

**WAC 197-11-960 Environmental checklist.**

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

*Purpose of checklist:*

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), chapter 43.21C RCW, requires all governmental agencies to consider the environmental impacts of a proposal before making decisions. An environmental impact statement (EIS) must be prepared for all proposals with probable significant adverse impacts on the quality of the environment. The purpose of this checklist is to provide information to help you and the agency identify impacts from your proposal (and to reduce or avoid impacts from the proposal, if it can be done) and to help the agency decide whether an EIS is required.

*Instructions for applicants:*

This environmental checklist asks you to describe some basic information about your proposal. Governmental agencies use this checklist to determine whether the environmental impacts of your proposal are significant, requiring preparation of an EIS. Answer the questions briefly, with the most precise information known, or give the best description you can.

You must answer each question accurately and carefully, to the best of your knowledge. In most cases, you should be able to answer the questions from your own observations or project plans without the need to hire experts. If you really do not know the answer, or if a question does not apply to your proposal, write "do not know" or "does not apply." Complete answers to the questions now may avoid unnecessary delays later.

Some questions ask about governmental regulations, such as zoning, shoreline, and landmark designations. Answer these questions if you can. If you have problems, the governmental agencies can assist you.

The checklist questions apply to all parts of your proposal, even if you plan to do them over a period of time or on different parcels of land. Attach any additional information that will help describe your proposal or its environmental effects. The agency to which you submit this checklist may ask you to explain your answers or provide additional information reasonably related to determining if there may be significant adverse impact.

*Use of checklist for nonproject proposals:*

Complete this checklist for nonproject proposals, even though questions may be answered "does not apply." IN ADDITION, complete the SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS (part D).

For nonproject actions, the references in the checklist to the words "project," "applicant," and "property or site" should be read as "proposal," "proposer," and "affected geographic area," respectively.

A. BACKGROUND

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable: **Amendment of the Water Quality Standards Rule (Chapter 173-201A) to address minor changes to the rule; typographic errors and clarifications.**
2. Name of applicant: **Department of Ecology**
3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:  
**Melissa Gildersleeve**  
**PO Box 47600**  
**Olympia, WA 98504**  
**360-407-6461**
4. Date checklist prepared: **December 2010**
5. Agency requesting checklist: **Washington State Department of Ecology**
6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable): **Proposed rule adoption in April 2011.**

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain: **Yes. Washington State Water Quality Standards are required to be reviewed once every 3 years and then updated where necessary. The most recent review began in November 2010, as a separate action from this proposal.**

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.

**A complete set of Washington Administrative Procedures documents will be prepared to support this proposal, including Draft rule language, Draft Cost-Benefit analysis, small Business Economic Impact Statement, and an explanation of the proposed changes. A public hearing and comment period will occur after the filing the Proposed Rule-Making Order (CR-102).**

9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain.

**Does not apply.**

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.

**The federal Environmental Protection Agency is required to approve or disapprove these standards under the Clean Water Act.**

11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site. There are several questions later in this checklist that ask you to describe certain aspects of your proposal. You do not need to repeat those answers on this page. (Lead agencies may modify this form to include additional specific information on project description.)

**Portions of the surface water quality standards (Chapter 173-201A WAC) were amended November 20, 2006. Since that time, Ecology has identified a number of typographic errors and areas where clarifications are needed that are non-substantive in nature. This rule revision is limited to those changes. Adopting these changes will make the rule more accurate and easier to understand by clarifying sections which have caused confusion for some stakeholders.**

12. Location of the proposal. Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any, and section, township, and range, if known. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s). Provide a legal description, site plan, vicinity map, and topographic map, if reasonably available. While you should submit any plans required by the agency, you are not required to duplicate maps or detailed plans submitted with any permit applications related to this checklist.

**The proposed rule language covers all surface waters in the State of Washington.**

**B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS**

**1) Earth**

**The following questions do not apply to this rule proposal.**

- a. General description of the site (circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other . . . . .
- b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?
- c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any prime farmland.
- d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.
- e. Describe the purpose, type, and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.
- f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.

- g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?
- h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any:

## 2) Air

**The following questions do not apply to this rule proposal.**

- a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal (i.e., dust, automobile, odors, industrial wood smoke) during construction and when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.
- b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:

## 3) Water

## a. Surface:

- i. Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.

**The water quality standards affect all waters of the state by defining the highest beneficial uses each water body can attain and setting limits on pollution so that those uses are protected.**

- ii. Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans. **Does not apply.**
- iii. Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material. **Does not apply.**
- iv. Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known. **Does not apply.**
- v. Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan. **Does not apply.**

Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge. **The water quality standards set limits on pollution by determining discharge levels that protect the beneficial uses of the waterbody.**

## b. Ground:

**The following questions do not apply to this rule proposal.**

- i. Will ground water be withdrawn, or will water be discharged to ground water? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.
- ii. Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (for example: Domestic sewage; industrial, containing the following chemicals. . . ; agricultural; etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the number of such systems, the number of houses to be served (if applicable), or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.
- c. Water runoff (including stormwater):

- i. Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.
- ii. Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe.
- d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water impacts, if any:

4) **Plants**

- a. Check or circle types of vegetation found on the site: **Does not apply.**
  - deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other
  - evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other
  - shrubs
  - grass
  - pasture
  - crop or grain
  - wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage, other
  - water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other
  - other types of vegetation
- b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered? **Does not apply.**
- c. List threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site. **These rules are being specifically promulgated to specifically protect ESA species.**
- d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any: **Does not apply.**

5) **Animals**

- a. Circle any birds and animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site: **Does not apply.**
  - birds: hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other:
  - mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, other:
  - fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other:
- b. List any threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site. **These rules apply in all waters of the state including those waters with salmonid habitat and spawning; the provisions in this rule are designed to protect these and other aquatic life species.**
- c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain. **Yes the rules are specifically designed to protect migration routes.**
- d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any: **Does not apply.**

6) **Energy and natural resources**

**The following questions do not apply to this rule proposal.**

- a. What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.
- b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe.
- c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any:

7) **Environmental health**

- a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste, that could occur as a result of this proposal? If so, describe. **Does not apply.**
  - i. Describe special emergency services that might be required. **Does not apply.**
  - ii. Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any: **This regulation sets pollution limits on toxic substances that may affect human health and aquatic species.**
- b. **Noise**
  - i. What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)? **Does not apply.**
  - ii. What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site. **Does not apply.**
  - iii. Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any: **Does not apply.**

8) **Land and shoreline use**

**The following questions do not apply to this rule proposal.**

- a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties?
- b. Has the site been used for agriculture? If so, describe.
- c. Describe any structures on the site.
- d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?
- e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?
- f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?
- g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?
- h. Has any part of the site been classified as an "environmentally sensitive" area? If so, specify.
- i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?
- j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?
- k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:
- l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:

9) **Housing**

**The following questions do not apply to this rule proposal.**

- a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.
- b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any:

10) **Aesthetics**

**The following questions do not apply to this rule proposal.**

- a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?
- b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:

11) **Light and glare**

**The following questions do not apply to this rule proposal.**

- a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?
- b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?
- c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?
- d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:

12) **Recreation**

- a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity? **Does not apply.**
- b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe. **No. These rules support and protect recreational uses in water bodies, along with other beneficial uses.**
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any: **Does not apply.**

13) **Historic and cultural preservation**

**The following questions do not apply to this rule proposal.**

- a. Are there any places or objects listed on, or proposed for, national, state, or local preservation registers known to be on or next to the site? If so, generally describe.
- b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site.
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts, if any:

14) **Transportation**

**The following questions do not apply to this rule proposal.**

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site, and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.
- b. Is site currently served by public transit? If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?
- c. How many parking spaces would the completed project have? How many would the project eliminate?
- d. Will the proposal require any new roads or streets, or improvements to existing roads or streets, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).
- e. Will the project use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.



2. How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish, or marine life?  
**The water quality standards are designed to protect aquatic life. These proposed revisions do not alter the way the regulation is implemented or the designated uses of water bodies thus will not change the impact to the environment.**

Proposed measures to protect or conserve plants, animals, fish, or marine life are: **The water quality standards are designed to protect aquatic life, human health in both freshwater and marine surface waters.**

3. How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources? **Does not apply.**

Proposed measures to protect or conserve energy and natural resources are: **Does not apply.**

4. How would the proposal be likely to use or affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated (or eligible or under study) for governmental protection; such as parks, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species habitat, historic or cultural sites, wetlands, floodplains, or prime farmlands?  
**These proposed revisions do not alter the way the regulation is implemented thus will not change the impact to the environment.**

Proposed measures to protect such resources or to avoid or reduce impacts are: **Does not apply.**

5. How would the proposal be likely to affect land and shoreline use, including whether it would allow or encourage land or shoreline uses incompatible with existing plans?  
**These proposed revisions do not alter the way the regulation is implemented or the designated uses of water bodies thus will not change the impact to the environment.**

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce shoreline and land use impacts are: **Does not apply.**

6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities? **Does not apply.**

Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demand(s) are: **Does not apply.**

7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.  
**This rule should not conflict with existing regulations. This rule is designed to meet the requirements of the Clean Water Act for protecting human and aquatic life uses and satisfy the requirements of the Endangered Species Act. This rule revision will not alter the way the regulation is implemented or the designated uses of waterbodies thus will not change the impact to the environment.**