

WAC 197-11-960 Environmental checklist.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

Purpose of checklist:

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

Instructions for applicants:

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

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

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

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

Use of checklist for nonproject proposals:

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:

ABERNATHY CREEK TIDAL RESTORATION PROJECT

2. Name of applicant:

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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

**DONNA BIGHOUSE
2108 GRAND BLVD
VANCOUVER, WA. 98661
360.906.6738**

4. Date checklist prepared:

April 18, 2012

5. Agency requesting checklist:

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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

JULY 15- AUGUST 31, 2012 for in-water work (with a possible two week extension). There could be an additional two months of work out of water excavating channels, restoring the new access road, and planting trees.

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 future additions or expansions of this proposal.

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

An Army Corps of Engineers Feasibility Study has been completed for this project which includes a wetland delineation and cultural assessment.

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 known.

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

**HYDRAULIC PROJECT APPROVAL (HPA)
CULTURAL ASSESSMENT (SECTION 106)
SPECIALIZED PROJECT INFORMATION FORM (ESA)
POSSIBLE FILL AND GRADE PERMIT (SECTION 10/404 OR 404)
NATIONWIDE 27 PERMIT
POSSIBLE WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION (SECTION 401)**

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 Abernathy Creek Tidal Restoration project is roughly a 20 acre site within the tidal reach of Abernathy Creek., about 250 feet from the creek's confluence with the Columbia River. The project will involve excavation of one existing and two new backwater channels, the removal of a gravel road in the path of the new channels, and the planting of native plants to provide stability to the creek banks and shade for habitat. Proposed improvements include;

- **Construction of three backwater channels measuring approximately 900ft long by30 ft wide and 6 ft deep, 700ft long by22 ft wide and 6 feet deep, and 300ft long by 10 ft wide and 3.5 ft deep.**
- **Removal of a single vehicle access road totaling approximately 1,900 feet in length.**
- **Installation of approximately 150 pieces of large wood to create habitat log structures in both the mainstem and backwater channels.**

- **Installation of two log toe structures along the left bank of Abernathy Creek near the entrance of Channel A & B.**
- **Re-location of a fish weir upstream from the restoration site.**
- **Planting of native vegetation over approximately 7 acres.**

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 proposed project is located on Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) land. The 138 acre Abernathy Creek Wildlife Area (ACWA) is located about 10 miles west of Longview, Washington on State Highway 4. Abernathy Creek is a direct tributary to the lower Columbia River at River Mile (RM) 48. ACWA is bordered by private land to the east, west and north, state highway 4 borders the site to the south. The site is located in sections 3 & 10, township 8 north, range 4 west, W.M. Cowlitz County tax parcel number 60002.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

1. Earth

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

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

45%

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.

clato, silt loam, 0%-3% slopes.
godfrey, silt loam, 0%- 3% slopes.
hazeldell, gravelly silt loam, 30%- 65% slopes.
lithic, (no detailed description), 50%- 100 slopes%.

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

None known.

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

Indicate source of fill. **Approximately 11,594 cubic yards of material will be excavated from an old access road in the floodplain to create backwater channels A and B and hauled off site. An estimated 1,351 cubic yards of native material from Channels A and B will be re-graded to create hummocks in the floodplain. An old upland access road will need to be restored for relocation of the fish monitoring equipment. This road will be re-graded as necessary. We will import 860 cubic yards of ballast/crushed rock to build the driving surface. The source of this rock will be from Longview pit.**

f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe. **Yes, temporary erosion control measures will be implemented. An erosion/siltation control plan will be designed for this project.**

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

Approximately 1.8 % of the site will be covered with ballast/crushed rock to rebuild the surface of an old upland access road. However we will be removing an old access road from within the floodplain which amounts to approximately 1.7% impervious surface.

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

Erosion control methods include: stabilized construction access points, silt fences, straw bales, and straw wattles. Silt barriers will be properly maintained until construction is completed and the soils are stabilized. A temporary coffer dam might be needed during construction of the large wood structures to isolate flows away from the each site.

2. Air

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

Automobile and heavy equipment exhaust, dust during construction. No emissions to the air after construction. Quantities are unknown.

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

None known.

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

Construction equipment will utilize properly functioning exhaust systems.

Limit the construction hours from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm daily

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.

Abernathy Creek is a type F, fish bearing stream as designated by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources. Abernathy Creek flows into the Columbia River at river mile 48. Wetland delineation has been completed as a part of this proposal.

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.

Yes. The purpose of this project is to restore juvenile salmon habitat within the tidal reach of lower Abernathy Creek. See attached 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.

No fill or dredge material will be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands.

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

Yes. A temporary coffer dam might be needed during construction of the large wood structures to isolate flows away from the each site. Dewatering and fish exclusion from the coffer dams will be done according to NMFS guidelines from Protocol I in the Restoration Programmatic SPIF. We don't anticipate the need to isolate the work site unless flows are unusually high.

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

**Yes, the project site does lie within the 100 year floodplain.
Fema floodplain map 5300320104 c, panel 104 of 350.**

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.

NO.

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 (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.

No waste material will be discharged as a part of this project.

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.

Stormwater runoff for this project will not change. The stormwater will follow its natural course and drain into Abernathy Creek.

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

No, not likely.

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

No reduction or control of surface water is proposed.

4. Plants

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

- _____ Deciduous tree: red alder, big leaf maple, Oregon Ash,
_____ Evergreen tree: Douglas fir, Western red cedar, Sitka spruce
_____ Shrubs: vine maple, red elderberry, snowberry, oceanspray, red-osier dogwood, willows
_____ Grass: reed canary grass
_____ Pasture
_____ Crop or grain
_____ Wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage,
_____ Water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other
_____ Other types of vegetation: sword fern, Himalayan blackberry

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

A small amount of vegetation will be removed as part of this project. A planting plan will add native vegetation to this project site.

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

A search was conducted from the Natural heritage Information System and there was no record of listed plant species in the area.

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

Native plants have been incorporated into the planting plan. See attached plans.

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, songbirds,
mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, raccoon, coyote,
fish: , salmon, trout, eulachon, freshwater mussels and clams, green sturgeon, and Pacific lamprey

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

THE ONLY THREATENED OR ENDANGERED SPECIES KNOWN ON OR NEAR THE SITE ARE FISH SPECIES; COHO SALMON (ONCORHYNCHUS KISUTCH), CHINOOK SALMON (ONCORHYNCHUS TSHAWYTSCHA), CHUM SALMON (ONCORHYNCHUS KETA), EULACHON (THALEICHTHYS PACIFICUS).

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

All Columbia River salmonids migrate upstream and downstream of this site. The site is also on the pacific flyway migration route.

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

The proposed project will increase key habitat quantity and quality (e.g., pools, off channel) for rearing of juvenile salmonids and trout for both in-basin and out of basin stocks. Additionally this project should increase habitat diversity and channel stability for juvenile and adult salmonids. The proposed measure to enhance the riparian canopy by removing invasive non-natives and re-planting with native vegetation will provide for additional enhancements for both fish and wildlife.

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.

NONE.

- 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:

NONE.

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.

NO.

1) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

NONE.

2) 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)?

General automobile traffic on State Highway 4 and heavy equipment during construction.

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 hour's noise would come from the site.

**Traffic and heavy equipment for construction, 6:00 AM – 6:00 PM daily.
No long term noise expected.**

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

Limit the work hours from 6:00 – 6:00 pm daily.

8. Land and shoreline use

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

The Abernathy Creek Wildlife Area ACWA is managed for riparian and upland forest habitat and fishing access. There used to be a public boat launch at this site, however the flood of 1996 destroyed the launch. The ACWA is bordered by low density residential development to the west and north, with Weyerhauser Tree Farm to the east. State Highway 4 borders the site to the south.

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

NO.

c. Describe any structures on the site.

There is one floating board resistant weir in the creek and rotary screw trap which is seasonally placed in the creek. These structures are all part of the Intensively Monitored Watershed program managed by WDFW. Just above the Hwy 4 bridge is an old boat ramp which has been destroyed by floods and is no longer functional.

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

Yes. The non-essential boat ramp will be removed since it creates an obstruction in the creek.

NO.

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

Cowlitz County does not designate this site with a specific zoning.

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

Cowlitz County does not designate this site with a comprehensive plan designation.

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

Conservancy

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

This is a Type F stream with associated Category 2 & 3 wetlands. Riparian habitat conservation areas are located on the site.

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

No people will reside on the completed project. A few people will work from time to time on the property as they do now.

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

NONE.

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

NONE.

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

The project is compatible with all existing and projected land use designations and /or regulations.

This is a habitat restoration project to restore salmon habitat. The project is compatible with all existing and projected land use designations and/or regulations.

9. Housing

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

NOT APPLICABLE.

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

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.

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

NONE.

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

NONE.

11. Light and glare

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

NONE.

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

NONE.

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

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

There are no formal recreational opportunities on or near the site.

There are however, informal recreational opportunities along Abernathy Creek and the Columbia River. Some of the activities may include fishing, hiking, boating, and other water activities.

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

No displacement of recreational use is anticipated.

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

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.

NONE KNOWN.

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

NONE KNOWN.

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

NONE.

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.

Abernathy Creek wildlife area is located off Abernathy Creek Road.

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

There is no public transit to or near the site.

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

NONE.

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.

NONE.

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

NONE.

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.

NONE.

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

NONE.

16. Utilities

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

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

NONE.

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: *Monna A. Bepko*
Date Submitted: *April 24, 2012*