Fax to (360) 902-2946;
- Mail to the address below.

Responsible Official: Bob Zeigler

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://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/sepa/> 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 Bob Zeigler at the address, e-mail, or fax number above; you can also call him at (360) 902-2578.

DATE OF ISSUE: November 26, 2012

SIGNATURE:



Footnotes

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