



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 18-038: COASTAL PINK SHRIMP FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Description of Proposal: The Washington coastal pink shrimp fishery has operated under state statutes and regulations since its inception in the late 1950s. It is unknown if the fishery ever operated under a formal fishery management plan prior to 1990; it has not done so in the decades after.

The purpose of the pink shrimp FMP is to formally document existing policy and objectives, and propose a new policy, specific for management of the Washington coastal pink shrimp fishery. The FMP includes descriptions of: policies and objectives; regulatory authorities; fishery descriptions; time, area and gear regulations; habitat considerations; and bycatch and listed species interactions.

The proposed new policy introduces a management measure based on the concept of biological reference points. This management measure would affect “time” i.e., fishery season. Establishment of seasons, catch limits, and geographical areas for fishing and shellfish removal are exempt from SEPA under WAC 197-11-835(1) and are not included in this SEPA determination.

Biological reference points are benchmark values, derived from scientific stock assessments or other fishery data-based analyses, that serve as indicators of fishery (or stock) performance. Approaching or exceeding a benchmark triggers a pre-specified management response. The only alternatives for this new policy are status quo or adoption of the reference points as presented in the FMP.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife developed two reference points based on an evaluation that links oceanographic conditions, pink shrimp stock abundance, and fishery catch. The management response if either of the reference points is reached is an early closure to the current fishery season and delay to the start of the fishery season the subsequent year. Under the proposed new policy, WDFW would enact the same management response and similarly close the Washington pink shrimp fishery. This approach is consistent with a long-standing policy to maintain the Washington pink shrimp fishery under similar rules as Oregon (and to a lesser degree, California). This approach recognizes that the two states’ fleets are fishing on one pink shrimp stock and that an ODFW closure of the fishery could not prevent Washington vessels from fishing in federal waters off Oregon, or vice versa.

Implementation of an FMP with a biological reference point policy is also necessary to maintain the pink shrimp trawl fishery’s sustainability certification under the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). MSC is an international organization that certifies fisheries through “eco-labeling.” Certification requires meeting sustainability criteria, involves outside review of fishery governance and management, and includes public review of the process. Industry processors sponsor the MSC certification; WA shrimpers indirectly benefit by the expansion of markets into Europe and other countries that only purchase eco-labeled product.

Proponent/Applicant: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)
Contact: Lorna Wargo or Dan Ayres
48 Devonshire Road
Montesano, WA 98563
(360) 249-1221 or (360) 249-4628 ext. 209
Lorna.Wargo@dfw.wa.gov or Daniel.Ayres@dfw.wa.gov

Location of Proposal, including street, if any: The Washington coastal pink shrimp fishery operates as a state-managed fishery in Pacific Ocean federal waters (3-200 miles) off the U.S. west coast.

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 June 20, 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 Regulatory Services Section

Address: P.O. Box 43200, 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: June 6, 2018

SIGNATURE:



Footnotes

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