

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:

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:

Please complete 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. ADDITION, complete the SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS (part D). For nonproject actions.

A. BACKGROUND

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

Chopaka Access Project

2. Name of applicant:

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

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

600 Capitol Way N, Olympia, WA 98501: Chris Gourley (360) 902-8392

4. Date checklist prepared:

01/10/14

5. Agency requesting checklist:

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

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

Construction scheduled to begin around May 2014

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.

An archaeological report has been prepared. No environmental documents are expected to be prepared, but may be if requested.

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 are known at this time.

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

An Okanogan County Shoreline Exemption and Floodplain permit will be required.

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 project will include gravel resurfacing of a parking area to provide space for 9 vehicles. A path will be made to a new viewing blind on the oxbow and a gravel launch will be formed for hand launching above OHWM. The site will provide an ADA parking area and ADA compliant trails. Some remnant cattle fencing (approximately 1650 feet) will be removed as well as a debris pile on the site.

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, "and county" 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 Chopaka Access Site is located in Okanogan County in Eastern Washington. From I-90 eastbound, take exit 85 for WA-970 N toward Wenatchee. Take a slight right to merge onto US-2 E/US-97 N toward Okanogan/Spokane. Merge onto US-2 E and stay on the highway through Wenatchee. In Tonasket, turn left onto 4th St and right onto State Route 7 and continue on Hwy 7 N, which turns into Loomis-Oroville Rd. In Loomis, turn right to stay on Loomis-Oroville Rd. After Palmer Lake, turn left onto Chopaka Rd. Follow the road for approximately 4.3 miles; the access is on the right. It is located within Township 40N, Range 25E, and Section 17.



B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

1. Earth

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

Where the work will be conducted is very flat. The outlying areas around the valley are steep hills.

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

The area that is used as a water access is currently around 25%.

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.

Within the river valley, soils consist of primarily Boesel fine sandy loam, 0 – 3% slopes. This soil is generally found on flood plains and stream terraces and has a parent material of alluvium. It is a moderately well-drained soil with low capacity. The soil where the work will take place is comprised of Donovan ashy loam, found on 0 – 25% slopes and extremely stony. This soil is generally found at the base of hills and has a parent material of volcanic ash over glacial till. Just south of the project area is Colville silt loam, moderately wet, found on 0- 3% slopes. This soil is found on stream terraces and has a parent material of alluvium. It is somewhat poorly drained and has a high available water capacity.

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

No.

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

The purpose of the project is to improve public access to an oxbow lake that is within close proximity to the Similkameen River. The gravel driveway and parking area will be regraded and a path to a new viewing blind will be established. Approximately 98 cubic yards of gravel will be placed. The gravel will be locally sourced, if possible. Gravel for the boat launch (all placed above OHWM) will constitute 3 cubic yards, which will be placed after grading the slope to 20%.

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

Not likely. The proposed disturbance area is small and flat and has been previously disturbed.

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

The area to be graded for the road and parking area have been previously graveled. The paths are new (1046 square feet). The ramp into the water for hand-launching will be improved with geoweb fabric under new gravel. This area will be approximately 240 square feet.

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

Any potential erosion will be prevented using erosion control BMP's. The project plans have details on erosion control measures on Sheet 4. Straw wattles will be placed along slopes to reduce erosion and siltation that may occur from disturbance.

2. Air

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

Vehicle exhaust and dust from construction is expected. No long-term change in emissions

is expected from the completed project.

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

No

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

Standard emission control converters and mufflers would be in use by construction vehicles.

3. Water

a. Surface Water:

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.

There is an oxbow lake that was once a meander of the Similkameen River nearby. This river valley has many oxbows and side channels present. The Similkameen River runs out of Canada into Okanogan County.

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.

The work will be conducted adjacent to the oxbow lake. There is no in-water work, as the launch does not extend below OHWM. The majority of the work, including the parking area, viewing blind, paths, and launch, is within 200 feet of the shoreline of the oxbow lake.

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.

There will not be any work in water or wetlands.

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

No.

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

Yes. The entire site is within the 100 year floodplain.

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 Water:

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.

Not Applicable.

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.

Storm water runoff will not be altered.

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

It is possible that runoff may enter the oxbow lake. It is highly unlikely that waste would enter surface waters.

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

Sediment control BMP's will be in place including use of straw wattles on slopes. Any other necessary BMP's will be utilized as needed. Impacts are not expected.

4. Plants

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

deciduous tree: alder, **maple, aspen**, other: **cottonwood**

evergreen tree: fir, cedar, **pine**, other

shrubs

grass

pasture

crop or grain

wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage, other: reed canarygrass

water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other

other types of vegetation

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

Some low-growing ground cover will be removed for the placement of additional gravel. Some grass areas may be mowed.

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

The Natural Heritage Program (NHP) databases as well as the federal agency listings (USFWS) were examined for threatened or endangered plants on December 13, 2013.

Threatened plants include: northern bentgrass, pasqueflower, two-spiked moonwort, hair-like sedge, Smoky Mountain sedge, quill sedge, sparse-flowered sedge, long-bract frog orchid, yellow lady's slipper, stalk-leafed monkeyflower, Kotzebue's grass-of-parnassus, and nagoonberry. Endangered plants include: Ute ladies' tresses, Columbia crazyweed, and tall bitter fleabane. Ute ladies' tresses are also listed as a federally threatened species.

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

None is planned.

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**, other:

mammals: **deer**, bear, elk, beaver, other:

fish: **bass, salmon, trout**, herring, shellfish, **other**

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

Northern spotted owl, marbled murrelet, bull trout, grizzly bears, and Canada lynx are all threatened in Okanogan County. The gray wolf is considered endangered in this area. Wolves have been sighted within 45 miles of the project site. The listed threatened species have not been documented within or in proximity to the project site.

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

The site is part of a migration route for many birds.

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

To preserve fish and wildlife resources, WDFW will time this project to have minimal impact upon 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 are needed.

- 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 are included.

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 special emergency services that might be required.

None.

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

Avoid use of toxic chemicals and materials.

b. Noise

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

None.

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.

Increased levels of noise during construction activities are expected from this project. Hours of increased noise levels will be 7am to 6pm. No change in noise level is expected from the completed project.

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

No special noise reduction efforts are planned.

8. Land and shoreline use

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

The current use is a public hand-launch area with trailer and vehicle parking in a graveled parking area. The site is utilized for general recreation including as a site to hand launch small boats. The adjacent properties include DNR and BLM lands, some of which are used for grazing. The site is within the Similkameen Wildlife Area Unit and there are a few trails and viewpoints within the area.

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

The site was once used as a cattle grazing area and some cattle are still found nearby.

c. Describe any structures on the site.

The only structures are fences. There was once a gravel parking area, but it is overgrown.

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

No structures exist on the property and therefor, none will be demolished. Approximately 1650 feet of fencing will be removed.

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

Agriculture 20

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

Agricultural Resource

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

Rural

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

The site is listed under Priority Habitat for the following:

Breeding area for golden eagle

Communal roost for Townsend's big-eared bat and Yuma myotis

Breeding area for cavity-nesting ducks

Regular concentrations of Northwest white-tailed deer and bald eagle

Aquatic habitat – Palustrine

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

None.

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:

None.

9. Housing

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

None.

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?

New structures will include an informational kiosk and a view blind.

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? **None.** 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?
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

- a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?
The area is used for walking and boating.
- 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:
The new parking lot will be ADA compliant, as will the trail to the view blind. The blind itself allows visitors to observe wildlife without the pressures of increased human contact. The renovated hand launch will provide easier access to the oxbow lake for users with small boats like kayaks and canoes.

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.
No.
- b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site.
Not Applicable.
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts, if any:
A formal archaeological report was completed and submitted to DAHP. There were no cultural findings at the site and it is the opinion of the archaeological group that administered the study, Statistical Research Inc., that nothing of cultural or historic importance will be found. The project will be kept within the proposed footprint to reduce and control any possible impacts.

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.

The site can be accessed by using Chopaka Road, off of Loomis-Oroville Hwy, northwest of Palmer Lake. No modifications will be made to the existing roads, but the entrance driveway will be widened for safety.

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

The site is not served by public transit. There is no public transportation system in Okanogan County. There is a service that is provided by a private company. The closest stop is in Tonasket, approximately 30 miles from the site.

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

The completed project will add a dedicated ADA parking space and the rest of the parking area will be regraded for parking, adding wheel stops for a total of 9 parking spaces. Currently the site does not have parking spots delineated.

- 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.

While the project is expected to increase recreational access and opportunities, it is not anticipated that the project will draw additional traffic to the point of being a nuisance.

- 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.

No.

- 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: **No utilities exist at this site.**
electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system,
other _____

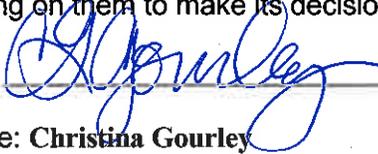
b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service,
and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might
be needed.

No utilities are planned this site.

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: **Christina Gourley**

Position and Agency/Organization: **Biologist, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife**

Date Submitted: **January 10, 2014**

Appendix A. Project Drawings

