



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: DNS 16-039: UPLISTING MARBLED MURRELETS FROM A STATE THREATENED SPECIES TO A STATE ENDANGERED SPECIES

Description of Proposal:

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has evaluated the population status of the Marbled Murrelet, which is currently a state threatened species. Two rules are proposed to be amended: WAC 232-12-014 and WAC 232-12-011. WAC 232-12-014 identifies endangered species in Washington as those that are seriously threatened with extinction in the state and are in need of recovery actions to restore populations to healthy levels. WAC 232-12-011 identifies species classified as protected, which are designated into three subcategories: threatened, sensitive, and other. Threatened species are those that are likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future.

Pursuant to WAC 232-12-297 (6.1.1) and (6.2), WDFW is proposing to amend WAC 232-12-014 and WAC 232-12-011 and is requesting that the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission adopt the Department's recommendation to uplist the Marbled Murrelet from a state threatened species to a state endangered species. Rationale for this action are presented in the *Draft Washington State Periodic Status Review for the Marbled Murrelet*. The report provides an analysis of the factors cited in WAC 232-12-297(7.1.1) through (7.1.5) and considers all information relevant to the status of the species in Washington as well as in the nation.

As described in the report, the primary threats for initial listing as threatened included loss of old forest nesting habitat from commercial timber harvesting and mortality associated with net fisheries and oil spills. In Washington, nesting habitat losses due to timber harvest since initial listing in 1993 have been substantial, with an estimated 30% loss on nonfederal lands. In conjunction with habitat loss, the population is undergoing measurable decline. At-sea population monitoring from 2001 to 2015 indicated a 4.4% decline annually, which represents a 44% reduction of the population since 2001. The magnitude of the population decline indicates that the status of the Marbled Murrelet in Washington has become more imperiled since state listing in 1993. Without solutions that can effectively address these concerns in the short-term, it is likely the Marbled Murrelet could become functionally extirpated in Washington within the next several decades. Therefore, the Department's recommendation is to list the Marbled Murrelet as a state endangered species in Washington.

Draft versions of the *Washington State Periodic Status Review for the Marbled Murrelet* were evaluated by the scientific community, including both WDFW scientists and external scientists. Members of the public are also invited to review the draft periodic status review during a public comment period that extends from July 12 to October 10, 2016. After the close of the public review period, the Department will prepare the final periodic status review and delisting recommendation.

The final listing recommendation is planned to be presented to the Washington Fish and Wildlife

Commission on November 4-5, 2016 and the Commission is expected to take action on the recommendation on December 9-10, 2016.

Proponent/Applicant: Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)
Contact: Hannah Anderson, Listing and Recovery Section Manager
600 Capitol Way North
Olympia, WA 98501
(360) 902-8403
Hannah.Anderson@dfw.wa.gov

Location of Proposal, including street, if any: The marbled murrelet occurs only in western Washington. The species is unusual among seabirds in that it does not nest in colonies at the marine-terrestrial interface. In the central and southern parts of its global range, including Washington, the murrelet nests in coastal forests including the Olympic mountains, southwest Washington forests, and the western slopes of the Cascade mountains.

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 90 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 letter. The comment period will end at **5:00 pm on October 10, 2016**.

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: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/sepa/>
- Fax to (360) 902-2946;
- Mail to the address below.

Responsible Official: Lisa Wood

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

Address: 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, WA 98501-1091

After the comment period closes, applicants may view the updated status of this proposal on the WDFW SEPA website: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/sepa/>. 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: July 12, 2016

SIGNATURE:



Footnotes

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

SEPA Log Number: 16-039.dns