



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 16-038: UPLISTING LYNX FROM A STATE THREATENED SPECIES TO A STATE ENDANGERED SPECIES

Description of Proposal:

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has evaluated the population status of the Lynx, which is currently a state threatened species. Two rules are proposed to be amended: WAC 232-12-014 and WAC 232-12-011. WAC 232-12-014 identifies endangered species in Washington as those that are seriously threatened with extinction in the state and are in need of recovery actions to restore populations to healthy levels. WAC 232-12-011 identifies species classified as protected, which are designated into three subcategories: threatened, sensitive, and other. Threatened species are those that are likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future.

Pursuant to WAC 232-12-297 (6.1.1) and (6.2), WDFW is proposing to amend WAC 232-12-014 and WAC 232-12-011 and is requesting that the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission adopt the Department's recommendation to uplist the Lynx from a state threatened species to a state endangered species. Rationale for this action are presented in the *Draft Washington State Periodic Status Review for the Lynx*. 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 as well as in the nation.

As described in the report, available information indicates that the distribution of Lynx in Washington has contracted significantly from its historic extent and that western Okanogan County is the only area in Washington that supports a resident Lynx population. Estimates of population size, while rudimentary, suggest that this population may include approximately 54 individuals. Threats to this population include loss and fragmentation of habitat due to wildfire, small population size, demographic stochasticity, and the unpredictable effects of climate change. There has been no indication that the conservation status of Washington's Lynx population has improved since it was state or federally listed. Given the reduced distribution, small and restricted population, and an increase in the number and severity of threats to Lynx in Washington, WDFW recommends that the status of the Lynx in the state be changed from threatened to endangered.

Draft versions of the *Washington State Periodic Status Review for the Lynx* were evaluated by the scientific community, including both WDFW scientists and external scientists. Members of the public are also invited to review the draft periodic status review during a public comment period that extends from July 12 to October 10, 2016. After the close of the public review period, the Department will prepare the final periodic status review and delisting recommendation.

The final listing recommendation is planned to be presented to the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission on November 4-5, 2016 and the Commission is expected to take action on the recommendation on December 9-10, 2016.

Proponent/Applicant: Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)
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Location of Proposal, including street, if any: The range of the lynx includes much of the boreal forest of North America, and its range extends south from northern Canada and Alaska to several areas of the contiguous United States including northcentral and northeastern Washington.

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 90 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 October 10, 2016**.

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: July 12, 2016

SIGNATURE:



Footnotes

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