



State of Washington

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL OF MITIGATED DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE

Name of Proposal: MDNS 14-055: INDIAN CREEK RESTORATION

Environmental Document Being Withdrawn: Mitigated Determination of Nonsignificance for INDIAN CREEK RESTORATION issued August 7, 2014

This MDNS is being withdrawn and will be re-issued with revised project description, checklist information, and mitigation measures.

Description of Proposal:

The Indian Creek watershed has been degraded from past land use including construction and management of a logging railroad in the 1920's, livestock grazing, farming, and tractor logging. The stream and associated meadows have lost the large trees and riparian shrubs that would provide roughness features during floods. As a result the stream channel has cut deeper into valley alluvium, and high flows are now trapped in the incised, flume-like channel. This project proposes to use local and transported conifers to restore channel interaction with the adjacent meadows. Approximately 1,000 trees up to 24" in diameter will be placed in complex jams in the stream and scattered randomly on the meadow to restore roughness. Ditches that route surface water to the stream will also be filled with woody material to promote groundwater recharge and to reduce flood peaks downstream of the project area. Placing complex log jams in the stream is expected to cause the channel to re-aggrade, flooding the meadows on a much more frequent basis. This technique is referred to as large wood replenishment, and is described in WDFW's "Stream Habitat Restoration Guidelines" Manual. The proponent has demonstrated the efficacy of this restoration approach in other portions of the Yakima watershed, where wood replenishment has spread floodwaters across publicly-owned meadows. Side channels, stream pool frequency, riparian plants and wetland features have flourished as a result of these projects.

There is no record of any recent cultural surveys, buildings, structures, or sites, located on or near the site that are over 45 years old listed in or eligible for listing in national, state, or local preservation registers. The APE has been identified as culturally sensitive location; however there are no recorded landmarks, features, or other evidence of Indian or historic use or occupation. There are no recorded reports of recent cultural surveys within Section 21; therefore there is insufficient evidence upon which to base a finding of project effects. To address this lack, the APE will be surveyed by a professional archaeologist from the Yakama Nation; the resulting report will be used to inform BPA's findings. The BPA, as the federal lead for this project, initiated Section 106 consultation with DAHP and the affected tribe(s). As a result of consultation and research conducted by a professional archaeologist, the BPA determined that

insufficient evidence was available to reach a finding about the potential for the project to affect historic properties. The BPA contracted with a professional archaeologist to conduct research designed to address this lack of information. The BPA contracted with a professional archaeologist from the Yakama Nation to conduct research designed to address this lack of information. The survey is currently on-going. The results of the survey will be used to identify appropriate measures to avoid, minimize, and compensate for loss, changes to, and disturbance to historic properties.

The proponent shall incorporate the following mitigation measures into the project:

Wolves

- The project will occur in early fall and will be completed in less than one month.
- The project will increase the amount of riparian habitat, improving wolf prey species.

Northern Spotted Owls

- Canopy closure will be retained at levels above 60%.
- No trees with defect will be removed.
- Harvest will be extremely light, removing only a few select individual understory trees. Dominant and co-dominant trees will be retained.

Northern Goshawks

- Timing restrictions will be adhered to.

Bull Trout

- Indian Creek will be surveyed prior to construction to ensure that Bull trout redds are not present.

Mid Columbia Steelhead

- Work window limitations will be adhered to.

Water quality

- Appropriate water quality best management practices will be implemented at the project site during harvest and wood placement.
- Areas of the project site disturbed during construction will be stabilized via placement of slash and installation of livestakes where appropriate.
- Refueling of any/all equipment will occur at a minimum of 150 feet away from the OHWM of Indian Creek.

Public Access and Recreation

- The area is open to pedestrian, bicycle and horse access. These methods for accessing the property will be retained. The existing open road will not be affected by this project.

Historic and Cultural Preservation

- A Cultural and Archaeological survey will be completed by a professional archaeologist. All documented sites will be protected with a 10 meter buffer.

Proponent/Applicant:

Primary:

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Location of Proposal: The project is in Kittitas County in central Washington State. Indian Creek is a left bank tributary to the North Fork (NF) of the Teanaway River, and is within Township 21N, Range 16E, Section 16 WM.

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

Responsible Official: Lisa Wood

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

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If you have questions about this action, contact Lisa Wood at the address above, SEPADesk2@dfw.wa.gov, phone (360) 902-2260, or fax (360) 902-2946.

DATE OF ISSUE: November 5, 2014

SIGNATURE:

