



State of Washington

## Department of Fish and Wildlife

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Main Office Location: Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington Street SE, Olympia, WA

July 17, 2012

**Subject: Revised Emergency Declaration by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) under RCW 77.55.021(8a)**

Dear Commissioners:

The following emergency declaration has been revised to provide clarity and updates to the initial declaration.

On July 6, 2012 the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) made a declaration of emergency in Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, Island, Pacific, San Juan, Skagit, and Whatcom counties to allow for efficient and timely response by government agencies to collect and dispose of debris originating from Japan as a result of the March 2011 tsunami. This emergency is declared under the authority of RCW 77.55.021(8a) for the protection of life, the public, property or fish life and applies solely to Class 3 debris as described below.

Larger tsunami debris has recently washed ashore containing aquatic invasive species, toxic chemicals, and petroleum products. Larger debris is transported more slowly therefore the volumes are anticipated to come ashore over the next 2 years. If the larger debris is not promptly removed, the toxic materials or invasive organisms can kill or harm the public's fish resources and create public health and safety issues. This emergency declaration and the appropriate Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) will facilitate prompt Class 3 debris removal and proper disposal.

DFW is using the following debris size classification system to assist agencies and the public to understand when HPAs will be required for debris removal:

Class 1 debris: *Class 1 debris does not require an HPA*, however it is strongly recommended that proper collection, containment and disposal best management practices are followed. This debris is similar to material that washes up on the beaches regularly. Debris in this class have the following characteristics, the pieces are small and easily picked up and removed without excavation of the beach, these items are not toxic and are small enough to not support significant colonies of plants or animals. It is expected that this type debris will comprise the largest component of material washing up on the beaches. This would include, bottles, buckets, floats, small piece of timber (raw or processed), netting, anchor ropes, etc.

Class 2 debris: *Class 2 debris does not require an HPA*, however it is strongly recommended that

proper collection, containment and disposal best management practices are followed. Material in this class is generally larger requiring multiple people to pick it up and remove it or the use of small equipment such as vehicles with mounted winches or lifts. Material will generally require the use of a pickup truck or similar light equipment to remove it from the beach. This larger material is more likely to contain toxic materials and support larger communities of plants and animals. Debris may require special handling to prevent the release of invasive species and toxic material.

Class 3 debris: ***Class 3 debris removal requires an HPA.*** Material in this class will generally be large, bulky, and heavy. This material is likely to contain toxic material and may have attached invasive species. Items in this class would include fishing boats, buildings, docks, cars, large masses of netting and ropes that will require dismantlement and/or the use of heavy equipment to remove.

DFW has issued an emergency Hydraulic Project Approval to the State Emergency Military Department (EMD) for work needed to respond to Class 3 debris removal and disposal presumed to be associated with this event. You are encouraged to contact Washington State Marine Debris hotline 1-855-WACOAST (1-855-922-6278) if tsunami-related debris washes ashore within your jurisdiction. This emergency will remain in effect until July 31, 2014.

Should your jurisdiction have any questions regarding the HPA issued under this emergency please contact me at (360) 902-2527 or [Jeffrey.Davis@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:Jeffrey.Davis@dfw.wa.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeff Davis".

Jeff Davis  
Habitat Program Protection Division Manager

SAK:jpd EM Tsunami Emergency notification

Enclosures: Emergency HPA 127913-01

cc: WRIA file