

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending Order 95-16, filed 10/10/97, effective 11/10/97)

**WAC 197-11-070 Limitations on actions during SEPA process.**

(1) Until the responsible official issues a final determination of nonsignificance or final environmental impact statement, no action concerning the proposal shall be taken by a governmental agency that would:

- (a) Have an adverse environmental impact; or
- (b) Limit the choice of reasonable alternatives.

(2) In addition, certain DNSs require a fourteen-day period prior to agency action (WAC 197-11-340(2)), and FEISSs require a seven-day period prior to agency action (WAC 197-11-460(4)).

(3) In preparing environmental documents, there may be a need to conduct studies that may cause nonsignificant environmental impacts. If such activity is not exempt under WAC 197-11-800(~~(+18)~~) (17), the activity may nonetheless proceed if a checklist is prepared and appropriate mitigation measures taken.

(4) This section does not preclude developing plans or designs, issuing requests for proposals (RFPs), securing options, or performing other work necessary to develop an application for a proposal, as long as such activities are consistent with subsection (1).

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending Order 94-22, filed 3/31/95, effective 5/1/95)

**WAC 197-11-250 SEPA/Model Toxics Control Act integration.**

(1) WAC 197-11-253 through 197-11-268 integrate the procedural requirements and documents of this chapter with those required under the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA), chapter 70.105D RCW, and chapter 173-340 WAC.

(2) Both MTCA and SEPA provide opportunities for early public review of a proposal. The following sections contain procedures to combine the MTCA and SEPA processes to reduce duplication and improve public participation. These sections supplement the other requirements of this chapter. To the extent there is a conflict, these sections supersede any conflicting provisions of this chapter.

(3) WAC 197-11-253 through 197-11-268 apply to remedial

actions as defined in RCW 70.105D.020(12) and conducted by ecology or by a potentially liable person (PLP) under an order, agreed order, or consent decree under MTCA. These sections do not apply to independent remedial actions; rather, the remainder of this chapter applies to independent remedial actions that are subject to SEPA.

(4) When the remedial action is part of a development proposal, the procedures in WAC 197-11-256 through 197-11-268 shall be used to combine the procedural requirements of SEPA and MTCA, to the extent practicable.

(5) To effectively integrate the procedural requirements of SEPA and MTCA, the SEPA elements of the environment that could be impacted need to be identified as early in the MTCA process as possible. Early consideration of SEPA facilitates identification of study areas prior to conducting the remedial investigation/ feasibility study (RI/FS) and effective, timely integration of SEPA and MTCA documents. The threshold determination may be delayed until later in the MTCA process.

(6) WAC 197-11-256 through 197-11-268 do not change the categorical exemption for information collection in WAC 197-11-800(~~(+18+)~~) (17) or the emergency exemption in WAC 197-11-880.

(7) Interim actions (WAC 173-340-430) conducted as part of a remedial action conducted by ecology, or by a potentially liable person under an order, agreed order, or consent decree under MTCA are governed by WAC 197-11-268.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending Order 95-16, filed 10/10/97, effective 11/10/97)

**WAC 197-11-310 Threshold determination required.** (1) A threshold determination is required for any proposal which meets the definition of action and is not categorically exempt, subject to the limitations in WAC 197-11-600(3) concerning proposals for which a threshold determination has already been issued, or statutorily exempt as provided in chapter 43.21C RCW. A threshold determination is not required for a planned action (refer to WAC 197-11-164 through 197-11-172).

(2) The responsible official of the lead agency shall make the threshold determination, which shall be made as close as possible to the time an agency has developed or is presented with a proposal (WAC 197-11-784). If the lead agency is a GMA county/city, that agency must meet the timing requirements in subsection (6) of this section.

(3) The responsible official shall make a threshold determination no later than ninety days after the application

and supporting document <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/laws-rules/activity/wac173157.html> are determined to be complete. The applicant may request an additional thirty days for the threshold determination (RCW 43.21C.033).

(4) The time limit in subsection (3) of this section shall not apply to a county/city that:

(a) By ordinance adopted prior to April 1, 1992, has adopted procedures to integrate permit and land use decisions with SEPA requirements; or

(b) Is planning under RCW 36.70A.040 (GMA) and is subject to the requirements of subsection (6) of this section.

(5) All threshold determinations shall be documented in:

(a) A determination of nonsignificance (DNS) (WAC 197-11-340); or

(b) A determination of significance (DS) (WAC 197-11-360).

(6) When a GMA county/city with an integrated project review process under RCW 36.70B.060 is lead agency for a project, the following timing requirements apply:

(a) If a DS is made concurrent with the notice of application, the DS and scoping notice shall be combined with the notice of application (RCW 36.70B.110). Nothing in this subsection prevents the DS/scoping notice from being issued before the notice of application. If sufficient information is not available to make a threshold determination when the notice of application is issued, the DS may be issued later in the review process.

(b) Nothing in this section prevents a lead agency, when it is a project proponent or is funding a project, from conducting its review under SEPA or from allowing appeals of procedural determinations prior to submitting a project permit application.

(c) If an open record predecision hearing is required, the threshold determination shall be issued at least fifteen days before the open record predecision hearing (RCW 36.70B.110 (6)(b)).

(d) The optional DNS process in WAC 197-11-355 may be used to indicate on the notice of application that the lead agency is likely to issue a DNS. If this optional process is used, a separate comment period on the DNS may not be required (refer to WAC 197-11-355(4)).

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending Order 95-16, filed 10/10/97, effective 11/10/97)

**WAC 197-11-800 Categorical exemptions.** The proposed actions contained in Part Nine are categorically exempt from threshold determination and EIS requirements, subject to the rules and limitations on categorical exemptions contained in WAC 197-11-305.

Note: The statutory exemptions contained in chapter 43.21C RCW are not included in Part Nine. Chapter 43.21C RCW should be reviewed in determining whether a proposed action not listed as categorically exempt in Part Nine is exempt by statute from threshold determination and EIS requirements.

(1) **Minor new construction--Flexible thresholds.**

(a) The exemptions in this subsection apply to all licenses required to undertake the construction in question, except when a rezone or any license governing emissions to the air or discharges to water is required. To be exempt under this subsection, the project must be equal to or smaller than the exempt level. For a specific proposal, the exempt level in (b) of this subsection shall control, unless the city/county in which the project is located establishes an exempt level under (c) of this subsection. If the proposal is located in more than one city/county, the lower of the agencies' adopted levels shall control, regardless of which agency is the lead agency.

(b) The following types of construction shall be exempt, except when undertaken wholly or partly on lands covered by water:

(i) The construction or location of any residential structures of four dwelling units.

(ii) The construction of a barn, loafing shed, farm equipment storage building, produce storage or packing structure, or similar agricultural structure, covering 10,000 square feet, and to be used only by the property owner or his or her agent in the conduct of farming the property. This exemption shall not apply to feed lots.

(iii) The construction of an office, school, commercial, recreational, service or storage building with 4,000 square feet of gross floor area, and with associated parking facilities designed for twenty automobiles.

(iv) The construction of a parking lot designed for twenty automobiles.

(v) Any landfill or excavation of 100 cubic yards throughout the total lifetime of the fill or excavation; and any fill or excavation classified as a Class I, II, or III forest practice under RCW 76.09.050 or regulations thereunder.

(c) Cities, towns or counties may raise the exempt levels

to the maximum specified below by implementing ordinance or resolution. Such levels shall be specified in the agency's SEPA procedures (WAC 197-11-904) and sent to the department of ecology. A newly established exempt level shall be supported by local conditions, including zoning or other land use plans or regulations. An agency may adopt a system of several exempt levels (such as different levels for different geographic areas). The maximum exempt level for the exemptions in (1)(b) of this section shall be, respectively:

- (i) 20 dwelling units.
- (ii) 30,000 square feet.
- (iii) 12,000 square feet; 40 automobiles.
- (iv) 40 automobiles.
- (v) 500 cubic yards.

(2) **Other minor new construction.** The following types of construction shall be exempt except where undertaken wholly or in part on lands covered by water (unless specifically exempted in this subsection); the exemptions provided by this section shall apply to all licenses required to undertake the construction in question, except where a rezone or any license governing emissions to the air or discharges to water is required:

(a) The construction or designation of bus stops, loading zones, shelters, access facilities and pull-out lanes for taxicabs, transit and school vehicles.

(b) The construction and/or installation of commercial on-premise signs, and public signs and signals.

(c) The construction or installation of minor road and street improvements such as pavement marking, freeway surveillance and control systems, railroad protective devices (not including grade-separated crossings), grooving, glare screen, safety barriers, energy attenuators, transportation corridor landscaping (including the application of Washington state department of agriculture approved herbicides by licensed personnel for right of way weed control as long as this is not within watersheds controlled for the purpose of drinking water quality in accordance with WAC 248-54-660), temporary traffic controls and detours, correction of substandard curves and intersections within existing rights of way, widening of a highway by less than a single lane width where capacity is not significantly increased and no new right of way is required, adding auxiliary lanes for localized purposes, (weaving, climbing, speed change, etc.), where capacity is not significantly increased and no new right of way is required, channelization and elimination of sight restrictions at intersections, street lighting, guard rails and barricade installation, installation of catch basins and culverts, and reconstruction of existing roadbed (existing curb-to-curb in urban locations), including adding or widening of shoulders,

addition of bicycle lanes, paths and facilities, and pedestrian walks and paths, but not including additional automobile lanes.

(d) Grading, excavating, filling, septic tank installations, and landscaping necessary for any building or facility exempted by subsections (1) and (2) of this section, as well as fencing and the construction of small structures and minor facilities accessory thereto.

(e) Additions or modifications to or replacement of any building or facility exempted by subsections (1) and (2) of this section when such addition, modification or replacement will not change the character of the building or facility in a way that would remove it from an exempt class.

(f) The demolition of any structure or facility, the construction of which would be exempted by subsections (1) and (2) of this section, except for structures or facilities with recognized historical significance.

(g) The installation of impervious underground tanks, having a capacity of 10,000 gallons or less.

(h) The vacation of streets or roads.

(i) The installation of hydrological measuring devices, regardless of whether or not on lands covered by water.

(j) The installation of any property, boundary or survey marker, other than fences, regardless of whether or not on lands covered by water.

(3) **Repair, remodeling and maintenance activities.** The following activities shall be categorically exempt: The repair, remodeling, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing private or public structures, facilities or equipment, including utilities, involving no material expansions or changes in use beyond that previously existing; except that, where undertaken wholly or in part on lands covered by water, only minor repair or replacement of structures may be exempt (examples include repair or replacement of piling, ramps, floats, or mooring buoys, or minor repair, alteration, or maintenance of docks). The following maintenance activities shall not be considered exempt under this subsection:

(a) Dredging;

(b) Reconstruction/maintenance of groins and similar shoreline protection structures; or

(c) Replacement of utility cables that must be buried under the surface of the bedlands. Repair/rebuilding of major dams, dikes, and reservoirs shall also not be considered exempt under this subsection.

(4) **Water rights.** (~~The following appropriations of water shall be exempt,~~) Appropriations of one cubic foot per second or less of surface water, or of 2,250 gallons per minute or less of ground water, for any purpose. The exemption covering not only the permit to appropriate water, but also any hydraulics permit, shoreline permit or building permit required for a

normal diversion or intake structure, well and pumphouse reasonably necessary to accomplish the exempted appropriation, and including any activities relating to construction of a distribution system solely for any exempted appropriation(~~+~~

~~(a) Appropriations of fifty cubic feet per second or less of surface water for irrigation purposes, when done without a government subsidy.~~

~~(b) Appropriations of one cubic foot per second or less of surface water, or of 2,250 gallons per minute or less of ground water, for any purpose).~~

(5) **Purchase or sale of real property.** The following real property transactions by an agency shall be exempt:

(a) The purchase or acquisition of any right to real property.

(b) The sale, transfer or exchange of any publicly owned real property, but only if the property is not subject to an authorized public use.

(c) The lease of real property when the use of the property for the term of the lease will remain essentially the same as the existing use, or when the use under the lease is otherwise exempted by this chapter.

(6) **Minor land use decisions.** The following land use decisions shall be exempt:

(a) Except upon lands covered by water, the approval of short plats or short subdivisions pursuant to the procedures required by RCW 58.17.060, but not including further short subdivisions or short platting within a plat or subdivision previously exempted under this subsection.

(b) Granting of variances based on special circumstances, not including economic hardship, applicable to the subject property, such as size, shape, topography, location or surroundings and not resulting in any change in land use or density.

(c) Classifications of land for current use taxation under chapter 84.34 RCW, and classification and grading of forest land under chapter 84.33 RCW.

~~((d) Annexation of territory by a city or town.))~~

~~(7) (**School closures.** The adoption and implementation of a plan, program, or decision for the closure of a school or schools shall be exempt. Demolition, physical modification or change of a facility from a school use shall not be exempt under this subsection.~~

~~(8))~~ **Open burning.** Opening burning and the issuance of any license for open burning shall be exempt. The adoption of plans, programs, objectives or regulations by any agency incorporating general standards respecting open burning shall not be exempt.

~~((9))~~ (8) **Clean Air Act.** ~~((The following actions under the Clean Air Act shall be exempt:~~

~~(a))~~) The granting of variances under RCW 70.94.181 extending applicable air pollution control requirements for one year or less shall be exempt.

~~((b) The issuance, renewal, reopening, or revision of an air operating permit under RCW 70.94.161.~~

~~(10))~~) **(9) Water quality certifications.** The granting or denial of water quality certifications under the Federal Clean Water Act (Federal Water Pollution Control Act amendments of 1972, 33 U.S.C. 1341) shall be exempt.

~~((11))~~) **(10) Activities of the state legislature.** All actions of the state legislature are exempted. This subsection does not exempt the proposing of legislation by an agency (WAC 197-11-704).

~~((12))~~) **(11) Judicial activity.** The following shall be exempt:

(a) All adjudicatory actions of the judicial branch.

(b) Any quasi-judicial action of any agency if such action consists of the review of a prior administrative or legislative decision. Decisions resulting from contested cases or other hearing processes conducted prior to the first decision on a proposal or upon any application for a rezone, conditional use permit or other similar permit not otherwise exempted by this chapter, are not exempted by this subsection.

~~((13))~~) **(12) Enforcement and inspections.** The following enforcement and inspection activities shall be exempt:

(a) All actions, including administrative orders and penalties, undertaken to enforce a statute, regulation, ordinance, resolution or prior decision. No license shall be considered exempt by virtue of this subsection; nor shall the adoption of any ordinance, regulation or resolution be considered exempt by virtue of this subsection.

(b) All inspections conducted by an agency of either private or public property for any purpose.

(c) All activities of fire departments and law enforcement agencies except physical construction activity.

(d) Any action undertaken by an agency to abate a nuisance or to abate, remove or otherwise cure any hazard to public health or safety. The application of pesticides and chemicals is not exempted by this subsection but may be exempted elsewhere in these guidelines. No license or adoption of any ordinance, regulation or resolution shall be considered exempt by virtue of this subsection.

(e) Any suspension or revocation of a license for any purpose.

~~((14))~~) **(13) Business and other regulatory licenses.** The following business and other regulatory licenses are exempt:

(a) All licenses to undertake an occupation, trade or profession.

(b) All licenses required under electrical, fire, plumbing,

heating, mechanical, and safety codes and regulations, but not including building permits.

(c) All licenses to operate or engage in amusement devices and rides and entertainment activities, including but not limited to cabarets, carnivals, circuses and other traveling shows, dances, music machines, golf courses, and theaters, including approval of the use of public facilities for temporary civic celebrations, but not including licenses or permits required for permanent construction of any of the above.

(d) All licenses to operate or engage in charitable or retail sales and service activities, including but not limited to peddlers, solicitors, second hand shops, pawnbrokers, vehicle and housing rental agencies, tobacco sellers, close out and special sales, fireworks, massage parlors, public garages and parking lots, and used automobile dealers.

(e) All licenses for private security services, including but not limited to detective agencies, merchant and/or residential patrol agencies, burglar and/or fire alarm dealers, guard dogs, locksmiths, and bail bond services.

(f) All licenses for vehicles for-hire and other vehicle related activities, including but not limited to taxicabs, ambulances, and tow trucks: Provided, That regulation of common carriers by the utilities and transportation commission shall not be considered exempt under this subsection.

(g) All licenses for food or drink services, sales, and distribution, including but not limited to restaurants, liquor, and meat.

(h) All animal control licenses, including but not limited to pets, kennels, and pet shops. Establishment or construction of such a facility shall not be considered exempt by this subsection.

(i) The renewal or reissuance of a license regulating any present activity or structure so long as no material changes are involved.

~~((15))~~ (14) **Activities of agencies.** The following administrative, fiscal and personnel activities of agencies shall be exempt:

(a) The procurement and distribution of general supplies, equipment and services authorized or necessitated by previously approved functions or programs.

(b) The assessment and collection of taxes.

(c) The adoption of all budgets and agency requests for appropriation: Provided, That if such adoption includes a final agency decision to undertake a major action, that portion of the budget is not exempted by this subsection.

(d) The borrowing of funds, issuance of bonds, or applying for a grant and related financing agreements and approvals.

(e) The review and payment of vouchers and claims.

(f) The establishment and collection of liens and service

billings.

(g) All personnel actions, including hiring, terminations, appointments, promotions, allocations of positions, and expansions or reductions in force.

(h) All agency organization, reorganization, internal operational planning or coordination of plans or functions.

(i) Adoptions or approvals of utility, transportation and solid waste disposal rates.

(j) The activities of school districts pursuant to desegregation plans or programs; however, construction of real property transactions or the adoption of any policy, plan or program for such construction of real property transaction shall not be considered exempt under this subsection (~~(see also WAC 197-11-800(7))~~).

~~((16))~~ (15) **Financial assistance grants.** The approval of grants or loans by one agency to another shall be exempt, although an agency may at its option require compliance with SEPA prior to making a grant or loan for design or construction of a project. This exemption includes agencies taking nonproject actions that are necessary to apply for federal or other financial assistance.

~~((17))~~ (16) **Local improvement districts.** The formation of local improvement districts, unless such formation constitutes a final agency decision to undertake construction of a structure or facility not exempted under WAC 197-11-800 and 197-11-880.

~~((18))~~ (17) **Information collection and research.** Basic data collection, research, resource evaluation, requests for proposals (RFPs), and the conceptual planning of proposals shall be exempt. These may be strictly for information-gathering, or as part of a study leading to a proposal that has not yet been approved, adopted or funded; this exemption does not include any agency action that commits the agency to proceed with such a proposal. (Also see WAC 197-11-070.)

~~((19))~~ (18) **Acceptance of filings.** The acceptance by an agency of any document or thing required or authorized by law to be filed with the agency and for which the agency has no discretionary power to refuse acceptance shall be exempt. No license shall be considered exempt by virtue of this subsection.

~~((20))~~ (19) **Procedural actions.** The proposal or adoption of legislation, rules, regulations, resolutions or ordinances, or of any plan or program relating solely to governmental procedures, and containing no substantive standards respecting use or modification of the environment shall be exempt. Agency SEPA procedures shall be exempt.

~~((21))~~ (20) **Building codes.** The adoption by ordinance of all codes as required by the state Building Code Act (chapter 19.27 RCW).

~~((22))~~ (21) **Adoption of noise ordinances.** The adoption

by counties/cities of resolutions, ordinances, rules or regulations concerned with the control of noise which do not differ from regulations adopted by the department of ecology under chapter 70.107 RCW. When a county/city proposes a noise resolution, ordinance, rule or regulation, a portion of which differs from the applicable state regulations (and thus requires approval of the department of ecology under RCW 70.107.060(4)), SEPA compliance may be limited to those items which differ from state regulations.

~~((23))~~ (22) **Review and comment actions.** Any activity where one agency reviews or comments upon the actions of another agency or another department within an agency shall be exempt.

~~((24))~~ (23) **Utilities.** The utility-related actions listed below shall be exempt, except for installation, construction, or alteration on lands covered by water. The exemption includes installation and construction, relocation when required by other governmental bodies, repair, replacement, maintenance, operation or alteration that does not change the action from an exempt class.

(a) All communications lines, including cable TV, but not including communication towers or relay stations.

(b) All storm water, water and sewer facilities, lines, equipment, hookups or appurtenances including, utilizing or related to lines eight inches or less in diameter.

(c) All electric facilities, lines, equipment or appurtenances, not including substations, with an associated voltage of 55,000 volts or less; and the overbuilding of existing distribution lines (55,000 volts or less) with transmission lines (more than 55,000 volts); and the undergrounding of all electric facilities, lines, equipment or appurtenances.

(d) All natural gas distribution (as opposed to transmission) lines and necessary appurtenant facilities and hookups.

(e) All developments within the confines of any existing electric substation, reservoir, pump station or well: Provided, That additional appropriations of water are not exempted by this subsection.

(f) Periodic use of chemical or mechanical means to maintain a utility or transportation right of way in its design condition: Provided, That chemicals used are approved by the Washington state department of agriculture and applied by licensed personnel. This exemption shall not apply to the use of chemicals within watersheds that are controlled for the purpose of drinking water quality in accordance with WAC 248-54-660.

(g) All grants of rights of way by agencies to utilities for use for distribution (as opposed to transmission) purposes.

(h) All grants of franchises by agencies to utilities.

(i) All disposals of rights of way by utilities.

~~((25))~~ **(24) Natural resources management.** In addition to the other exemptions contained in this section, the following natural resources management activities shall be exempt:

~~(a) ((All Class I, II, III forest practices as defined by RCW 76.09.050 or regulations thereunder.~~

~~(b))~~ Issuance of new grazing leases covering a section of land or less; and issuance of all grazing leases for land that has been subject to a grazing lease within the previous ten years.

~~((c))~~ (b) Licenses or approvals to remove firewood.

~~((d))~~ (c) Issuance of agricultural leases covering one hundred sixty contiguous acres or less.

~~((e))~~ (d) Issuance of leases for Christmas tree harvesting or brush picking.

~~((f))~~ (e) Issuance of leases for school sites.

~~((g))~~ (f) Issuance of leases for, and placement of, mooring buoys designed to serve pleasure craft.

~~((h))~~ (g) Development of recreational sites not specifically designed for all-terrain vehicles and not including more than twelve campsites.

~~((i))~~ (h) Periodic use of chemical or mechanical means to maintain public park and recreational land: Provided, That chemicals used are approved by the Washington state department of agriculture and applied by licensed personnel. This exemption shall not apply to the use of chemicals within watersheds that are controlled for the purpose of drinking water quality in accordance with WAC 248-54-660.

~~((j))~~ (i) Issuance of rights of way, easements and use permits to use existing roads in nonresidential areas.

~~((k))~~ (j) Establishment of natural area preserves to be used for scientific research and education and for the protection of rare flora and fauna, under the procedures of chapter 79.70 RCW.

~~((26) Watershed restoration projects. Actions pertaining to watershed restoration projects as defined in RCW 89.08.460(2) are exempt, provided, they implement a watershed restoration plan which has been reviewed under SEPA (RCW 89.08.460(1)).~~

~~(27))~~ **(25) Personal wireless service facilities.**

(a) The siting of personal wireless service facilities are exempt if the facility:

(i) Is a microcell and is to be attached to an existing structure that is not a residence or school and does not contain a residence or a school;

(ii) Includes personal wireless service antennas, other than a microcell, and is to be attached to an existing structure (that may be an existing tower) that is not a residence or school and does not contain a residence or school, and the existing structure to which it is to be attached is located in a

commercial, industrial, manufacturing, forest, or agriculture zone; or

(iii) Involves constructing a personal wireless service tower less than sixty feet in height that is located in a commercial, industrial, manufacturing, forest, or agricultural zone.

(b) For the purposes of this subsection:

(i) "Personal wireless services" means commercial mobile services, unlicensed wireless services, and common carrier wireless exchange access services, as defined by federal laws and regulations.

(ii) "Personal wireless service facilities" means facilities for the provision of personal wireless services.

(iii) "Microcell" means a wireless communication facility consisting of an antenna that is either:

(A) Four feet in height and with an area of not more than five hundred eighty square inches; or

(B) If a tubular antenna, no more than four inches in diameter and no more than six feet in length.

(c) This exemption does not apply to projects within a critical area designated under GMA (RCW 36.70A.060).

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending Order DE 83-39, filed 2/10/84, effective 4/4/84)

**WAC 197-11-820 Department of licensing.** All licenses required under programs administered by the department of licensing as of December 12, 1975 are exempted, except the following:

(1) Camping club promotional permits under chapter 19.105 RCW.

(2) Motor vehicle wrecker licenses under chapter 46.80 RCW; WAC 197-11-800 (~~((14))~~) (13)(i) shall apply to allow possible exemption of renewals of camping club promotional permits and motor vehicle wrecker licenses.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending Order DE 83-39, filed 2/10/84, effective 4/4/84)

**WAC 197-11-835 Department of fisheries.** The following activities of the department of fisheries are exempted:

(1) The establishment of seasons, catch limits or

geographical areas for fishing or shellfish removal.

(2) All hydraulic project approvals (RCW 75.20.100) for activities incidental to a Class I, II, III forest practice as defined in RCW 76.09.050 or regulations thereunder.

(3) Hydraulic project approvals where there is no other agency with jurisdiction (besides the department of game) requiring a nonexempt permit, except for proposals involving removal of fifty or more cubic yards of streambed materials or involving realignment into a new channel. For purposes of this paragraph, the term new channel shall not include existing channels which have been naturally abandoned within the twelve months previous to the hydraulic permit application.

(4) All clam farm licenses and oyster farm licenses, except where cultural practices include structures occupying the water column or where a hatchery or other physical facility is proposed for construction on adjoining uplands.

(5) All other licenses (other than those excepted in (2) and (3) above) authorized to be issued by the department as of December 12, 1975 except the following:

(a) Fish farming license, or other licenses allowing the cultivation of aquatic animals for commercial purposes;

(b) Licenses for the mechanical and/or hydraulic removal of clams, including geoducks; and,

(c) Any license authorizing the discharge of explosives in water. WAC 197-11-800 (~~(+14+)~~) (13)(i) shall apply to allow possible exemption of renewals of the above licenses.

(6) The routine release of hatchery fish or the reintroduction of endemic or native species into their historical habitat where only minor documented effects on other species will occur.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending Order DE 83-39, filed 2/10/84, effective 4/4/84)

**WAC 197-11-850 Department of agriculture.** All actions under programs administered by the department of agriculture as of December 12, 1975 are exempted, except for the following:

(1) The approval of any application for a commercial registered feedlot, quarantined registered feedlot under chapter 16.36 RCW, or chapters 16-28 and 16-30 WAC.

(2) The issuance or amendment of any regulation respecting restricted-use pesticides under chapter 15.58 RCW that would have the effect of allowing the use of a pesticide previously prohibited by Washington state.

(3) The removal of any pesticide from the list of

restricted-use pesticides established in WAC 16-228-155 so as to permit sale of such pesticides to home and garden users, unless the pesticide is no longer manufactured and is not available.

(4) The removal of any pesticide from the list of highly toxic and restricted-use pesticides established under WAC 16-228-165 so as to authorize sale of such pesticides to persons not holding an annual user permit, an applicator certificate, or an applicator operator license, unless the pesticide is no longer manufactured and is not available.

(5) The removal of any pesticide from the category of highly toxic pesticide formulations established in WAC 16-228-165 so as to permit the sale of such pesticides by persons not possessing a pesticide dealer's license, unless the pesticide is no longer manufactured and is not available.

(6) The approval of any use of the pesticide DDT or DDD except for those uses approved by the centers for disease control of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (such as control of rabid bats).

(7) The issuance of a license to operate a public livestock market under RCW 16.65.030.

(8) The provisions of WAC 197-11-800 (~~((14))~~) (13)(i) shall apply to allow possible exemption of renewals of the licenses in (1) through (7) above.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending Order DE 83-39, filed 2/10/84, effective 4/4/84)

**WAC 197-11-855 Department of ecology.** The following activities of the department of ecology shall be exempt:

~~(1) ((The issuance, reissuance or modification of any waste discharge permit that contains conditions no less stringent than federal effluent limitations and state rules and regulations. This exemption shall apply to existing discharges only and shall not apply to any new source discharges.~~

~~(2))~~ Review of comprehensive solid waste management plans under RCW 70.95.100 and 70.95.110.

~~((3))~~ (2) Granting or denial of certification of consistency pursuant to the Federal Coastal Zone Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1451).

~~((4))~~ (3) Issuance of short-term water quality standards modification, pursuant to chapter 173-201 WAC, for minor projects when the water violations would:

(a) Result in turbidity violations only;

(b) Be less than fourteen days duration;

(c) Be mitigated by a current hydraulic project approval

conditioned to protect the fishery resource; and

(d) Not significantly impair beneficial uses of the affected water body.

~~((5))~~ (4) Approval of engineering reports when such approval allows preparation of plans and specifications, but not when it would commit the department to approving the final proposal.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending Order DE 83-39, filed 2/10/84, effective 4/4/84)

**WAC 197-11-902 Agency SEPA policies.** (1) The act and these rules allow agencies to condition or deny proposals if such action is based upon policies identified by the appropriate governmental authority. These policies must be incorporated into regulations, plans, or codes formally designated by the agency (or appropriate legislative body, in the case of local government) as possible bases for the exercise of substantive authority under SEPA. (RCW 43.21C.060; WAC 197-11-660.) State and local policies so designated are called "agency SEPA policies" in these rules.

(2) Agencies are required to designate their SEPA policies not later than one hundred eighty days after the effective date of these rules (or the creation of the agency). In order to condition or deny a proposal, an agency must comply with the provisions of RCW 43.21C.060 and WAC 197-11-660. If an agency has already formally designated agency SEPA policies that meet the requirements of the act and these rules, the agency is not required to adopt them again. Agencies may revise or add to their SEPA policies at any time. Although agency SEPA procedures cannot change the provisions of these rules concerning substantive authority and mitigation (WAC 197-11-906(2)), agency SEPA policies are encouraged to identify specific mitigation measures or techniques.

(3) An agency's document that includes or references by citation their agency SEPA policies (WAC 197-11-660(3)) may be included in agency SEPA procedures (WAC 197-11-904). Public notice and opportunity for public comment shall be provided as part of the agency process for formally designating its SEPA policies.

(4) Depending on their content, the formal designation of agency SEPA policies will not necessarily require any environmental review and will normally be categorically exempt as a procedural action under WAC 197-11-800(~~((20))~~) (19). For example, the policies may merely compile, reorganize, or

reference laws or policies currently on the books, or may otherwise be procedural in nature, such as requiring decision makers to consider certain factors.

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending Order 94-22, filed 3/6/95, effective 4/6/95)

**WAC 197-11-904 Agency SEPA procedures.** (1) Each agency is required by the act and this section to adopt its own rules and procedures for implementing SEPA. (RCW 43.21C.120.) Agencies may revise or add to their SEPA procedures at any time. Agencies may adopt these rules (chapter 197-11 WAC) by reference, and shall meet the requirements of WAC 197-11-906 concerning the content of their procedures. State and local rules for carrying out SEPA procedures are called "agency SEPA procedures."

(2) State agencies shall adopt or amend their procedures within one hundred eighty days of the effective date of this chapter or subsequent revisions, or within one hundred eighty days of the establishment of an agency, whichever shall occur later. State agencies shall adopt their procedures by rule making under the state Administrative Procedure Act, chapter 34.05 RCW. If a state agency does not have rule making authority under chapter 34.05 RCW, the agency shall adopt procedures under whatever authority it has, and public notice and opportunity for public comment shall be provided. Adoption shall be deemed to have taken place at the time the transmittal of adopted rules is filed with the code reviser.

(3) Local agencies shall adopt or amend their procedures within one hundred eighty days of the effective date of this chapter or subsequent revisions, or within one hundred eighty days of the establishment of the local governmental entity, whichever shall occur later. Local agencies shall adopt their procedures by rule, ordinance, or resolution, whichever is appropriate, to ensure that the procedures have the full force and effect of law. Public notice and opportunity for public comment shall be provided as part of the agency's process for adopting its SEPA procedures.

(4) Any agency determining that all actions it is authorized to take are exempt under Part Nine of these rules may adopt a statement to the effect that it has reviewed its authorized activities and found them all to be exempt under this chapter. Adoption of such a statement under the procedures in subsections (2) and (3) shall be deemed to be in compliance with the requirement that the agency adopt procedures under this

chapter.

(5) The adoption of agency procedures is procedural and shall be categorically exempt under this chapter (WAC 197-11-800(~~(+20)~~)) (19)).

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending Order 94-22, filed 3/6/95, effective 4/6/95)

**WAC 197-11-908 Critical areas.** (1) Each county/city may select certain categorical exemptions that do not apply in one or more critical areas designated in a critical areas ordinance adopted under GMA (RCW 36.70A.060). The selection of exemptions that will not apply may be made from the following subsections of WAC 197-11-800: (1), (2)(a) through (h), (3), (5), (6)(a), (~~(+14)~~) (13)(c), (~~(+24)~~) (23)(a) through (g), and (~~(+25)~~ ~~(d)~~, ~~(f)~~, ~~(h)~~, ~~(i)~~) (24)(c), (e), (g), (h).

The scope of environmental review of actions within these areas shall be limited to:

(a) Documenting whether the proposal is consistent with the requirements of the critical areas ordinance; and

(b) Evaluating potentially significant impacts on the critical area resources not adequately addressed by GMA planning documents and development regulations, if any, including any additional mitigation measures needed to protect the critical areas in order to achieve consistency with SEPA and other applicable environmental review laws.

All other categorical exemptions apply whether or not the proposal will be located within a critical area. Exemptions selected by an agency under this section shall be listed in the agency's SEPA procedures (WAC 197-11-906).

(2) Proposals that will be located within critical areas are to be treated no differently than other proposals under this chapter, except as stated in the prior subsection. A threshold determination shall be made for all such actions, and an EIS shall not be automatically required for a proposal merely because it is proposed for location in a critical area.