



NATIONAL DEER ASSOCIATION

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Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
C/O Taylor Cotten
P.O. Box 43141
Olympia, WA 98504-3200

1 September, 2022

RE: Recommendation to reclassify the Columbia River Population of Columbian white-tailed deer to Threatened

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife:

On behalf of the National Deer Association (NDA), I am writing to provide our comments in support of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) recent recommendation to reclassify the Columbia River Population of Columbian white-tailed deer to Threatened. We are a national non-profit conservation organization with the mission to ensure the future of wild deer, wildlife habitat and hunting. We represent 30,000 members nationwide, including hunters, landowners and natural resource professionals.

We support WDFW's recommendation to reclassify the Columbia River Population of Columbian white-tailed deer from Endangered to Threatened based on the Department's recent periodic status review. This proposed re-classification by WDFW is precisely how the wildlife conservation process is intended to operate: as populations recover, re-classification based on sound-science and data should be considered. The Columbian subspecies of white-tailed deer represents a unique challenge encompassing all three pillars of the NDA's mission – wild deer, wildlife habitat and hunting. Fortunately, the future of the subspecies in southwest Washington looks promising.

The NDA appreciates WDFW's proactive and aggressive approach to managing populations of Columbian white-tailed deer in Washington, including the recent and thorough periodic status review. The comprehensive review found encouraging conservation gains and population growth, while also considering continued vulnerability with respect to habitat and climate. We're encouraged by WDFW's well-rounded and continued management, and we welcome the recommendation to reclassify the Columbia River Population of Columbian white-tailed deer to Threatened.

Please don't hesitate to reach out with questions or for more information.

Sincerely,

Torin Miller
Director of Policy