

SEPA ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

PURPOSE OF CHECKLIST:

Local governments and state agencies use the SEPA environmental checklist to help determine whether a proposal will have significant adverse environmental impacts. This information is also helpful to determine if available avoidance, minimization or compensatory mitigation measures will address significant impacts or if an environmental impact statement will need to be prepared in order to further analyze the proposal.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICANTS:

Please describe some basic information about your proposal. 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 if you explain why the question does not apply – not when an answer is unknown. You may also attach, or incorporate by reference, additional studies and reports. Complete and accurate answers to these questions help avoid processing delays in the SEPA and 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 NON-PROJECT PROPOSALS:

For non-project proposals (such as ordinances, regulations, plans, and programs), you must also the [Supplemental Sheet for Non-project 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.

SEPA CHECKLIST:

A. Background

1. Name of project proposal:

Permit Procedures Code Update

2. Name of applicant:

Skagit County

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

Robby Eckroth, AICP
Senior Planner
Skagit County Planning & Development Services
1800 Continental Place
Mount Vernon, WA 92837
(360) 416-1328

4. Date checklist prepared:

05/21/2024

5. Agency requesting checklist:

Skagit County

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

Public hearing on Tuesday, June 18, 2024 at 6 pm.

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.

This proposal is entirely procedural. It does not allow any new land uses nor modify requirements for any land uses.

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.

None directly related to this proposal.

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

This proposal will undergo a public hearing and review by the Skagit County Planning Commission, and requires approval of the Board of County Commissioners via ordinance.

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 legislative action to update the County's permit procedures to improve the timely processing of applications, for better readability, and for compliance with recent changes in state law.

- 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 proposal affects permit applications and permits for all lands and all land uses within unincorporated Skagit County.

B. Environmental Elements

1. Earth

a. General description of the site:

Skagit County's topography includes but is not limited to mountains, valleys and saltwater beaches (Page 10 of the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan 2016-2036).

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

The topography of Skagit County ranges from sea level to 8,966-foot Mount Logan (Page 10 of the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan 2016-2036).

c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck, etc.)? 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.

Skagit County contains a number of soil series as identified on pages 111 through 115 of the Skagit Comprehensive Plan 2016 to 2036 and referenced pursuant to the Soil Survey of Skagit County Area, Washington, USDA Soil Conservation Service, 1998.

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

None proposed as part of the non-project action (legislative proposal).

e. Describe the purpose, type, total area, and approximate quantities and total affected area of any filling, excavation, and grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

2. Air

- a. **What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal during construction, operation, and maintenance after the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities, if known.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

3. Water

a. *Surface Water:*

1. **Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (for example year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands, etc.)? If yes, describe the type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.**

Skagit County boasts a number of year-round and seasonal streams; shorelines adjacent to Skagit Bay, Padilla Bay, Samish Bay, and Rosario Strait; lakes, ponds, wetlands, and estuarine areas (Skagit County Shoreline Master Program, page 11).

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.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

- 3. Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

The Skagit County FEMA Q3 100-Year Floodplain map is available at the following website:

<https://www.skagitcounty.net/GIS/Documents/Flood/FEMA%20Q3%20100%20Year%20Floodplain%20Map.pdf>

- 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.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

b. Ground Water:

- 1. Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (for example year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands, etc.)? If yes, describe the type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

- 2. Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (for example domestic sewage; industrial, containing the following chemicals....; agricultural; etc.). Describe the general size of the sources, the number of such sources, the number of houses to be served (if applicable), or the number of animals or humans the source(s) are expected to serve.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

c. Water Runoff (including stormwater):

- 1. Describe the source of runoff (including stormwater) 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.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

4. Plants

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

- Deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, etc.
- Evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, etc.
- Shrubs
- Grass
- Pasture
- Crop or grain
- Orchards, vineyards or other permanent crops
- Wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage, etc.
- Water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, etc.
- Other types of vegetation

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Himalayan blackberry, Holly, and English ivy are known to be present within Skagit County. Other noxious weeds or invasive species may be present on a case-by-case basis. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

5. Animals

a. List any birds and other animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site.

Skagit County supports a diversity of animals, including but not limited to the following:

- 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.

Skagit County is home to threatened and endangered species, including but not limited to the following animals:

- Bull trout
- Canada lynx
- Gray wolf
- Marbled murrelet
- Northern spotted owl

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

Yes, Skagit County is located within the Pacific Flyway and includes salmonid migratory routes.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

6. Energy and Natural Resources

a. What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

7. Environmental Health

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

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

b. Noise:

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

- 2. What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example traffic,**

construction, operation, etc.)? Indicate what at what hours noise would come from the site.

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Performance standards for noise are administered pursuant to SCC Chapter 14.18.840. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

8. Land and Shoreline Use

a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties? Will the proposal affect current land uses on nearby or adjacent properties? If so, describe.

Skagit County supports a number of land uses as described in the Land Use, Rural, and Natural Resource Lands Elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Skagit County boasts a number of year-round and seasonal streams; shorelines adjacent to Skagit Bay, Padilla Bay, Samish Bay, and Rosario Strait; lakes, ponds, wetlands, and estuarine areas (Skagit County Shoreline Master Program, page 11). This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

b. Has the project site been used as working farm 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 farm or forest land tax status will be converted to non-farm or non-forest use?

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

d. Describe any structures on the site.

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Site development that includes the demolition of existing structures requires an approved building permit from Skagit County PDS. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

The Skagit County Comprehensive Plan Designations and Zoning Districts map is available at the following website:

<https://skagitcounty.net/Departments/GIS/Gallery/townshipmap.htm>

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

The Skagit County Shoreline Master Program (currently being updated) identifies the following six shoreline environmental designations within unincorporated Skagit County:

- Natural;
- Rural Conservancy;
- Urban Conservancy;
- Shoreline Residential;
- High Intensity; and
- Aquatic.

This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

The GMA requires Skagit County to designate and protect critical areas including wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, frequently flooded areas, geologically hazardous areas, and fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas (Skagit County Comprehensive Plan, page 163). Development projects that have the potential to impact a critical area or it's buffers are evaluated for compliance with SCC Chapter 14.24 – Critical Areas.

This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

9. Housing

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

The Housing Element of the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan lists the goals and policies related to providing a diversity of housing in the County. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

10. Aesthetics

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

11. Light and Glare

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Performance standards for lights and glare are administered pursuant to SCC Chapter 14.18.840. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

12. Recreation

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

Skagit County is home to an array of recreations opportunities, including but not limited to parks, trails, camping, water sports, and athletic fields.

13.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

14. 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? If so, specifically describe.**

The Washington Information System for Architectural and Archaeological Records Data (WISAARD) maintained by DAHP provides data concerning heritage barns, registered historic properties and register districts. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Skagit County is located in an area traditionally utilized by Southern Coast Salish peoples whose descendants are represented in the present-day by the Upper Skagit, Stillaguamish, Sauk-Suittle Nooksack, Lummi, Samish, and Swinomish Tribes. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

15. 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.**

The Skagit County GIS Basemap identifies the existing streets and roads within the County and is available at the following website:

<https://skagitcounty.net/Departments/GIS/Main.htm>

This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

- b. Is the site or affected geographic area currently served by public transit? If so, generally describe. If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?**

The County's public transportation needs are served by Skagit Transit (SKAT). This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Parking requirements for development projects are administered pursuant to the requirements of SCC Chapter 14.16.800: Parking. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

16. 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, etc.)? If so, generally describe.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

17. Utilities

- a. Check utilities currently available at the site:**

Electricity Natural gas Water Refuse Service

Telephone Sanitary Sewer Septic System

Other: Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action (legislative proposal).

C. 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: 

Name of signee: Robby Eckroth

Position and Agency/Organization: Senior Planner / Skagit County PDS

Date Submitted: 05/21/2024

D. Supplemental sheet for non-project actions

(IT IS NOT NECESSARY to use this sheet for project actions)

In order to best answer these questions, it may be helpful to read them in conjunction with the list of the elements of the environment. When answering these questions, be aware that the extent of the proposal, or the types of activities likely to result from the proposal, affects 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?

It is not anticipated that this non-project legislative action would cause these increases to occur.

a. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

Not applicable.

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

This non-project legislative action is entirely procedural and would not affect plant, animal, or fish life.

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

Not applicable.

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

It will not.

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

Not applicable.

4. How would the proposal be likely to use or affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated, eligible, or under study for governmental protection (for example parks; wilderness; wild and scenic rivers; threatened or endangered species habitat; historic or cultural sites; wetlands; floodplains; prime farmlands, etc)?

It will not.

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

Not applicable.

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?

It will not.

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

Not applicable.

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

It will not.

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

Not applicable.

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

No conflicts are anticipated.