

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:

[Hydraulic Code rule making to implement RCW 77.55.480 - Habitat Recovery Pilot Program](#)

2. Name of applicant:

Theresa Nation
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

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

P.O. Box 43200 Olympia, WA 98504-3200
Phone: (360) 688-4745
Email: HPARules@dfw.wa.gov

4. Date checklist prepared:

9/29/2021

5. Agency requesting checklist:

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

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

CR-105 form and rule proposal filed with the Office of the Code Reviser on 9/20/2021
Rule proposal published in the Washington State Register on 10/6/2021
Waiting period ends 11/22/2021
Anticipated adoption by the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission on 12/2/2021
Anticipated effective date in mid-January 2022

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

There are no plans for changes to this rule section after the current rule making activity.

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

The Habitat Recovery Pilot Program was created by Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill (E2SHB) 1382 in 2021 and codified in state law as Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 77.55.480.

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.

There is no property involved with this proposal.

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

None

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.)

WDFW is conducting expedited rule making to revise the Hydraulic Code Rules in Chapter 220-660 WAC to implement RCW 77.55.480. This law became effective July 25, 2021.

The new law creates the Habitat Recovery Pilot Program. The purpose of the pilot program is to create opportunities for streamlined permitting of habitat restoration projects. Specifically, it applies to projects that will directly benefit freshwater, estuarine (where freshwater flows into saltwater), or marine fish, or their habitat. The program streamlines state and local permitting in order to advance the projects to construction as quickly and efficiently as possible. Projects reviewed through the pilot program are exempt from further SEPA review. Local governments will still maintain their ability to implement floodplain planning under the pilot program. The pilot program is separate from the Fish Habitat Enhancement Project (FHEP) process that is described in [RCW 77.55.181](#).

The pilot program is currently set to expire on June 30, 2025. WDFW is conducting expedited rule making in order to implement the program as quickly as possible. The proposed rule adopts the language of RCW 77.55.480 by reference into Chapter 220-660 WAC Hydraulic Code Rules. The pilot program may be extended or made permanent through future legislative action.

Rule making progress and documents can be viewed at the WDFW rule making website:

<https://wdfw.wa.gov/about/regulations/development/habitat-recovery-pilot-program>

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.

The Hydraulic Code Rules apply statewide. WDFW does not anticipate any changes to the locations of proposed habitat recovery projects as a result of this rule making action.

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

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

This is a nonproject action.

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 [\[help\]](#)

This is a nonproject action.

- 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 off-site 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 [\[help\]](#)

This is a nonproject action.

- 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.
 - 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 floodplain? 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 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.

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 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.

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, and runoff water, and drainage pattern impacts, if any:

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

This is a nonproject action.

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** [\[help\]](#)

This is a nonproject action.

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 [\[help\]](#)

This is a nonproject action.

- 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 [\[help\]](#)

This is a nonproject action.

- 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 [\[help\]](#)

This is a nonproject action.

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

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

This is a nonproject action.

- 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 [\[help\]](#)

This is a nonproject action.

- 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?

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

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

This is a nonproject action.

- 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 off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?

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

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

This is a nonproject action.

- 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 [\[help\]](#)

This is a nonproject action.

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

This is a nonproject action.

- 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 non-project 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 [\[help\]](#)

This is a nonproject action.

- 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 [\[help\]](#)


This is a nonproject action.

- 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.

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 Theresa Nation

Position and Agency/Organization Environmental Planner, Habitat Program Protection
Division, WDFW

Date Submitted: 9/29/2021

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?

Some restoration projects may have short-term construction impacts such as noise or ground disturbance. The rule proposal under consideration implements a streamlined permitting process. Individual projects will receive a Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) permit at the end of a review process. These permits will be the same as HPA permits issued through the standard or FHEP review processes. It is not known if an increase in the number of restoration projects will result from implementation of the pilot program.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

Restoration projects are, by definition, conducted to improve environmental (habitat) conditions.

Construction impacts are minimized or avoided through provisioning of the HPA permit for each project.

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

The streamlining of permitting will not directly impact plants or animals. Fish recovery and fish habitat restoration projects permitted under this rule are expected to result in beneficial impacts to the aquatic environment. Earlier construction of restoration projects will speed up the delivery of those beneficial impacts.

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

n/a

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

No changes to energy are associated with the proposal. Natural resources will benefit from earlier permitting of restoration projects.

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

n/a

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 pilot program will streamline the permitting process for habitat restoration projects. This will allow projects to go to construction sooner and benefit environmentally sensitive or protected areas.

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

n/a

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?

Habitat restoration projects already occur without the existence of the pilot program. These projects will continue to be developed and built. It is possible that shoreline use may change if the pilot program results in an increase in restoration projects.

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

Under the pilot project, the review process includes the relevant local government, affected federally recognized tribes, and several state agencies and offices. These entities may raise concerns during the review process. Any other individual or entity may also submit comments before an HPA is issued.

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

n/a

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

n/a

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

This rule proposal is specifically to adopt the program created under RCW 77.55.480. WDFW is the sole authority regulating hydraulic projects under Chapter 77.55 RCW, and the only state agency that regulates hydraulic projects solely for the protection of all fish life. The end result of participation in the pilot program is an HPA permit. The Habitat Recovery Pilot Program allows project proponents to bypass certain other permitting requirements. Specifically, projects are exempted from state and local permits or approvals. Projects are also not subject to the requirements of RCW 43.21c.030(2). The following exceptions apply:

- Permits minimally necessary as a requirement of participation in a federal program;

- applicable cultural resource protection requirements from the Washington Department of Archeological and Historic Preservation (DAHP); and
- leases or other land use authorizations from the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

A multiagency permitting (MAP) team consisting of certain state agencies and offices, the relevant local government, and affected federally recognized tribes, reviews proposals submitted to the pilot program and may raise concerns during the review process. The MAP team may also exclude a project from the pilot program if it determines that the project may adversely impact human health, public safety, or the environment, or that the project's scope or complexity renders it inappropriate for expedited review.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and tribes also regulate certain aspects of hydraulic projects under their own authorities. National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regulate the "take" of threatened or endangered species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act. Federal land managers, including U.S. Forest Service, National Parks Service, and Bureau of Land Management, regulate activities occurring on federal lands. Tribes regulate fisheries and certain aspects of construction projects on tribal lands.