



State of Washington

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Mailing Address: 600 Capitol Way N - Olympia, Washington 98501-1091 - (360) 902-2200, TDD (360) 902-2207
Main Office location: Natural Resources Building - 1111 Washington Street SE - Olympia, WA

DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE (DNS)

Name of Proposal: NACHES OFF-CHANNEL HABITAT RESTORATION

Description of Proposal: The project area is located on the right bank floodplain of the Naches River, encompassing what was historically a stream/wetlands complex associated with a side-channel of the Naches River. The irrigation ditch drains into a side channel of the Naches River in a reach that has been designated as a high priority for restoration and protection of steelhead and spring Chinook habitat.

The goal of this project is to improve salmonid habitat (steelhead and Chinook rearing habitat) in a side channel of the Naches River and at the terminal end of Powell Ditch.

The project has the following objectives:

Elimination of a fish passage barrier at the lower end of Powell Ditch. The terminal end of Powell Ditch currently occupies a confined ditch, where gradient and velocity do not meet fish passage standards. To eliminate this barrier, approximately 5 - 10 cubic feet per second of irrigation tailwater will be diverted from the ditch into a restored and enhanced historic channel to the south. One cubic foot per second of irrigation tailwater will remain in the current Powell Ditch channel to maintain any habitat in this channel.

Improve off-channel rearing habitat for salmonids by restoring 850 feet of a primary channel and reconnecting approximately 1,200 ft of historic secondary channels and 3.5 acres of associated wetlands. This area will be re-planted with native trees and shrubs, with the expected habitat benefits of shade, nutrients, reduction of sediment, and long term input of large, woody debris. Wood and rootwads will also be added to the restored channel.

Improvement of salmonid habitat in the side-channel of the Naches River by installing up to nine habitat complexity structures (with large logs and rootwads) to encourage the formation of scour holes/pools in the side channel. Such pools provide hiding and holding habitat for juvenile and adult salmonids. The structure located nearest to the newly constructed outlet of Powell Ditch will reduce the potential for scour at the outlet. These structures will be installed over a 250 foot length of the side channel.

Improve floodplain function by removing a small (less than two feet high) berm/dike along approximately 250 feet of the lower end of Powell Ditch. This berm is likely the result of past ditch maintenance activities. It currently limits the potential for overbank flow out of Powell Ditch. Elimination of the berm will allow high water to move south across the restored wetlands before entering the side channel of the Naches River. Overland flow allows flood waters to dissipate energy, release sediment, and in some cases infiltrate into the groundwater.

Improve potential spawning habitat in Powell Ditch by placement of spawning-sized gravels and addition of channel meanders above the diversion point.

Proponent/Applicant:

Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group

P.O. Box 1271

White Salmon, WA 98672

Contact person: Margaret Neuman: 509-281-1322

Location of Proposal, including street, if any: The project area is located on the right bank floodplain of the Naches River, encompassing what was historically a stream/wetlands complex associated with a side-channel of the Naches River. The area is down-valley from the lower segment of an irrigation return flow channel that is part of the South Naches Irrigation District's Powell Ditch. Project is located off of Charlie Lane, Naches, Washington, Yakima County; NW 1/4 of Section 24, Township 14 North, Range 17 East WM

Lead Agency: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

WDFW has determined that this proposal likely will 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. If you want to review this information, please contact WDFW at the address below.

Agencies, affected tribes, and members of the public are invited to comment on this proposal.

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. If you have comments about this DNS or the proposal, you must send your comments to us so that we receive them within 14 days. This means we must receive your comments by **July 9, 2008**.

When you send us your comments, please provide the name of proposal in your comment letter, and mail the letter to:

Responsible Official: Teresa A. Eturaspe

Position/Title: SEPA/NEPA Coordinator, WDFW Regulatory Services Section

Address: 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, WA 98501

You can also send your comments via email to SEPAdesk@dfw.wa.gov, or via fax to (360) 902-2946.

If you have questions about this DNS or the details of the proposal, contact Teresa Eturaspe at the address, e-mail, or fax number above; you can also call her at (360) 902-2575.

DATE OF ISSUE: June 25, 2008

SIGNATURE: 

Footnotes

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

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