

# **SEPA ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST**

## ***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:***

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:***

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:

*PCODES-18-0002*

*Amendment of San Juan County Code (SJCC) 18.40.400 Exempt Signs, subsection C.  
related to political signs*

2. Name of applicant:

*San Juan County, Washington*

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

*Adam Zack, Planner II  
San Juan County Department of Community Development (DCD)  
PO Box 947  
Friday Harbor WA 98250  
(360) 370-7580*

4. Date checklist prepared:

*June 21, 2018*

5. Agency requesting checklist:

*San Juan County Department of Community Development*

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

- *June 12, 2018, County Council adopted Ordinance No. 14-2018 Ordinance Adopting Interim Official Controls Regarding Political Signs and referred the matter to the Planning Commission for review and recommendation*
- *July 3, 2018, SEPA determination published and Request for Expedited Review sent to Washington State Department of Commerce*

**Tentative Schedule**

- *July 20, 2018, Joint Planning Commission and County Council Public Hearing*
- *July 2018, County Council adopts amended sign code by ordinance*

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

*The County may revise all of its sign regulations at a later date. San Juan County Council adopted Ordinance No. 14-2018 on June 12, 2018. This ordinance temporarily removes conditions from the political sign exemption in San Juan County Code 18.40.400(C). Ordinance No. 14-2018 will expire on December 12, 2018 if not otherwise renewed or made permanent after a public hearing.*

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

*No other environmental information has been or will be prepared in direct relation 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.

*This is a non-project action that will make County Code consistent with existing County policy on political signs. No other approvals related to it are pending.*

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

*After receiving a Planning Commission recommendation, approval of amendments to the County's Unified Development Code (UDC) is required from the County Council.*

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.)

*The nonproject action proposal is to amend the development code at San Juan County Code 18.40.400 Exempt signs, subsection (C) and Ordinance 2-1998 as follows:*

*The following signs are exempt from the regulations contained in SJCC 18.40.370 through ~~18.40.400~~ 18.40.390*

*~~C. Political signs shall be permitted outright; provided, that they shall not be erected more than 45 days prior to an election and shall be removed by the candidate or landowner no more than 72 hours following an election terminating candidacy. Political signs shall not exceed six square feet in area.~~*

*The result of the amendments to San Juan County Code and Ordinance 2-1998 is that political signs will be exempt from the sign code regulations without conditions.*

*This change is needed in order to comply with San Juan County Superior Court Judge Katie Loring's order dated Monday, May 21, 2018 re: Case No. 18-2-0507528. The Court held that the conditions of the political sign exemption in SJCC 18.40.400(C) are likely contrary to law and entered an order preventing the County from enforcing them. Existing County policy is to not enforce the time limits on political signs. County Code will be made consistent with County policy and the Court order by amending SJCC 18.40.400(C) as proposed above.*

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.

*San Juan County, Washington.*

## **B. Environmental Elements** [\[HELP\]](#)

### **1. Earth** [\[help\]](#)

#### a. General description of the site:

*The County is an archipelago containing a wide variety of terrain including steep slopes, flat land and wetlands.*

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

*There are various slopes in the County.*

#### 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.

*There is no particular site or soil associated with this nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

#### 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.

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

## 2. **Air** [\[help\]](#)

- 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.

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

## 3. **Water** [\[help\]](#)

- 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.

*The County has seasonal streams, wetlands, lakes and marine embayments. The County is completely surrounded by marine waters.*

- 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 question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

- 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.

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

- 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.

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

b. Ground Water: [\[help\]](#)

- 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.

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

- 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.

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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.

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

**5. Animals** [\[help\]](#)

- 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 \_\_\_\_\_

*This is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

## **6. Energy and Natural Resources** [\[help\]](#)

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.

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This project would not affect the potential use of solare energy.*

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:

*None.*

## **7. Environmental Health** [\[help\]](#)

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.

*No.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

- 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.

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

- 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.

*None.*

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

*None.*

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

*None.*

**b. Noise**

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

- 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.

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*None.*

**8. Land and Shoreline Use** [\[help\]](#)

- 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.

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

- 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?

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

- 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:

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

- c. Describe any structures on the site.

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*Not applicable.*

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

*Not applicable.*

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

*The amended sign code will be consistent with other County development code regulations, as reviewed by the County's prosecuting attorney.*

- m. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts to agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any:

*Not applicable.*

**9. Housing** [\[help\]](#)

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*None.*

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

*None.*

**10. Aesthetics** [\[help\]](#)

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*None.*

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

*None.*

**11. Light and Glare** [\[help\]](#)

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*No.*

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

*None.*

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

*None.*

**12. Recreation** [\[help\]](#)

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*No.*

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

*None.*

**13. Historic and cultural preservation** [\[help\]](#)

- 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? If so, specifically describe.

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

- 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.

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

- 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.

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

- 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.

*None.*

**14. Transportation** [\[help\]](#)

- 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.

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

- 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?

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*None.*

- 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).

*No.*

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

- 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?

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

- 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.

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*None.*

**15. Public Services** [\[help\]](#)

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.

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

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

*None.*

**16. Utilities** [\[help\]](#)

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

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

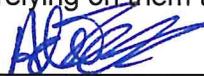
c. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed.

*This question is not applicable to a nonproject action.*

**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: \_\_\_\_\_



Name of signee:

Adam Zack

Position and Agency/Organization:

Planner II,

San Juan County Department of Community Development

Date Submitted:

July 3, 2018

## 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; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise?

*This proposal will not increase discharge to water; emissions to air; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise. The proposal will increase the amount of time that political signs are allowed to be posted.*

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

*None*

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

*The likely affects to plants, animals, fish, or marine life would be minimal. Political signs have been allowed under the current regulations since adoption in 1998 and are usually posted in existing development areas.*

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

*None*

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

*The proposal will not deplete energy or natural resources.*

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

*None.*

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 proposal will not affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated for governmental protection. Vegetation removal associated with posting signs is not permitted in critical areas per San Juan County Code Chapter 18.35.*

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

*None.*

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 proposal will not affect land and shoreline use, which includes allowing or encouraging land shoreline uses incompatible with existing plans. Land and shoreline use would remain subject to the San Juan County Comprehensive Plan, Shoreline Master Program, and Unified Development Code. Increasing the duration of time that political signs are allowed to be posted would not alter allowed uses because political signs are already allowed.*

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

*None.*

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

*The proposal will not increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities. Demand for these services isn't affected by posting of political signs.*

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

*None.*

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 is not likely to conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements to the protection of the environment.*