



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

Eastern Region Office

4601 North Monroe St., Spokane, WA 99205-1295 • 509-329-3400

October 14, 2024

WDFW SEPA Desk
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
PO Box 43200
Olympia, WA 98504

Re: 4-0 Ranch Forest Restoration
File: 24-06

Dear Lisa Wood:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Determination of Nonsignificance regarding the 4-0 Ranch Forest Restoration Project (Proponent: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife). After reviewing the documents, the Department of Ecology (Ecology) submits the following comments:

Water Quality Program

Forest Practice Rules found in Washington Administrative Code-Title 222 require 150 trees per acre be established after harvest. Your plan for the 4-0 Ranch Forest Restoration project proposes less than required per [WAC 222-34-020](#) Required Reforestation-East of Cascades Summit, which reads:

(1) Reforestation - where required.

(a) Unless the harvest application indicates that the land will be converted to another use, or the lands are identified in [WAC 222-34-050](#) as having a likelihood of conversion to urban use, reforestation is required for forest lands harvested after January 1, 1975, in the following instances:

(i) Clearcutting; or

(ii) Partial cutting where 50 percent or more of the timber volume is removed within any 5-year period, unless the department determines that the live trees remaining will reasonably utilize the timber growing capacity of the soils.

(b) Reforestation is not required where:

(i) Individual dead, dying, down or windthrown trees are salvaged; or

(ii) A tree or trees not constituting a merchantable stand are removed from lands in actual use for other purposes, for example, removal of individual trees from lands used exclusively for farming or cultivated pasture; or

(iii) Trees are removed under a thinning program reasonably expected to maximize the long-term production of commercial timber; or

(iv) An average of 150 vigorous, undamaged, well-distributed seedlings per acre of a commercial tree species are established on the area harvested (up to 20 percent of the harvested area may contain fewer than 150 seedlings per acre, but no acre of the harvested area with timber growing capacity may contain less than 120 seedlings per acre); or

(v) A minimum of 100 vigorous, undamaged, well-distributed advanced regeneration, saplings or merchantable trees per acre of a commercial tree species or combinations thereof, remain on the area harvested.

(2) Reforestation standards. A harvest area is reforested when that area contains an average of 150 or more vigorous, undamaged commercial species seedlings per acre that have survived on the site for at least 1 growing season. Up to 20 percent of the harvested area may contain fewer than 150 seedlings per acre, but no portion of the harvested area with timber growing capacity may contain less than 120 seedlings per acre. The department may determine that less than an average of 150 seedlings per acre is acceptable if fewer seedlings will reasonably utilize the timber growing capacity of the site.

For more information or technical assistance, please contact Jason Graham at (509) 329-3517 or via email at Jason.Graham@ecy.wa.gov.

Water Resources Program

Please keep in mind that any surface water diversion that occurs during the 4-0 Ranch Forest Restoration project requires application to the Department of Ecology for a water right permit.

For more information, please contact Herm Spangle at (509) 209-3421 or via email at Herm.Spangle@ecy.wa.gov.

State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)

Ecology bases comments upon information submitted for review. As such, comments made do not constitute an exhaustive list of the various authorizations you may need to obtain, nor legal requirements you may need to fulfill in order to carry out the proposed action. Applicants should remain in touch with their Local Responsible Officials or Planners for additional guidance.

For information on the SEPA Process, please contact Cindy Anderson at (509) 655-1541 or via email at Cindy.Anderson@ecy.wa.gov.

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For more guidance on, or to respond to the comments made by Ecology, please contact the appropriate staff listed above at the phone number or email provided.

Department of Ecology
Eastern Regional Office
(Ecology File: 202404339)

Ecc: Leland Lauffer, Biologist, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife