



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 24-008: METHOW FOREST RESTORATION

Description of Proposal:

The Methow Forest Restoration project is intended to improve ecological integrity ratings, habitat for multiple wildlife species, and forest health on the Methow Wildlife Area. Special emphasis for this project is placed on improving the fire-resiliency for mule deer habitat.

Approximately 578 acres of overstocked forest stands on 5 units will be commercially thinned to more closely resemble the historic range of variability found in fire-dependent forests on the east slopes of the Cascades before 1880 CE. This will include a reduction in stocking levels to approximately 25 trees per acre on drier sites (e.g. south aspects, ridgetops) to 40 trees per acre in area with more available moisture (e.g. north aspects, protected draws). All the commercial thinning units will be marked with orange paint to denote retention trees.

As part of this proposal, all roads used for access and timber hauling will be existing grades that were constructed when these stands were harvested in the past. Some of these roads may be abandoned to Washington Forest Practice standards at the discretion of the local Wildlife Area Manager. This work will include installing undrivable water bars, spreading slash and debris over the road prism, and grass seeding with a mix of native species.

Proponent/Applicant: Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)
Contact: Leland Lauffer
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Leland.Lauffer@dfw.wa.gov

Location of Proposal, including street, if any: Rendezvous, Methow, and Golden Doe Units of the WDFW Methow Wildlife Area, northwest and north of Winthrop, Okanogan County, Washington:

- Township 35N, Range 21E, Sections 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, and 13
- Township 33N, Range 22E, Section 33
- Township 32N, Range 22E, Section 4

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 threshold determination according to state rules.² Agencies, affected tribes, and members of the public are invited to comment on this determination. We must receive your comments within 14 days of the date of this determination. The comment period will end at **5:00 pm on March 14, 2024.**

Method of Comment:

SEPA documents related to this proposal can be reviewed at the WDFW SEPA website at: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licenses/environmental/sepa/open-comments>.

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 through one of the following ways:

- Online at the Public Input comment portal for this proposal: <https://publicinput.com/MethowForest>
- Email to: MethowForest@PublicInput.com

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, or have difficulty with the Public Input comment portal, contact Lisa Wood at: SEPADesk2@dfw.wa.gov.

DATE OF ISSUE: February 29, 2024

SIGNATURE: 

Footnotes

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

SEPA Log Number: 24-008.dns

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).