



State of Washington

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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ADDENDUM 16-064 TO DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE 15-046 DATED: SEPTEMBER 1, 2015

Name of DNS: DNS 15-046: SOUTH FORK COWICHE CREEK FLOODPLAIN
RESTORATION PROJECT

Description of Original Proposal:

The YKFP proposal for South Fork Cowiche Creek identified approximately 2 miles for wood replenishment and riparian enhancement on the Cowiche unit of WDFW's Oak Creek Wildlife Area. Restoration measures are to reverse channel incision and restore floodplain function. The goals of the project are to enhance instream habitat complexity and groundwater storage, which will in turn contribute toward improved flows. This project will provide additional benefits to fish and wildlife by increasing minimum stream flows, restoring the density and species composition of riparian vegetation, increasing the availability of pool habitat and cool water refugia during periods of high temperature, and providing suitable habitat for beaver re-colonization.

Wood is a critical component of stream ecosystems. The project will install wood structures to restore in-channel complexity, reverse channel incision and reengage Cowiche Creek with its floodplain. Log structures can be cost-effective applications that reduce stream velocities at high flows, thereby trapping sediment to help reverse channel incision. Wood will also be placed on the floodplain to promote roughness during floods. Fine material will be trapped which will promote seed germination, and provide microclimate heterogeneity for riparian re-vegetation. Floodplain roughness also helps avoid rapid channel avulsions that would otherwise hamper floodplain restoration.

Floodplain and aquatic restoration will require 882 logs to be placed in the channel and floodplain. Wood for the project will be harvested in the Oak Creek watershed. Timber harvest sites were previously identified in the Oak Creek Floodplain Restoration Project (DNS 14-048), however the method of harvest and tree removal has changed. Timber harvest operations will be conducted with ground based equipment on slopes < 45%. Trees will be whole tree logged and processed at the landings. Normal ground disturbance from a tractor yarder will occur. Logging slash at landings will be piled and burned and/or distributed along skid trails. Trees will be left in lengths as long as possible and hauled via truck to the Cowiche worksite. After construction, the Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) will install cuttings along disturbed banks and broadcast native grass-seed.

Proposed restoration includes the construction of unanchored log jams in the stream channel (with and without rootwads) and placed via cable yarder (Link Belt 98 or equivalent – a tracked, lattice crane with 54-foot boom). Pilings (vertical logs) will be driven into the bank using a 100-class tracked excavator with hydraulic hoepack to encourage flows into disconnected wide floodplain areas where riparian vegetation is absent. Logs may be positioned individually or in small groupings. Small diameter woody material will be placed by laborers as racking material upstream of and within each jam. In addition, logs will be placed in the floodplain to enhance

roughness and trap fine material during floods, in turn rejuvenating soil health and promoting native plant germination. All wood placements will be consistent with the Oregon State Guide to Placement of Wood, Boulders and Gravel for Habitat Restoration (2010) and Stream Habitat Restoration Guidelines (2012).

Description of Addendum 16-064:

Additional wood is being proposed for the South Fork Cowiche Creek Floodplain Restoration Project located on the Cowiche unit of the Oak Creek Wildlife Area, project number is 15-046. The amount of wood needed for the project in our original proposal was significantly underestimated. The SEPA document currently says 882 logs will be placed in the channel and associated floodplain. According to recent calculations due to the level of degradation and channel incision in this area of South Fork Cowiche Creek, approximately 1500 will be needed to complete the project. All other aspects of the project will remain the same, only 618 logs are being added.

Proponent/Applicant:

Primary

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Location of Project or Action: Cowiche Creek is a right bank tributary to the Naches River. The project reach is located on the Cowiche unit of the WDFW's Oak Creek Wildlife Area near Yakima, Yakima County, Washington: Township 14N, Range 16E, Sections 34 and 35.

Lead Agency: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

This addendum is being distributed pursuant to WACs 197-11-600 and 197-11-625. The updated information provided above does not substantially change the analysis of significant impacts in the existing environmental checklist. Based on the original DNS and the updated information provided in this addendum, we have determined that a new threshold determination is not warranted. There is no comment period associated with this SEPA addendum.

Responsible Official: Lisa Wood

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

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If you have questions about this action, contact Lisa Wood at the address above, SEPAdesk2@dfw.wa.gov, phone (360) 902-2260, or fax (360) 902-2946.

DATE OF ISSUE: October 17, 2016

SIGNATURE:

