

WAC 197-11-970 Determination of nonsignificance (DNS).

DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE

Description of proposal:

The proposal is for a new General Permit for Biosolids Management (general permit) to replace the current general permit that will expire on August 21, 2015. The general permit will be used as the primary means of permitting the biosolids management activities of the 396 facilities subject to the state biosolids management program. The state biosolids program regulates biosolids (including septage) applied to the land, biosolids solid or given away in a bag or other container, biosolids being stored, biosolids transferred from one facility to another, and sewage sludge disposed in a municipal solids waste landfill.

Proponent:

Washington State Department of Ecology
PO Box 47600, Olympia WA 98504-7600
300 Desmond Dr SE, Lacey WA 98503

Location of proposal:

The general permit is applicable within the boundaries of the State of Washington, including state and federal lands. It does not apply to lands within the boundaries of Indian reservations or lands outside of Indian reservation that are held in trust by the federal government for a tribe.

Lead agency:

Washington State Department of Ecology

The lead agency for this proposal has determined that it does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030 (2)(c). This decision was made after review of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public on request.

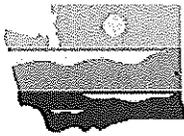
- There is no comment period for this DNS.
- This DNS is issued after using the optional DNS process in WAC 197-11-355. There is no further comment period on the DNS.
- This DNS is issued under WAC 197-11-340(2); the lead agency will not act on this proposal for 30 days from the date below. Comments must be submitted in writing by June 23, 2015.

Responsible official: Laurie G. Davies

Position/title: Program Manager, Waste 2 Resources Program

Address: PO Box 47600, Olympia WA 98504-7600

Date. 5/4/15 Signature Laurie G. Davies



SEPA ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

UPDATED 2014

Purpose of checklist:

Governmental agencies use this checklist to help determine whether the environmental impacts of your proposal are significant. This information is also helpful to determine if available avoidance, minimization or compensatory mitigation measures will address the probable significant impacts or if an environmental impact statement will be prepared to further analyze the proposal.

Instructions for applicants: [\[help\]](#)

This environmental checklist asks you to describe some basic information about your proposal. Please answer each question accurately and carefully, to the best of your knowledge. You may need to consult with an agency specialist or private consultant for some questions. You may use "not applicable" or "does not apply" only when you can explain why it does not apply and not when the answer is unknown. You may also attach or incorporate by reference additional studies reports. Complete and accurate answers to these questions often avoid delays with the SEPA process as well as later in the decision-making process.

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.

Instructions for Lead Agencies:

Please adjust the format of this template as needed. Additional information may be necessary to evaluate the existing environment, all interrelated aspects of the proposal and an analysis of adverse impacts. The checklist is considered the first but not necessarily the only source of information needed to make an adequate threshold determination. Once a threshold determination is made, the lead agency is responsible for the completeness and accuracy of the checklist and other supporting documents.

Use of checklist for nonproject proposals: [\[help\]](#)

For nonproject proposals (such as ordinances, regulations, plans and programs), complete the applicable parts of sections A and B plus the SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS (part D). Please completely answer all questions that apply and note that the words "project," "applicant," and "property or site" should be read as "proposal," "proponent," and "affected geographic area," respectively. The lead agency may exclude (for non-projects) questions in Part B - Environmental Elements –that do not contribute meaningfully to the analysis of the proposal.

A. background [\[help\]](#)

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable: [\[help\]](#)

Issuance of the new General Permit for Biosolids Management. A draft of the proposed General Permit my be found at: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/biosolids/GenPermitDev.html>

2. Name of applicant: [\[help\]](#)

Washington State Department of Ecology

3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person: [\[help\]](#)

Rebecca Singer
State Biosolids Coordinator
Washington State Department of Ecology
Waste 2 Resources Program
P.O. Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600
360-407-6108
Rebecca.singer@ecy.wa.gov

4. Date checklist prepared: [\[help\]](#)

March 20, 2015

5. Agency requesting checklist: [\[help\]](#)

Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology)

6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable): [\[help\]](#)

The proposal is to issue a new General Permit to replace the current General Permit that will expire on August 20, 2015. Following a threshold determination on this proposal, fulfillment of public notice requirements, completion of the public comment period and public hearing requirements, a final proposed General Permit will be prepared and issued. The final General Permit will become effective 30 days after notice has been published in the State Register. Ecology anticipates completing the process by August 20, 2015.

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain. [\[help\]](#)

There are no current plans for additions, expansion or further activity related to the issuance of the new General permit, however, the permit is in effect for five years from the effective date. During this five year period there may be federal or state rule changes that would require modification of the permit. Chapter 173-308 WAC contains provisions for making revisions to the General Permit. If revisions or amendments

need to be made within the five year period the General Permit is in effect, SEPA and public notice requirements will be met at that time.

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal. [\[help\]](#)

An Environmental Checklist was completed during the development of the original biosolids rule, and a DNS was issued by Ecology on December 10, 1993.

An Environmental Checklist was completed during the development of amendments to the biosolids rule, and a DNS was issued by Ecology on January 16, 2007.

An Environmental Checklist was completed and a DNS was issued by Ecology for each of the following General Permit issuances:

January 2, 1998: First General Permit

February 1, 2005: Second General Permit

August 20, 2010: Current General Permit

In addition, all facilities in the state subject to the proposed General Permit will be required to apply for coverage under the permit and to separately meet their respective SEPA requirements. Submitting a complete permit application package that includes all required plans, meeting all SEPA requirements, and meeting all public notice requirements will be required for all facilities subject to the proposed General Permit prior to receiving coverage.

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. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

NOTE: The proposal is not for a specific property. All facilities applying for coverage under the proposed General Permit will be required to get approval from Ecology and, sometimes, a local agency for management of nonexceptional quality biosolids at a specific property.

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known. [\[help\]](#)

Issuance of a threshold determination by the SEPA lead agency (Ecology)

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.) [\[help\]](#)

This proposal is for the issuance of the new General Permit for Biosolids Management. The proposed permit does not impose any new requirements beyond those in the State biosolids rule, or federal biosolids

rules or laws. The proposed permit differs from the current permit with the additional requirement for soil testing prior to land application of biosolids or septage. The additional requirement will provide valuable soil nutrient levels needed to determine an appropriate agronomic rate. The State biosolids program regulates biosolids (including septage) being stored, transferred from one facility to another and applied to the land for beneficial use. The State also regulates sewage sludge disposed in municipal solid waste landfills. Upon issuance of the General Permit, all facilities that produce, transfer, store, handle or land apply biosolids, will be required to submit an application for coverage. The application process includes providing specific information on the proposed uses and size and location of the proposed project.

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. [\[help\]](#)

The proposed General Permit will be applicable within the boundaries of the State of Washington, including state and federal lands and facilities. The proposed General Permit does not apply to land within the boundaries of Indian Reservations or lands outside of Indian Reservations that are held in trust by the federal government for the tribe.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS [\[help\]](#)

Note: The proposal is not for a specific site. It is for the General Permit for Biosolids that will cover specific sites for which the applicants will be required to meet SEPA requirements prior to being allowed to land apply nonexceptional biosolids. Most of the responses below are not applicable to this proposal, however, information is provided on biosolids and the state of the biosolids program where appropriate.

1. Earth

a. General description of the site [\[help\]](#)
(circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous,
other _____

Not applicable to this proposal.
Application to slopes is limited based on the biosolids characteristics and soil properties.

b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

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 agricultural land of long-term commercial significance and whether the proposal results in removing any of these soils. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- e. Describe the purpose, type, total area, and approximate quantities and total affected area of any filling, excavation, and grading proposed. Indicate source of fill. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

Biosolids have been shown to reduce erosion by providing water holding capacity in course soils and infiltration in fine textured soils.

- g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any: [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

2. Air

- a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal during construction, operation, and maintenance when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any: [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

3. Water

- a. Surface Water: [\[help\]](#)

- 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. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

Minimum buffers from surface waters are required for land application of biosolids. No less than 33' for nonexceptional biosolids and 100' for septage.

- 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. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- 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. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- 4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- 5) Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- 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. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

b. Ground Water:

- 1) Will groundwater be withdrawn from a well for drinking water or other purposes? If so, give a general description of the well, proposed uses and approximate quantities withdrawn from the well. Will water be discharged to groundwater? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- 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. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

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. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- 2) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

Land application of biosolids requires buffers to both surface waters and wells and are not permitted to be applied on grounds where the water table is less than 3 feet. In addition, biosolids have low mobility once applied to soil.

- 3) Does the proposal alter or otherwise affect drainage patterns in the vicinity of the site? If so, describe.

Not applicable to this proposal.

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water, and drainage pattern impacts, if any:

Not applicable to this proposal.

4. **Plants** [\[help\]](#)

- a. Check the types of vegetation found on the site: [\[help\]](#)

- deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other
 evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other
 shrubs
 grass
 pasture
 crop or grain
 Orchards, vineyards or other permanent crops.
 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? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- c. List threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

Biosolids may not be applied to the land if they are likely to adversely affect a threatened or endangered species or its critical habitat.

- d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any: [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- e. List all noxious weeds and invasive species known to be on or near the site.

Not applicable to this proposal.

5. Animals

- a. List any birds and other animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site. Examples include: [\[help\]](#)

birds: hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other:

mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, other:

fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other _____

Not applicable to this proposal.

- b. List any threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

Biosolids may not be applied to the land if they are likely to adversely affect a threatened or endangered species or its critical habitat.

- c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any: [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- e. List any invasive animal species known to be on or near the site.

Not applicable to this proposal.

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. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- 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: [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

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. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

Biosolids are regulated to reduce health hazards and are not considered a hazardous waste.

- 1) Describe any known or possible contamination at the site from present or past uses.

Not applicable to this proposal.

- 2) Describe existing hazardous chemicals/conditions that might affect project development and design. This includes underground hazardous liquid and gas transmission pipelines located within the project area and in the vicinity.

Not applicable to this proposal

Biosolids must meet certain quality standards defined in Chapter 173-308 WAC. In addition, biosolids must be applied at an agronomic rate. The requirement of applying biosolids at an agronomic rate minimizes the overall input of the pollutants to any land application site. The characteristics of biosolids also reduce the mobility of pollutants by binding them to the soil matrix.

- 3) Describe any toxic or hazardous chemicals that might be stored, used, or produced during the project's development or construction, or at any time during the operating life of the project.

Not applicable to this proposal.

- 4) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

Not applicable to this proposal.

5) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:

Not applicable to this proposal.

b. Noise

1) What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

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. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

3) Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any: [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

8. Land and shoreline use

a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties? Will the proposal affect current land uses on nearby or adjacent properties? If so, describe. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

b. Has the project site been used as working farmlands or working forest lands? If so, describe. How much agricultural or forest land of long-term commercial significance will be converted to other uses as a result of the proposal, if any? If resource lands have not been designated, how many acres in farmland or forest land tax status will be converted to nonfarm or nonforest use? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

Biosolids are applied to both agricultural soils and forest soils as a soil amendment. Biosolids provide valuable nutrients in forest lands where nitrogen is a limiting growth factor. Biosolids also provide nutrients and water holding capacity to agricultural land, reducing the use of commercial fertilizers and the amount of irrigation required.

1) Will the proposal affect or be affected by surrounding working farm or forest land normal business operations, such as oversize equipment access, the application of pesticides, tilling, and harvesting? If so, how:

Not applicable to this proposal.

c. Describe any structures on the site. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

e. What is the current zoning classification of the site? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

h. Has any part of the site been classified as a critical area by the city or county? If so, specify. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any: [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any: [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

m. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with nearby agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any:

Not applicable to this proposal.

9. Housing

a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any: [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

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? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any: [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

11. Light and glare

- a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any: [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

12. Recreation

- a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any: [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

13. Historic and cultural preservation

- a. Are there any buildings, structures, or sites, located on or near the site that are over 45 years old listed in or eligible for listing in national, state, or local preservation registers located on or near the site? If so, specifically describe. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- b. Are there any landmarks, features, or other evidence of Indian or historic use or occupation? This may include human burials or old cemeteries. Are there any material evidence, artifacts, or areas of cultural importance on or near the site? Please list any professional studies conducted at the site to identify such resources. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- c. Describe the methods used to assess the potential impacts to cultural and historic resources on or near the project site. Examples include consultation with tribes and the department of archeology and historic preservation, archaeological surveys, historic maps, GIS data, etc. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- d. Proposed measures to avoid, minimize, or compensate for loss, changes to, and disturbance to resources. Please include plans for the above and any permits that may be required.

Not applicable to this proposal.

14. Transportation

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site or affected geographic area and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- b. Is the site or affected geographic area currently served by public transit? If so, generally describe. If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- c. How many additional parking spaces would the completed project or non-project proposal have? How many would the project or proposal eliminate? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- d. Will the proposal require any new or improvements to existing roads, streets, pedestrian, bicycle or state transportation facilities, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private). [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- e. Will the project or proposal use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project or proposal? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur and what percentage of the volume would be trucks (such as commercial and nonpassenger vehicles). What data or transportation models were used to make these estimates? [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

- g. Will the proposal interfere with, affect or be affected by the movement of agricultural and forest products on roads or streets in the area? If so, generally describe.

Not applicable to this proposal.

- h. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any: [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

The proposed General Permit requires that all applicants that transport biosolids provide a Spill Prevention and Response plan to minimize impacts to road, traffic and residential areas should a spill occur.

15. Public services

- a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, public transit, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe. [\[help\]](#)

Not applicable to this proposal.

b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any. [help]

Not applicable to this proposal.

16. Utilities

a. Circle utilities currently available at the site: [help]
electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system,
other _____

Not applicable to this proposal.

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. [help]

Not applicable to this proposal.

C. Signature [HELP]

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: Rebecca Singer

Name of signer Rebecca Singer

Position and Agency/Organization State Biosolids Coordinator, Department of Ecology

Date Submitted: March 31, 2015

D. supplemental sheet for nonproject actions [help]

(IT IS NOT NECESSARY to 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; pro-
duction, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise?

The proposed General Permit for Biosolids is not expected to increase discharge to water; emissions to
air; production, storage or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise. The
proposed permit was written to ensure protection of human health and the environment while beneficially

utilizing biosolids to the greatest extent possible as mandated in chapter 70.95J RCW. All current and proposed biosolids projects are expected to continue or be implemented. Although it is anticipated that the production of biosolids could increase due to population growth in some areas of the state, the General Permit for Biosolids, developed under chapter 173-308 WAC, ensures the protection of waters with minimum buffers of 33 feet to surface waters and 100 feet to wells with no expected increase in toxic or hazardous substances following wastewater treatment processes. Any emissions to air or production of noise due to the processing of biosolids are not anticipated to increase.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

No measures are proposed as no increases are expected and any possible increases would be addressed by conditions in the General Permit.

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

The proposed General Permit for Biosolids is expected to have a positive affect on plants, animals, fish and marine life. Through decades of scientific research, biosolids have been shown to provide needed nutrients and organic matter to soils for crop and forestry production. The utilization of biosolids for agricultural purposes reduces the need for synthetic fertilizer and is applied to the land at an appropriate agronomic rate; this, along with required buffers, minimizes any potential runoff into surface water ultimately protecting fish and marine life. Biosolids encourage understory vegetation growth when applied to forest land and high quality domestic animal feed when applied to agricultural land.

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

No measures are proposed as no increases are expected.

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

The proposed General Permit for Biosolids is not expected to deplete energy or natural resources. Biosolids used for forest application have been known to enhance natural resources by introducing organic matter and nutrients into the soil encouraging productive understory vegetative growth. Biosolids used in agriculture improves water retention and reduces soil erosion. The processes of producing biosolids is not expected to deplete energy. Use of biosolids, when used as a soil amendment, decreases the use of commercial fertilizers which also conserves energy.

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

No measures are proposed as no depletions of energy or natural resources is expected.

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?

The proposed General Permit for Biosolids may affect parks, floodplains and prime farm lands. Biosolids can potentially be used for the development of parks however, any such activity would require SEPA and public notice. Biosolids may also be applied to floodplains but are restricted to the dry season when rainfall is minimal and ground water levels are low. This activity also requires SEPA and public notice. Biosolids are likely to be applied to prime farmland which is considered beneficial as biosolids enhance soil productivity.

The proposed General Permit for Biosolids is not expected to use or affect wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species habitat or historic and cultural sites. Biosolids applications require the use of heavy machinery prohibited in wilderness areas and are unlikely to affect wild and scenic rivers as certain buffers from any water are required ((WAC 173-308-190 and WAC 173-308-210(5)(b)). Biosolids applications are also prohibited where threatened or endangered species may be adversely affected (WAC 173-308-191). Application on historic or cultural sites is unlikely, however, SEPA and public notice would be required if such land were proposed for biosolids application

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

No such measures are proposed as no adverse affects to parks, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species habitat, historic or cultural sites, wetland, floodplains, or prime farmlands are expected.

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?

The proposed General Permit for Biosolids is not expected to adversely impact land or shoreline uses. The General Permit requires buffers to protect surface waters including shorelines and any proposal for application of biosolids near a shoreline would require site evaluation, SEPA and public notice. All other land use of biosolids (land application, composting or mixing) requires an approval process that includes but is not limited to site approval, SEPA and public notice. Any incompatibility with project plans and land use would be addressed during the approval process.

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

No such measures are proposed as no adverse affects to shorelines and land are expected. Any potential impact or incompatibility with existing land use plans will be addressed during approval processes.

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

The proposed General Permit for Biosolids is not expected to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities. Any current or proposed biosolids projects requiring transportation are

expected to continue or be implemented. While some population growth is expected to increase biosolids production, overall transportation is expected to remain the same.

Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demand(s) are:

No such measures are proposed as no increase in demands for transportation or public services and utilities are expected.

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

The proposal for the General Permit for Biosolids was written in accordance with Chapter 70.95J RCW and Chapter 173-308 WAC. They were written to follow the Federal Rule 40 CFR 503 for Biosolids Management. The management for biosolids under the General Permit also requires adherence to the Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act and all local zoning and land use requirements. The General Permit was written to follow all local, state and federal laws for the protection of human health and the environment. No conflicts are expected to occur.