



State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 43200, Olympia, WA 98504-3200 • (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 18-012: UPPER WINCHESTER WASTEWAY COMPLEX
WETLAND ENHANCEMENTS AND RESTORATION

Description of Proposal:

The primary objectives are to improve wetland habitat to support higher species diversity and higher numbers of waterfowl, shorebirds, water birds, song birds, reptiles, amphibians, and mammals for wildlife conservation and public recreation. The long-term goals of this project are to improve wetland function, increase palustrine emergent marsh habitat in an area heavily utilized by waterfowl, and support migrating, nesting, and brood rearing waterfowl and shorebirds.

This project will accomplish 173 acres of improvements on critical wetland habitats by improving wetland function and increasing palustrine emergent habitats in an area heavily utilized by waterfowl throughout the year, and with very high value for public recreation. Activities will restore 91 wetland acres by excavating sediment from basins that have gone dry, and enhance another 123 wetland acres by creating new water delivery swales to basins that have lost most of their water supply. The proposed tracts are owned by the BOR and managed in perpetuity by WDFW.

Tract 1 activities: This project will improve wetland function and wildlife habitat in an area that is open to the public. Wetland function will be restored by excavating sediments. Approximately 91 acres within nine former wetland basins will have the top 1-2 ft of excess sediment excavated (85,350 cubic yards total) to restore shallow, emergent marsh habitats **Tract 2 activities:** Approximately 123 acres of palustrine emergent wetlands will be enhanced by the construction of three new swales to improve water delivery. Seepage from the irrigation wasteway canal supplies water to large wetlands upstream of the project wetlands, but sedimentation and tall, emergent vegetation has altered the flow regime, preventing sufficient water from reaching the project wetland basins. Three new swales will be created to supply water to approximately 123 acres of degraded wetlands. The three swales are the following dimensions: swale 1 = 411 linear feet (LF); swale 2 = 232 LF; and swale 3 = 167 LF. Swales will have a 10 ft bottom width and 3:1 side-slopes. Implementation is planned for fall of 2018, and wetlands will fill with water immediately after construction, providing fall migration and wintering habitats.

These projects are part of a large-scale, long-term effort to evaluate and improve wetlands within the 34,920 acre Desert Unit, one of the management Units within the CBWA, which contains over 7,500 acres of wetlands and ponds in various states of succession. DU, WDFW and other partners anticipate a decade of work to evaluate and improve the wetlands throughout the Desert Unit. DU and WDFW have already successfully performed initial feasibility investigations at three other sites within the Desert Unit.

Proponent/Applicant: Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)
Contact: Richard Finger

1550 Alder Street NW
Ephrata, WA 98823
(509) 754-4624 ext. 229
Richard.Finger@dfw.wa.gov

Location of Proposal, including street, if any: About 9 miles west southwest of Moses Lake, Grant County, Washington: Township 18N, Range 25E, Sections 1 and 12.

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 14 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 March 23, 2018**.

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 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: <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: March 9, 2018

SIGNATURE:



Footnotes

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