



**DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES**

**ENVIRONMENTAL & LEGAL AFFAIRS –
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DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE

Description of proposal: DNR proposes eliminating quarter township management of Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) habitat in the Ahtanum State Forest (75,000 acres) of Southeast Region. The management strategy will be replaced with managing NSO habitat by spotted owl management unit (SOMU). Managing by SOMU is a landscape based approach and shifts the dispersal habitat to areas where dispersal habitat exists and where it is more likely to develop and be sustainable. At this time, some of the quarter townships cannot reach the fifty percent threshold due to being located at high elevation, in dry forest types, on south facing slopes and in areas where the plant association does not support the canopy closure required to meet dispersal. Establishing dispersal management areas into SOMUs that are based on forest type and areas that are dispersal habitat according to current inventory data will enhance DNR's ability to meet and maintain the conservation objectives of the HCP. The goal is to create a configuration that provides dispersal habitat in both the short- and long-term.

Proponent: Washington Department of Natural Resources

Location of proposal, including street address, if any: This proposal covers the 75,000+ acres of the Ahtanum State Forest (ASF), located in Yakima County, 35 miles west of the city of Union Gap.

Lead agency: Department of Natural Resources

The lead agency for this proposal has determined that it does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21c.030(2)(c). This decision was made after review of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public on request.

There is no comment period for this DNS

This DNS is issued under 197-11-340(2); the lead agency will not act on this proposal for 14 days from June 28, 2021 Comments must be submitted by July 12, 2021.

Responsible official: Todd Welker

Position/Title: Southeast Region Manager **Phone:** 509-925-0954

Address: 713 Bowers Road, Ellensburg, Washington 98926

Date: 6/22/2021

Signature:

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Kathryn Mink for TW

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There is no DNR administrative SEPA appeal.