



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 18-041: NORTH FORK MANASTASH CREEK AND LOWER UMTANUM CREEK WOOD REPLENISHMENT

Description of Proposal:

The North Fork Manastash Creek & Lower Umtanum Creek Wood Replenishment Project proposal is for wood enhancement in a ~10 mile reach of North Fork Manastash Creek, including the 100-year floodplain, and wood enhancement in a ~6 mile reach of Lower Umtanum Creek.

This project will entail using locally sourced wood from the Robinson Canyon Forest Restoration Project* on the LT Murray Wildlife Area as part of a Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) funded 830-acre thinning project aimed at improving ecological integrity ratings, habitat for multiple wildlife species and forest health. In addition, the project will improve the functional integrity of North Fork Manastash Creek and Umtanum Creek and associated riparian and upland habitat.

North Fork Manastash Creek is an important Yakima River tributary, which drains a 100-square mile watershed west of Ellensburg in Kittitas County, Washington. The project area lies within Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife and Washington Department of Natural Resources ownership. A large wood survey was conducted July 2015 to document baseline habitat conditions for effectiveness monitoring. The survey documented a deficiency of large wood: approximately 100 pieces counted in a 4 mile reach. The proposed large wood restoration work is expected to improve habitat for returning steelhead, and for resident Rainbow and Cutthroat trout. Large wood from the Robinson Canyon Forest Restoration Project will be transported and placed via helicopter due to limited access as a result of road decommissioning activities (unrelated to this project). The project will place up to 2,000 pieces of woody material with and without rootwads attached, including small diameter trees and slash, instream and along adjacent floodplains to restore in-channel complexity, reverse channel incision and re-engage the creek with its floodplain. Additionally, ground-based equipment and hand crews will access the North Fork Manastash in 2019 to place up to another 1,000 pieces of woody material in the stream channel and adjacent floodplain.

Umtanum Creek is a Yakima River tributary that flows for ten miles through the Wenas Wildlife Area, south-west of Ellensburg in Kittitas County, Washington. The project area lies within land owned and managed by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Instream wood is limited within the stream reach with no access. Large wood from the Robinson Canyon Forest Restoration Project will be hauled via log truck to nearby staging areas and placed in Umtanum Creek via helicopter. This project will improve habitat complexity in 6 miles of stream for Middle Columbia River Steelhead, spring Chinook and coho salmon by adding up to 1,000 pieces of woody material with and without rootwads attached, including small diameter trees and slash, instream and along adjacent floodplains to restore in-channel complexity, reverse channel incision and re-engage the creek with its floodplain.

*The Robinson Canyon Forest Restoration Project has its own WDFW SEPA determination, 18-035.

Proponent/Applicant:

Yakama Nation
Contact: Kelly Clayton
YKFP Habitat Biologist
PO Box 151
Toppenish, WA 98948
(509) 945-7195
clak@yakamafish-nsn.gov

Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Contact: Melissa Babik
L.T. Murray Wildlife Area Manager
201 North Pearl St
Ellensburg, WA 98926
(509) 925-6746
Melissa.Babik@dfw.wa.gov

Location of Proposal, including street, if any:

North Fork Manastash Creek and Lower Umtanum Creek, tributaries to the Yakima River in Kittitas County, Washington: Multiple sections within Townships 16N, 17N, and 18N; and Ranges 15E, 16E, 17E, 18E, and 19E.

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 July 2, 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: June 18, 2018

SIGNATURE:

Lisa Wood

Footnotes

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

SEPA Log Number: 18-041.dns