

State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) WAC 197-11-340 Final Determination of Non-Significance (DNS)

Project Name: Twin Lakes Water Storage Project

Proponent(s): Twin Lakes Aquifer Coalition

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Project Summary

The Twin Lakes Aquifer Coalition has applied for a groundwater right under application G4-34915 to withdraw groundwater near the Methow River to augment water levels in Twin Lakes area of Okanogan County that have been declining since 2001. TLAC will pump from wells in hydraulic continuity with the river only when river flows are high. Approximately 800 acre feet will be diverted to storage during each of the first ten years and 550 acre feet each year thereafter. The project will store about 1,600 acre feet and will return 300-450 acre feet annually to the river through the aquifer system. Although water withdrawals from the Methow River system will be limited to high flows, water returning to the river will be continuous and will be trusted to Office of Columbia River to benefit instream and out-of-stream uses.

On October 12, 2012, Okanogan County Planning and Ecology's Office of Columbia River issued a Determination of Significance. Under WAC 197-11-360 and -410, Ecology initiated scoping to evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposal. Written scoping comments were accepted through December 14, 2012. An open house was also held in Winthrop, WA on November 7, 2012. Additional project information can be found at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/cwp/tlws.html>

Project Location

Twin Lakes area near Winthrop, Okanogan County, Washington

Final Determination

- DNS:** Okanogan County Office of Planning & Development issued a Final Determination of Non-Significance on this proposal.
- MDNS:** Okanogan County Office of Planning & Development issued a final Determination of Non Significance if the mitigating conditions are satisfied.
- DS:** Okanogan County Office of Planning & Development issued a Final Determination of Significance and ordered preparation of an environmental impact statement.
- Categorical Exemption:** Okanogan County Office of Planning & Development determined this proposal is categorically exempt from SEPA Review under WAC 197-11-305 (9).

The co-lead agencies (Okanogan County and Department of Ecology Office of Columbia River) completed a threshold determination of the proposal at the programmatic level and determined requirements for environmental analysis and protection have been adequately addressed. The Determination of Significance issued on October 12, 2012 is withdrawn, a Final Determination of Non Significance has been issued.

Supplemental project level environmental review may be necessary following additional evaluation including:

- Drilling and testing of water supply wells;
- Comparison of water supply well testing results to predictions from groundwater modeling;
- Preparation of operating plans for the project;
- Preparation of a permit timeline for construction and management of the project;
- Preparation of a supplemental environmental checklist containing any new environmental impacts identified during testing.

