



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 20-007: NORTH POTHoles AND FRENCHMAN
PRESCRIPTION BURN

Description of Proposal:

The overarching goal of this project is to use prescribed burning to improve wetland habitat for native wildlife in Columbia Basin Wildlife Area (CBWA). Specifically, the project objectives are to improve breeding and foraging habitat in the North Potholes unit for northern leopard frogs (*Lithobates pipiens*; WA State Endangered Species and Species of Special Concern) and improve nesting habitat in the Frenchman unit for waterfowl and other migratory birds.

Northern leopard frogs are negatively associated with tall emergent vegetation (TEV) and select for environments with less than 20% TEV (Germaine and Hays 2007; WDFW SWAP 2015, page A3-31, NLF Stressor). Management is required in CBWA to address shallow wetlands dominated by tall emergent vegetation. Current vegetation management strategies last about 1-3 years before conditions return to pre-treatment levels. By combining burning and spraying TEV treatments will last 3-5 years.

Vegetation control was initiated in late summer 2019 with an herbicide treatment. The herbicide that was used was Imazapyr (tradenames Polaris and others), formulated labeled for aquatic use. Prescribed burning will target the shorelines of approximately 35 defined ponds in North Potholes, roughly 100 shoreline acres. Approximately 151 acres of wetland habitat will be targeted for burning in the Frenchman area (Figure 1- attached). In both areas, shoreline wetland vegetation will be converted to an early successional state more conducive to northern leopard frog reproduction and waterfowl nesting through prescribed burning. The prescribed burn would be implemented between January and February 2020.

Proponent/Applicant: Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)
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Location of Proposal, including street, if any: Two sites within the WDFW Columbia Basin Wildlife Area:

North Potholes Site: Approximately 7 miles southwest of Moses Lake, Grant County, Washington: Township 19N, Range 28E, Section 31; Township 19N, Range 27E, Sections 34-36; and Township 18N, Range 27E, Section 1.

Frenchman Site: Approximately 8.5 miles northeast of Royal City and approximately 0.7 miles north of the intersection of Hwy 262 and Frenchman Hills Rd E, Grant County, Washington: Township 17N, Range 27E, Section 17.

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 notice. The comment period will end at **5:00 pm on February 14, 2020**.

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: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/licenses/environmental/sepa/open-comments>
- Fax to (360) 902-2946
- Mail to the address below.

Responsible Official: Lisa Wood

Position/Title: SEPA/NEPA Coordinator, WDFW Habitat Program, Protection Division

Address: P.O. Box 43200, Olympia, WA 98504-3200

After the comment period closes, applicants may view the updated status of this proposal on the WDFW SEPA website: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/licenses/environmental/sepa/closed-final>. 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 31, 2020

SIGNATURE:



Footnotes

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

SEPA Log Number: 20-007.dns