



State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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**DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE, ADOPTION OF EXISTING
ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT, AND DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

Name of Proposal: DS/ADOPTION/DSEIS 22-011: WOLF-LIVESTOCK CONFLICT
DETERRENCE RULE MAKING

Under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is making a new threshold determination of significance (DS), adopting an existing environmental document, and issuing a draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (Supplemental EIS) with additional information and analysis to specifically address impacts related to rule making alternatives.

Description of Proposal and Threshold Determination:

WDFW initiated new rule making in response to a decision by Governor Jay Inslee in September 2020 to grant a petition for rule making directed to the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission relating to wolf management with the goal of instituting practices that will avoid the repeated loss of wolves and livestock in Washington.

Under the umbrella of the 2011 Wolf Conservation and Management Plan goals, the purpose of adopting new rules related to wolf management in Chapter 220-440 WAC is to 1) establish procedure for identifying WDFW expectations for use of non-lethal tools to mitigate wolf-livestock conflict in areas of chronic conflict, while recognizing the use of non-lethal tools is encouraged statewide, and 2) establish criteria for the use of WDFW's lethal removal authority in areas of chronic wolf-livestock conflict.

Our preliminary analysis finds that the proposed rule would not result in probable significant adverse environmental impacts. However, this proposal concerns management of gray wolves, a state-endangered species in Washington. Additionally, the full extent of the environmental impacts of the proposed rule will be "impossible to forecast ... with precision, often because some variables cannot be predicted or values cannot be quantified" (WAC 197-11-330(3)(d)). In light of this factor, as well as the "endangered" classification of wolves (WAC 197-11-330(3)(e)(ii)), and the high level of interest and controversy around the subject of this rule making, the agency is choosing to prepare a Supplemental EIS in conjunction with the rule making process.

Rule making progress and documents can be viewed at the WDFW wolf conservation website:
<https://wdfw.wa.gov/about/regulations/development/wolf-livestock-conflict-deterrence>

Location of Proposal, including street, if any: The Wolf-Livestock Conflict Deterrence Rule will apply statewide.

Proponent/Applicant: Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)
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Title and Date of Document Being Adopted:

Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) for the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan for Washington (July 28, 2011).

Agency that Prepared Document Being Adopted: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

Description of Document (or Portion) Being Adopted: The entire contents of the 2011 Final EIS for the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan for Washington.

WDFW completed the Final EIS, in conjunction with a Preferred Alternative Recommended Wolf Conservation and Management Plan for Washington, in 2011. The purpose of the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan, adopted with revisions by the Fish and Wildlife Commission in December 2011, is to ensure the reestablishment of a self-sustaining population of gray wolves in Washington and to encourage social tolerance for the species by addressing and reducing conflicts. The plan serves as the state recovery plan for the species per WAC 220-610-110(11.1).

The 2011 Final EIS evaluated four alternatives, including the revised Preferred Alternative. The alternatives varied in how conservation of wolves in Washington could be accomplished and how conservation and management would be balanced. These included differences in the geographic distribution of recovery objectives, numbers of recovery areas, management options to address conflicts, and compensation for livestock depredation. Alternative 2, the wolf conservation and management plan, was the Preferred Alternative because it met the goals and objectives for establishing a long-term viable wolf population in Washington while at the same time addressing wolf-livestock conflicts and interactions between wolves and wild ungulates. The Final Preferred Alternative was modified from its previous version in the Draft EIS based on the public, scientific, and agency reviews and input.

If the Document Being Adopted has been Challenged, Please Describe: N/A

Lead Agency and Name of Agency Adopting the Document: WDFW

The Documents are Available to be Read at: The 2011 Final EIS and the draft Supplemental EIS are both available online at: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/licenses/environmental/sepa/open-comments>. The 2011 Final EIS is also available at: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/01355>.

After independent review, we have identified and adopted the referenced 2011 Final EIS as being appropriate for this proposal. The document meets some, but not all, of our environmental review needs for the current proposal and will accompany the proposal to the decision maker along with a draft Supplemental EIS that specifically addresses alternatives and potential impacts related to this rule making.

We issued this Determination of Significance, Adoption, and draft Supplemental EIS, under RCW 43.21C.034, WAC 197-11-455, WAC 197-11-600(4)(d), WAC 197-11-620, and WAC 197-11-630. Agencies, affected tribes, and members of the public are invited to comment on this proposal or determination.

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.

Please submit your comments through **one** of the following methods:

- Online through the Public Input comment portal for this proposal at: <https://publicinput.com/SEPAWolfConflictDeterrence>.
- Email to SEPAWolfConflictDeterrence@PublicInput.com.
- Call 1-855-925-2801 to record your input by phone. The project code is 6659.

Comment Period: The comment period will end on **April 11, 2022**.

Responsible Official: Lisa Wood

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

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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.

If you have questions about this determination or the details of the proposal, contact Lisa Wood at the address above or email SEPADesk2@dfw.wa.gov.

DATE OF ISSUE: February 22, 2022

SIGNATURE:



SEPA Log Number: 22-011 ds/adpt/seis

Individuals who need to receive this information in an alternative format or language, or who need reasonable accommodations to participate in WDFW-sponsored public meetings or other activities may contact the Title VI/ADA Compliance Coordinator by phone at 360-902-2349, TTY (711), or email (Title6@dfw.wa.gov).