



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 20-020: TANEUM CREEK CEDAR MEADOW FLOODPLAIN ENHANCEMENT

Description of Proposal:

Taneum Creek provides habitat for ESA-listed steelhead, coho, resident trout, juvenile chinook and is proposed for outplanting of bull trout at some time in the future. Ambitious restoration of streamflow, floodplain connectivity, fish passage and land protection has occurred through past restoration efforts in this watershed. Between (approximately) river mile 11 and river mile 11.5 of Taneum Creek, Yakama Nation (YN) biologists have identified a stream reach that is lacking in woody material, and is oversimplified and disconnected from its floodplain as a result of past land management practices. The project reach lies within Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and Washington Department of Natural Resources (WA-DNR) managed lands (see attached APE maps). Historic land use within the project included both grazing and logging. Grazing in the vicinity began in the 1860's. Railroad logging up Taneum Canyon occurred during the 1930's and involved construction of rail lines and a headquarters camp within the project APE. Consequently, there has been severe alteration to the hydrologic, physical, and ecological processes that maintain habitat for native species in this stretch of Taneum Creek.

Yakama Nation Fisheries (YNF), in partnership with Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group, are proposing to restore this reach of Taneum Creek through strategic wood placement and minor excavation at the upstream end of existing secondary channels, to improve floodplain connectivity on the right bank of the creek. Yakama Nation Fisheries contracted with a geomorphologist from WPD, LLC to develop final designs for the project, which are attached to this SEPA document. This project aims to improve floodplain connectivity and instream habitat complexity by placing up to 150 logs with and without rootwads instream and on the floodplain and up to 100 cubic yards of slash within the ~0.5-mile project reach. Six wood structures (OR log jams) are planned instream, mainly aimed at deflecting streamflow and encouraging secondary channel development and activation on river right. Structures will also encourage instream complexity, including roughness, cover and pool formation. These structures will be keyed into the streambanks with minor excavation in the bed and banks of Taneum Creek. Spoils will be used as ballast in log jams. Slash will also be incorporated into the instream structures. There will also be a single, <50 cubic yard excavation at the top end (inlet) of the existing secondary channels on river right, to encourage further development and activation of these channels and right-bank floodplain at a 2-year flood event. The spoils from this excavation will also be used as ballast in log jams and/or placed on existing bars within the project area. Additionally, a portion of the cut logs will be placed on the right bank floodplain, in areas with little or no existing vegetation, to increase roughness in locations where instream structures are intended to increase overbank flows. Upon conclusion of the in-stream restoration work, the access road to the floodplain will be decommissioned using barrier rock or an earthen berm to

block motorized access to the floodplain.

Wood for the project will be acquired from a private contractor. Wood will be delivered to the staging area via logging trucks for the project using the West Taneum Road, which eventually becomes Forest Service Road 3300. Implementation is planned for summer and fall of 2020 and will include the use of heavy equipment to place wood including skidders, excavators, and log loaders. After the heavy equipment work is completed, hand crews may access the site by foot to adjust wood placement with manual winches and pulleys and to plant native vegetation within the project APE, for up to five years.

Proponent/Applicant:

Yakama Nation
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Location of Proposal, including street, if any: Taneum Creek, tributary to the Yakima River, approximately 10 miles northwest of Ellensburg, Kittitas County, Washington: Township 19N, Range 16E, Sections 29 and 30.

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 May 11, 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: April 27, 2020

SIGNATURE:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa Wood".

Footnotes

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

SEPA Log Number: 20-020.dns