

SEPA ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

Purpose of checklist:

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

Instructions for applicants:

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

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

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

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

Use of checklist for nonproject proposals:

Complete this checklist for nonproject proposals, even though questions may be answered "does not apply." in addition, complete the supplemental sheet for nonproject actions (part D).

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

A. Background

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

Amendments to the San Juan County Unified Development Code for Wetland Critical Areas.

2. Name of applicant: *San Juan County, Dept. of Community Development and Planning*

3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:

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4. Date checklist prepared: *August 25, 2011*

5. Agency requesting checklist: *San Juan County Community Development and Planning Dept.*

6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable): *Planning Commission hearing September 16, 2011.*

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.

No.

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

The San Juan County Best Available Science Synthesis (May 2011).

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

Does not apply – new regulations would apply County wide and it is a non-project action.

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

The new regulations must be approved by the San Juan County Council.

11. Give a 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.)

This is a non-project action amending San Juan County Code provisions for Wetland Critical Areas.

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.

This is a non-project action and the regulations will apply throughout unincorporated San Juan County, Washington.

B. Environmental Elements

1. Earth

a. General description of the site:

The lands within the County include a wide variety of terrain, including flat and hilly lands, extensive coastline, and areas with steep slopes.

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

Slopes in the County vary, up to and including vertical cliffs along the island shorelines.

c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any prime farmland.

The County has a variety of soils. Soil types can be found in the San Juan County Soil Survey (2009).

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

There are some areas of unstable slopes in the County. Such slopes are included in the geologically hazardous areas map.

- e. Describe the purpose, type, and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.

Does not apply.

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

This is a non-project action and does not include earth moving.

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

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

2. Air

- a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal (i.e., dust, automobile, odors, industrial, wood smoke) during construction and when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

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.

The County has a few seasonal and even fewer year round streams, and many lakes, ponds, wetlands, marine embayments and estuaries. The County is completely surrounded by marine waters. The entire coastline is designated as an "Area of Special Flood Hazard" on the FEMA flood zone maps.

- 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.

This is a non-project action that amends existing development standards.

- 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.

Does not apply.

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

The proposed regulations include provisions for noncompensatory enhancement projects, which may involve the temporary alteration of surface waters while improvements are being made to the wetland.

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

FEMA flood zones occur along the entire coastline and in other locations throughout the County. The areas within the 100-year floodplain are included in the Critical Area overlay district, to which the subject regulations would apply.

- 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.

The proposed regulations include provisions to control and prevent the discharge of waste materials and pollutants to surface waters.

b. Ground:

- 1) Will ground water be withdrawn, or will water be discharged to ground water? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

No.

- 2) Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any. 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.

Does not apply.

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.

Any projects permitted under the proposed regulations would be required to meet the stormwater management requirements of the UDC and the Stormwater Manual for Western Washington.

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

This is a non-project action that amends existing development standards regarding development in wetland critical areas.

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

Development permitted under the proposed regulations would be required to meet various measures to control and properly divert stormwater runoff and to avoid potential alteration to the subject property's hydrologic conditions.

4. Plants

- a. Check or circle types of vegetation found on the site:

Plants found in the County include:

- *deciduous trees: alder, maple, aspen, others.*
- *evergreen trees: fir, cedar, pine*
- *shrubs: snowberry, salmon berry, wild rose, salal, others.*
- *agricultural: grass, grains, other crops (hay, hops, vegetables)*
- *wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage*
- *water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, others.*
- *other types of vegetation: succulents, saprophytes*

- b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?

Limited amounts of vegetation that would be allowed under certain circumstances in the proposed regulations. Largely, this would occur in or outside the wetland buffer, up to certain thresholds of canopy closure and trees per acre. Some pruning and tree removal is allowed within the buffer.

- c. List threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.

Some threatened or endangered plant species are found in limited locations throughout the County.

- d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any:

The amendments do not include site specific project activities; however, they do include vegetation protection requirements (with particular reference to the preservation and use of native vegetation). Further, the proposed regulations include specific requirements regarding enhancement of wetland vegetation.

5. Animals

- a. Circle any birds and animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site:

- *birds: hawk, heron, eagle, peregrine falcon, waterfowl, songbirds*
- *mammals: deer, rodents, raccoon, mustelids, marine mammals*
- *fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, marine fish in nearshore waters*

Please refer to the Best Available Science Synthesis (May 2011) for a comprehensive listing of bird and animal species observed within the County.

- b. List any threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.

Bald eagle, peregrine falcon, marine mammals, salmonids, and many other listed species are known to occur, and some to breed, in the County.

- c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.

The islands are part of the Pacific Coast Flyway.

- d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:

The proposed regulations are not project activities. The UDC contains various regulations designed to minimize impacts to fish and wildlife and their habitat. Specifically, Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas and

Wetland Critical Areas are included in the County's Critical Areas Overlay District, along with specific protection requirements, such as buffers.

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.

Does not apply.

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

No.

- 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:

Does not apply.

7. Environmental health

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

Does not apply.

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

None.

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

Does not apply.

- b. Noise

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

Does not apply.

- 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.

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

8. Land and Shoreline use

- a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties?

Land uses vary throughout the County.

b. Has the site been used for agriculture? If so, describe.

Some land within San Juan County is used for agriculture.

c. Describe any structures on the site.

Does not apply.

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

No.

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

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

h. Has any part of the site been classified as an "environmentally sensitive" area? If so, specify.

The proposed regulations will apply to all areas in the County designated as Wetland Critical Areas.

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

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

9. Housing

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

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

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?

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

11. Light and glare

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

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

- c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

12. Recreation

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

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

13. Historic and cultural preservation

- a. Are there any places or objects listed on, or proposed for, national, state, or local preservation registers known to be on or next to the site? If so, generally describe.

Does not apply.

- b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site.

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

14. Transportation

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site, and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.

Does not apply.

- b. Is site currently served by public transit? If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?

Does not apply.

- c. How many parking spaces would the completed project have? How many would the project eliminate?

Does not apply.

- d. Will the proposal require any new roads or streets, or improvements to existing roads or streets, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).

No.

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

No.

- f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur.

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

15. Public services

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

No.

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

Does not apply.

16. Utilities

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

Does not apply.

- 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.

Does not apply.

17. Signature

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

Signature: _____

Date Submitted: _____

D. SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS

(do not use this sheet for project actions)

Because these questions are very general, it may be helpful to read them in conjunction with the list of the elements of the environment. When answering these questions, be aware of the extent the proposal, or the types of activities likely to result from the proposal, would affect the item at a greater intensity or at a faster rate than if the proposal were not implemented. Respond briefly and in general terms.

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

The proposed regulations would likely reduce the discharge of water to Wetland Critical Areas by maintaining certain distances between the wetland and any proposed development as well as the existing vegetation within that distance.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

Does not apply, since no increases are anticipated as a result of the proposed regulations.

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

By enhancing protection of the water quality and habitat functions of wetlands, wetland vegetation, and wildlife, the proposed regulations will likely benefit plants, animals, fish, and marine life.

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

Does not apply.

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

The preservation of buffer areas around wetlands will conserve natural resources.

- 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 regulations must protect the functions and values of Wetland Critical Areas. Therefore, it is anticipated that the proposal will benefit the above-listed designated areas.

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

Does not apply.

5. How would the proposal be likely to affect land and shoreline use, including whether it would allow or encourage land or shoreline uses incompatible with existing plans?

The proposed regulations are anticipated to locate development at distances sufficient to protect the functions and values of Wetland Critical Areas. They are not anticipated to allow or encourage land or shoreline uses that are incompatible with any existing plans.

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

Does not apply, as none are anticipated that would need avoidance or reduction.

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

Does not apply.

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

Does not apply.

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

There will be no conflict with State, Federal or local requirements for environmental protection. The proposed regulations expressly state that any waiver or exemption of the San Juan County critical area regulations does not relieve the applicant and/or land owner of the duty to comply with all applicable State and Federal requirements.