

## 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: **Amendments to the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) rules, Chapter 197-11-WAC.**
2. Name of applicant: **Department of Ecology**
3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person: **Barbara Ritchie, P.O. Box 47703, Olympia, Washington, 98504-7703, (360) 4007-6922.**
4. Date checklist prepared: **February 3, 2003**

5. Agency requesting checklist: **Department of Ecology**

6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):

**The date of intended adoption of the proposed rule making is April 15, 2003.**

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain. **No.**

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal. **None**

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.

**The WA State Department of Natural Resources may have applications currently being reviewed for Class I, II, and III forest practices that may be impacted by the proposed amendments to Ecology's SEPA rules.**

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

**Adoption of the proposed rule amendments.**

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.)

**Ecology is proposing amendments to its SEPA rules to make them consistent with legislation set forth in RCW 43.21C. The legislature has statutorily exempted certain actions from SEPA review in RCW 43.21C. These statutory exemptions were included in the list of "categorical rule exemptions" adopted by Ecology in 1984. This has resulted in the "statutory exemptions" being subject to WAC 197-11-305 which requires SEPA review in certain prescribed circumstances. The proposed amendments clarify Ecology's "categorical rule exemptions" by removing the "statutory exemptions" codified in RCW 43.21C (except RCW 43.21C.0384 dealing with personal wireless services facilities) from the list of "categorical rule exemptions" in Part Nine of the rules. (See CR 102 filed with the Code Reviser on January 15, 2003 for a more detailed explanation of Ecology's proposed rulemaking.)**

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 amendments to Ecology's SEPA rules would apply statewide.**

## **B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS**

### **1. Earth**

- a. General description of the site (circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other . . . . . **Not applicable.**
- b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)? **Not applicable.**
- 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. **Not applicable.**
- d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe. **Not applicable.**
- e. Describe the purpose, type, and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill. **Not applicable.**
- f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe. **Not Applicable.**
- g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)? **Not applicable.**
- h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any: **See Answer to D.1.**

### **2. Air**

- 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. **Not Applicable.**
- b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe. **Not applicable.**
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any: **See Answer to D.1.**

### **3. Water**

#### **a. Surface:**

- 1) 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. **Not applicable.**

2) 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. **Not applicable.**

3) 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. **Not applicable.**

4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known. **Not applicable.**

5) Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan. **Not applicable.**

6) Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge. **Not applicable.**

b. Ground:

1) Will ground water be withdrawn, or will water be discharged to ground water? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known. **Not applicable.**

2) 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. **Not applicable.**

c. Water runoff (including stormwater):

1) 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. **Not applicable.**

2) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe. **Not applicable.**

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water impacts, if any: **See Answer to D.1.**

#### 4. Plants

a. Check or circle types of vegetation found on the site: **Not applicable.**

\_\_\_\_\_ 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? **Not applicable.**
- c. List threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site. **Not applicable.**
- d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any: **Not applicable.**

## 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: **Not applicable.**

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. **Not applicable.**
- c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain. **Not applicable.**
- d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any: **See Answer to D.1.**

## 6. Energy and natural resources

- 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. **Not applicable.**
- b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe. **Not applicable.**
- 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: **Not applicable.**

## 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. **Not Applicable.**

- 1) Describe special emergency services that might be required. **Not applicable.**
- 2) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any: **See Answer to D.1.**

## **b. Noise**

- 1) What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)? **Not applicable.**
- 2) 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. **Not applicable.**
- 3) Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any: **See Answer to D.1.**

## **8. Land and shoreline use**

- a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties? **Not applicable.**
- b. Has the site been used for agriculture? If so, describe. **Not applicable.**
- c. Describe any structures on the site. **Not applicable.**
- d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what? **Not applicable.**
- e. What is the current zoning classification of the site? **Not applicable.**
- f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site? **Not applicable.**
- g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site? **Not applicable.**
- h. Has any part of the site been classified as an "environmentally sensitive" area? If so, specify. **Not applicable.**
- i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project? **Not applicable.**
- j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace? **Not applicable.**
- k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any: **See Answer to D.1.**
- l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any: **See Answer to D.1.**

## **9. Housing**

- a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing. **Not applicable.**
- b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing. **Not applicable.**
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any: **See Answer to D.1.**

## 10. Aesthetics

- a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed? **Not applicable.**
- b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed? **Not applicable**
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any: **See Answer to D.1.**

## 11. Light and glare

- a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur? **Not applicable.**
- b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views? **Not applicable.**
- c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal? **Not applicable.**
- d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any: **See Answer to D.1.**

## 12. Recreation

- a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity? **Not applicable.**
- b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe. **Not applicable.**
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any: **See Answer to D.1.**

## 13. Historic and cultural preservation

- 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. **Not applicable.**
- b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site. **Not applicable.**
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts, if any: **See Answer to D.1.**

## 14. Transportation

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site, and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any. **Not applicable.**

- b. Is site currently served by public transit? If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop? **Not applicable.**
- c. How many parking spaces would the completed project have? How many would the project eliminate? **Not applicable.**
- 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). **Not applicable.**
- e. Will the project use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe. **Not applicable.**
- f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur. **Not applicable.**
- g. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any: **See Answer to D.1.**

**15. Public services**

- a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe. **Not applicable.**
- b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.  
**See Answer to D.1.**

**16. Utilities**

- a. Circle utilities currently available at the site: electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other. **Not applicable.**
- b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed. **Not applicable.**

**C. SIGNATURE**

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

Signature:       /s/ Gordon White      

Date Submitted:   February 4, 2003

#### D. SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS

(do not use this sheet for project actions)

Because these questions are very general, it may be helpful to read them in conjunction with the list of the elements of the environment.

When answering these questions, be aware of the extent the proposal, or the types of activities likely to result from the proposal, would affect the item at a greater intensity or at a faster rate than if the proposal were not implemented. Respond briefly and in general terms.

1. How would the proposal be likely to increase discharge to water; emissions to air; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise?

The Washington State Legislature has exempted by statute some types of actions from the requirements of environmental review under SEPA. These “statutory exemptions” are contained in RCW 43.21C. The legislature also directed Ecology in RCW 43.21C.110 to specify *by rule* particular categorical exemptions that would not require SEPA review. RCW 43.21C.110 provides that the “categorical rule exemptions” are to be “*limited to those types of governmental actions which are not major actions significantly affecting the quality of the environment.*” RCW 43.21C.110(1)(a). The legislature further provided that the rules “*shall provide for certain circumstances where actions which potentially are categorically exempt require environmental review.*” *Id.* The “categorical rule exemptions” are in Part Nine of Ecology’s SEPA rules. WAC 197-11-800 to .890. The criteria for determining when the exception to the exemption applies are contained in WAC 197-11-305.

When Ecology adopted the SEPA rules in 1984, all of the “statutory exemptions” in RCW 43.21C were included within the list of “categorical rule exemptions” in Part Nine of Ecology’s rules. WAC 197-11-305 provides that those actions listed as categorically exempt by the SEPA rules can be subject to threshold determination requirements if circumstances as prescribed in the rule apply. WAC 197-11-305 applies to all of the actions identified in Part Nine of the SEPA rules including those “statutory exemptions” that were included in the “categorical rule exemptions” adopted by Ecology.

The state legislative scheme has been to exempt certain actions from SEPA review. It is inconsistent with RCW 43.21C for Ecology’s rules to require that the statutory exemptions be subject to WAC 197-11-305. Thus, the Department of Ecology has initiated rule making to remove from its rules all of the statutory exemptions. There are no impacts to the environment as a result of the proposed rulemaking and therefore no need to propose any measures to address any impacts since the proposed amendments correct Ecology’s rules so they are valid and not in conflict with legislation in RCW 43.21C.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are: See answer above.

2. How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish, or marine life?

See Answer to D.1.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve plants, animals, fish, or marine life are:

See Answer to D.1.

3. How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?

See Answer to D.1.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve energy and natural resources are:

See Answer to D.1.

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? See Answer to D.1.

Proposed measures to protect such resources or to avoid or reduce impacts are:

See Answer to D.1.

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?

See Answer to D.1.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce shoreline and land use impacts are:

See Answer to D.1.

6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities? See Answer to D.1.

Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demand(s) are: See Answer to D.1.

7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment. See Answer to D.1.