



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 (DNS)

Name of Proposal: DNS 15-003: LISTING TUFTED PUFFINS AS A STATE
ENDANGERED SPECIES

Description of Proposal:

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has evaluated the Tufted Puffin for possible listing as a state endangered species with the process outlined in WAC 232-12-297. One rule is proposed to be amended: WAC 232-12-014. WAC 232-12-014 identifies endangered species in Washington that are in danger of extirpation in the state and are in need of recovery actions to restore populations to healthy levels.

Pursuant to WAC 232-12-297(5.1.1) and (5.2), WDFW is proposing to amend WAC 232-12-014 and is requesting that the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission adopt the Department's recommendation to list Tufted Puffins as a state endangered species. A rationale for this action is presented in the Washington State Status Report for the Tufted Puffin. The report provides an analysis of the factors cited in WAC 232-12-297 (7.1.1) through (7.1.5) and considers all information relevant to the status of the species in Washington. The report also discusses factors affecting the species' status. As described in the report, Tufted Puffins in Washington have undergone an order of magnitude population decline and no longer occupy 57% of the historical breeding locations in the state. These declines are ongoing. Causes for the declines are unknown, but potentially include a number of historical and recent factors, including reduced prey availability, changing oceanic and climatic conditions, entrapment in fishing nets, mortality from oil spills and chemical contaminants, human disturbance of breeding colonies, impacts from introduced species, and increased bald eagle predation.

Draft versions of the Washington State Status Report for the Tufted Puffin were evaluated by the scientific community, including both WDFW scientists and external scientists. Members of the public were also invited to review the draft report during a public comment period that extended from September 12 to December 11, 2014. After the close of the public review period, WDFW prepared the final status report and listing recommendation. The public will have an opportunity to review the final report, listing recommendation, and SEPA findings for one month before the Fish and Wildlife Commission makes their decision. The final listing recommendation is planned to be presented to the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission on February 6-7, 2015 and the Commission is expected to take action on the recommendation on March 20-21, 2015.

Proponent/Applicant: Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)
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Location of Proposal, including street, if any: The range of Tufted Puffins in Washington

includes all marine waters and coastlines.

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. The comment period will end at **5:00 pm on January 23, 2015**.

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: Lisa Wood

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 Lisa Wood at the address, e-mail, or fax number above; you can also call her at (360) 902-2260.

DATE OF ISSUE: January 9, 2015

SIGNATURE:



Footnotes

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

SEPA Log Number: 15-003.dns