

**WAC 197-11-610 Use of NEPA documents.** (1) An agency may adopt any environmental analysis prepared under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) by following WAC 197-11-600 and 197-11-630.

(2) A NEPA environmental assessment (EA) or documented categorical exclusion may be adopted to support a determination of nonsignificance instead of preparing an environmental checklist, if the requirements of WAC 197-11-340, 197-11-600, and 197-11-630 (and WAC 197-11-350 and 197-11-355 as applicable), are met and elements of the environment in WAC 197-11-444 are adequately addressed.

(3) An agency may adopt a NEPA EIS as a substitute for preparing a SEPA EIS if:

(a) The requirements of WAC 197-11-360, 197-11-600, and 197-11-630 are met (in which case the procedures in Parts Three, Four, and Five of these rules for preparing an EIS shall not apply); and

(b) The federal ~~EA or~~ EIS is not found inadequate: (i) By a court; (ii) by the council on environmental quality (CEQ) (or is at issue in a predecision referral to CEQ) under the NEPA

regulations; or (iii) by the administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency under section 309 of the Clean Air Act, 42 U.S.C. 1857.

(4) Subsequent use by another agency of a federal EIS, adopted under subsection (3) of this section, for the same (or substantially the same) proposal does not require adoption, unless the criteria in WAC 197-11-600(3) are met.

(5) If the lead agency has not held a public hearing within its jurisdiction to obtain comments on the adequacy of adopting a federal environmental document as a substitute for preparing a SEPA EIS, a public hearing for such comments shall be held if, within thirty days of circulating its statement of adoption, a written request is received from at least fifty persons who reside within the agency's jurisdiction or are adversely affected by the environmental impact of the proposal. The agency shall reconsider its adoption of the federal document in light of public hearing comments.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.21C.110 and 43.21C.100 [43.21C.170].  
WSR 14-09-026 (Order 13-01), § 197-11-610, filed 4/9/14, effective

5/10/14. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.21C.110. WSR 84-05-020 (Order DE 83-39), § 197-11-610, filed 2/10/84, effective 4/4/84.]

**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. 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. The exemptions in this subsection apply except when the project:

(i) Is undertaken wholly or partly on lands covered by water;

(ii) Requires a license governing discharges to water that is not exempt under RCW 43.21C.0383;

(iii) Requires a license governing emissions to air that is not exempt under RCW 43.21C.0381 or WAC 197-11-800 (7) or (8); or

(iv) Requires a land use decision that is not exempt under WAC 197-11-800(6).

(b) The following types of construction shall be exempt:

(i) The construction or location of four detached single family residential units.

(ii) The construction or location of four multifamily residential units.

(iii) 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.

(iv) 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. This exemption includes parking lots for twenty or fewer automobiles not associated with a structure.

(v) Any fill or excavation of 100 cubic yards throughout the total lifetime of the fill or excavation and any excavation, fill or grading necessary for an exempt project in (i), (ii), (iii), or (iv) of this subsection shall be exempt.

(c) Cities, towns or counties may raise the exempt levels up to the maximum specified in (d) of this subsection by implementing ordinance or resolution. Such levels shall be specified in the agency's SEPA procedures (WAC 197-11-904). Separate maximum optional thresholds are established in (d) of this subsection applying to both incorporated areas and unincorporated urban growth areas in fully planning jurisdictions under RCW 36.70A.040; other unincorporated areas in fully planning counties; and jurisdictions in all other counties. Agencies may adopt the maximum level or a level between the minimum and maximum level. An agency may adopt a system of several exempt levels, such as different levels for different geographic areas, and mixed use projects.

At a minimum, the following process shall be met in order to raise the exempt levels.

(i) Documentation that the requirements for environmental analysis, protection and mitigation for impacts to elements of the environment (listed in WAC 197-11-444) have been adequately addressed for the development exempted. The requirements may be addressed in specific adopted development regulations, and applicable state and federal regulations.

(ii) Description in the findings or other appropriate section of the adopting ordinance or resolution of the locally established notice and comment opportunities for the public, affected tribes, and agencies regarding permitting of development projects included in these increased exemption levels.

(iii) Before adopting the ordinance or resolution containing the proposed new exemption levels, the agency shall provide a minimum of sixty days notice to affected tribes, agencies with expertise, affected jurisdictions, the department of ecology, and the public and provide an opportunity for comment.

(iv) The city, town, or county must document how specific adopted development regulations and applicable state and federal

laws provide adequate protections for cultural and historic resources when exemption levels are raised. The requirements for notice and opportunity to comment for the public, affected tribes, and agencies in (c)(i) and (ii) of this subsection and the requirements for protection and mitigation in (c)(i) of this subsection must be specifically documented. The local ordinance or resolution shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Use of available data and other project review tools regarding known and likely cultural and historic resources, such as inventories and predictive models provided by the Washington department of archaeology and historic preservation, other agencies, and tribal governments.

- Planning and permitting processes that ensure compliance with applicable laws including chapters 27.44, 27.53, 68.50, and 68.60 RCW.

- Local development regulations that include at minimum preproject cultural resource review where warranted, and standard inadvertent discovery language (SIDL) for all projects.

(d) The maximum exemption levels applicable to (c) of this subsection are:

Project types	Fully planning GMA counties		All other counties
	Incorporated and unincorporated UGA	Other unincorporated areas	Incorporated and unincorporated areas
Single family residential	30 units	20 units	20 units
Multifamily residential	60 units	25 units	25 units
Barn, loafing shed, farm equipment storage, produce storage or packing structure	40,000 square feet	40,000 square feet	40,000 square feet
Office, school, commercial, recreational, service, storage building, parking facilities	30,000 square feet and 90 parking spaces	12,000 square feet and 40 parking spaces	12,000 square feet and 40 parking spaces
Fill or excavation	1,000 cubic yards	1,000 cubic yards	1,000 cubic yards

(2) **Other minor new construction.**

(a) The exemptions in this subsection apply to all licenses required to undertake the following types of proposals except when the project:

(i) Is undertaken wholly or partly on lands covered by water;

(ii) Requires a license governing discharges to water that is not exempt under RCW 43.21C.0383;

(iii) Requires a license governing emissions to air that is not exempt under RCW 43.21C.0381 or WAC 197-11-800 (7) or (8); or

(iv) Requires a land use decision that is not exempt under WAC 197-11-800(6).

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

(c) The construction ~~and~~/or installation of commercial on-premise signs, and public signs and signals, including those for traffic control and wayfinding.

(d) The construction or installation of minor road and street improvements by any agency or private party that include the following:

(i) Safety structures and equipment: Such as pavement marking, physical measures to reduce motor vehicle traffic speed or volume, freeway surveillance and control systems, railroad protective devices (not including grade-separated crossings), grooving, glare screen, safety barriers, energy attenuators;

(ii) Transportation corridor landscaping (including the application of state of Washington 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);

(iii) Temporary traffic controls and detours;

(iv) 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;

(v) 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;

(vi) Channelization and elimination of sight restrictions at intersections, street lighting, guard rails and barricade installation;

(vii) Installation of catch basins and culverts for the purposes of road and street improvements;

(viii) Reconstruction of existing roadbed (existing curb-to-curb in urban locations), including adding or widening of shoulders where capacity is not increased and no new right of way is required;

(ix) Addition of bicycle lanes, paths and facilities, and pedestrian walks and paths, but not including additional automobile lanes.

(x) Operational modifications to an existing roadway network including speed limit designations, rechannelization, designation of transit-only lanes, adding or removing turn restrictions,

designating roadways as one-way or two-way, restricting or allowing motor vehicle access and converting underused right-of-way for public gathering space.

(e) 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.

(f) 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.

(g) 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 such as listing in a historic register.

(h) The installation or removal of impervious underground or above-ground tanks, having a total capacity of 10,000 gallons or

less except on agricultural and industrial lands. On agricultural and industrial lands, the installation or removal of impervious underground or above-ground tanks, having a total capacity of 60,000 gallons or less.

(i) The vacation of streets or roads.

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

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

(l) The installation of accessory solar energy generation equipment on or attached to existing structures and facilities whereby the existing footprint and size of the building is not increased.

(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, recreation, and transportation facilities 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 of over fifty cubic yards of material;

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

(c) Replacement of utility cables that must be buried under the surface of the bedlands; or

(d) Repair/rebuilding of major dams, dikes, and reservoirs shall also not be considered exempt under this subsection.

(4) **Water rights.** Appropriations of one cubic foot per second or less of surface water, or of 2,250 gallons per minute or less of groundwater, 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.

(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 a specifically designated and authorized public use established by the public landowner and used by the public for that purpose.

(c) Leasing, granting an easement for, or otherwise authorizing the use of real property when the property use will remain essentially the same as the existing use for the term of the agreement, or when the use under the lease, easement or other authorization is otherwise exempted by this chapter.

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

(a) Land use decisions for exempt projects, except that rezones must comply with (c) of this subsection.

(b) Other land use decisions not qualified for exemption under subsection (a) (such as a home occupation or change of use) are exempt provided:

(i) The authorized activities will be conducted within an existing building or facility qualifying for exemption under WAC 197-11-800 (1) and (2); and

(ii) The activities will not change the character of the building or facility in a way that would remove it from an exempt class.

(c) Where an exempt project requires a rezone, the rezone is exempt only if:

(i) The project is in an urban growth area in a city or county planning under RCW 36.70A.040;

(ii) The proposed rezone is consistent with and does not require an amendment to the comprehensive plan; and

(iii) The applicable comprehensive plan was previously subjected to environmental review and analysis through an EIS under the requirements of this chapter prior to adoption; and the EIS adequately addressed the environmental impacts of the rezone.

(d) Except upon lands covered by water, the approval of short plats or short subdivisions pursuant to the procedures required by RCW 58.17.060, and short plats or short subdivisions within the original short subdivision boundaries provided the cumulative divisions do not exceed the total lots allowed to be created under RCW 58.17.020. This exemption includes binding site plans authorized by RCW 58.17.035 up to the same number of lots allowed by the jurisdiction as a short subdivision.

(e) Granting of variance 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.

(f) Alteration of property lines as authorized by RCW 58.17.040(6).

(7) **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.

(8) **Clean Air Act.** The granting of variances under RCW 70.94.181 extending applicable air pollution control requirements for one year or less shall be exempt.

(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.

(10) **Activities of the state legislature.** All actions of the state legislature are exempted.

(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.

(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.

(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.

(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.

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

(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.

(16) **Local improvement districts and special purpose districts.** The formation of local improvement districts and special purpose 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. A special district or special purpose district is a local government

entity designated by the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) and is not a city, town, township, or county.

(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.)

(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.

(19) **Procedural actions.** The proposal, amendment or adoption of legislation, rules, regulations, resolutions or ordinances, or of any plan or program shall be exempt if they are:

(a) Relating solely to governmental procedures, and containing no substantive standards respecting use or modification of the environment.

(b) Text amendments resulting in no substantive changes respecting use or modification of the environment.

(c) Agency SEPA procedures.

(20) **Reserved.**

(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, SEPA compliance may be limited to those items which differ from state regulations.

(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.

(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 twelve 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; the overbuilding of existing distribution lines (55,000 volts or less) with transmission lines (up to and including 115,000 volts); within existing rights of way or developed utility corridors, all electric facilities, lines, equipment or appurtenances, not including substations, with an associated voltage of 115,000 volts or less; 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 vault, pipe, or well: 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, the chemicals used are approved by Washington state 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.

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

(a) 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.

(b) Licenses or approvals to remove firewood.

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

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

(e) Issuance of leases for school sites.

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

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

(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.

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

(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.

(25) **Wireless service facilities.**

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

(i) The collocation of new equipment, removal of equipment, or replacement of existing equipment on existing or replacement structures that does not substantially change the physical dimensions of such structures; or

(ii) The siting project involves constructing a 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) " Wireless services" means wireless data and telecommunications services, including commercial mobile services,

commercial mobile data services, unlicensed wireless services, and common carrier wireless exchange access services, as defined by federal laws and regulations.

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

(iii) "Collocation" means the mounting or installation of equipment on an existing tower, building, structure for the purposes of either transmitting or receiving, or both, radio frequency signals for communication purposes.

(iv) "Existing structure" means any existing tower, pole, building, or other structure capable of supporting wireless service facilities.

(v) "Substantially change the physical dimensions" means:

(A) The mounting of equipment on a structure that would increase the height of the structure by more than ten percent, or twenty feet, whichever is greater; or

(B) The mounting of equipment that would involve adding an appurtenance to the body of the structure that would protrude from the edge of the structure more than twenty feet, or more than the

width of the structure at the level of the appurtenance, whichever it greater.

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

(26) State Transportation Projects

The following Washington department of transportation projects and activities shall be exempt: The repair, reconstruction, restoration, retrofitting, or replacement of any road, highway, bridge, tunnel, or transit facility (such as a ferry dock or bus transfer station), including ancillary transportation facilities (such as pedestrian/bicycle paths and bike lanes), that is in operation, as long as the action:

(a) Occurs within the existing right of way and in a manner that substantially conforms to the preexisting design, function, and location as the original except to meet current engineering standards or environmental permit requirements; and

(b) The action does not result in addition of automobile lanes, a change in capacity, or a change in functional use of the facility.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.21C.110 and 43.21C.100 [43.21C.170]. WSR 14-09-026 (Order 13-01), § 197-11-800, filed 4/9/14, effective 5/10/14. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.21C.110. WSR 13-02-065 (Order 12-01), § 197-11-800, filed 12/28/12, effective 1/28/13. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.21A.090, chapter 43.21C RCW, RCW 43.21C.035, 43.21C.037, 43.21C.038, 43.21C.0381, 43.21C.0382, 43.21C.0383, 43.21C.110, 43.21C.222. WSR 03-16-067 (Order 02-12), § 197-11-800, filed 8/1/03, effective 9/1/03. Statutory Authority: 1995 c 347 (ESHB 1724) and RCW 43.21C.110. WSR 97-21-030 (Order 95-16), § 197-11-800, filed 10/10/97, effective 11/10/97. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.21C.110. WSR 84-05-020 (Order DE 83-39), § 197-11-800, filed 2/10/84, effective 4/4/84.]

(27) Structurally Deficient City, Town and County bridges

The repair, reconstruction, restoration, retrofitting, or replacement of a structurally deficient city, town or county bridge shall be exempt as long as the action:

(a) Occurs within the existing right of way and in a manner that substantially conforms to the preexisting design, function, and location as the original except to meet current engineering standards or environmental permit requirements; and

(b) The action does not result in addition of automobile lanes, a change in capacity, or a change in functional use of the facility.

(C) "Structurally deficient" means a bridge that is classified as in poor condition under the state bridge condition rating system and is reported by the state to the national bridge inventory as having a deck, superstructure, or substructure rating of four or below. Structurally deficient bridges are characterized by deteriorated conditions of significant bridge elements and potentially reduced load-carrying capacity. Bridges deemed structurally deficient typically require significant maintenance and repair to remain in service, and require major rehabilitation or replacement to address the underlying deficiency.

**WAC 197-11-830 Department of natural resources.** The following actions and licenses of the department of natural resources are exempted:

(1) Forest closures, shutdowns and permit suspensions due to extreme unusual fire hazards.

(2) Operating permits to use power equipment on forest land.

(3) Permits to use fuse on forest land.

(4) Log patrol licenses.

(5) Permits for drilling for which no public hearing is required under RCW 78.60.070 ~~79.76.070~~ (geothermal test drilling).

(6) Permits for the dumping of forest debris and wood waste in forested areas.

(7) Those sales of timber from public lands that the department of natural resources determines, by rules adopted pursuant to RCW 43.21C.120 do not have potential for a substantial impact on the environment.

(8) Except on aquatic lands under state control, leases for mineral prospecting under RCW 79.14.300 or 79.14.470 ~~79.01.616 or 79.01.652~~, but not including issuance of subsequent contracts for mining.

(9) Sales of rock from public lands involving rock pits less than three acres in size that are used for activities regulated under a forest practices application that is exempt under RCW 43.21C.037.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.21C.110 and 43.21C.100 [43.21C.170].  
WSR 14-09-026 (Order 13-01), § 197-11-830, filed 4/9/14, effective  
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## **PART ELEVEN - FORMS**

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

#### ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

##### *Purpose of checklist:*

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

##### *Instructions for applicants:*

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

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

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

The checklist questions apply to all parts of your proposal, even if you plan to do them over a period of time or on different parcels of land. Attach any additional information that will help

describe your proposal or its environmental effects. The agency to which you submit this checklist may ask you to explain your answers or provide additional information reasonably related to determining if there may be significant adverse impact.

*Use of checklist for nonproject proposals:*

For nonproject proposals complete this checklist and the supplemental sheet for nonproject actions (Part D). The lead agency may exclude any question for the environmental elements (Part B) which they determine do not contribute meaningfully to the analysis of the proposal.

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:
2. Name of applicant:
3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:
4. Date checklist prepared:
5. Agency requesting checklist:

6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):
7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.
8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.
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.
10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.
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.)
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.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

1. **Earth**

a. General description of the site (circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other.....

b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?

c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any agricultural land of long-term commercial significance and whether the proposal results in removing any of these soils.

d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.

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.

f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.

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

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any:

## **2. Air**

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.

b. Are there any offsite sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:

## **3. Water**

a. Surface:

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.

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.

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.

4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

5) Does the proposal lie within a 100-year flood plain? If so, note location on the site plan.

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.

b. Ground:

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.

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.

c. Water runoff (including storm water):

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.

2) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe.

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

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

#### 4. **Plants**

a. Check the types of vegetation found on the site:

— 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?
- c. List threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.
- d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any:
- e. List all noxious weeds and invasive species known to be on or near the site.

## 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:

Birds: Hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other:

Mammals: Deer, bear, elk, beaver, other:

Fish: Bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other:

- b. List any threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.
- c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.
- d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:

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

## **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.

b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe.

c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any:

## **7. Environmental health**

a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste, that could occur as a result of this proposal? If so, describe.

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

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.

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.

4) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

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

**b. Noise**

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

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.

3) Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:

**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.

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?

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:

c. Describe any structures on the site.

d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?

e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?

f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?

g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?

h. Has any part of the site been classified as a critical area by the city or county? If so, specify.

i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?

j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?

k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:

l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:

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

## 9. **Housing**

a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any:

## 10. **Aesthetics**

a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?

b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:

#### **11. Light and glare**

a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?

b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?

c. What existing offsite sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:

#### **12. Recreation**

a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?

b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:

**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.

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.

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.

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.

#### 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.

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?

c. How many additional parking spaces would the completed project or nonproject proposal have? How many would the project or proposal eliminate?

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).

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

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?

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.

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:

#### **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.

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

#### **16. Utilities**

a. Circle utilities currently available at the site: Electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other.

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.