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:
Floodplain Restoration-Cowiche Creek

2. Name of applicant:
Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group

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

Margaret Neuman, Executive Director

PO Box 2211

White Salmon, WA 98672

(509) 281-1322

fish@midcolumbiarfeg.com

Jennifer Nelson, WDFW

1701 S. 24th Avenue

Yakima, WA 98902

(509) 457-9307

jennifer.nelson@dfw.wa.gov

4. Date checklist prepared:
May 7, 2014

5. Agency requesting checklist:
WDFW

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

May 15-December 15, 2014

Inwater work will only occur between July 16-October 15, 2014

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

Riparian and floodplain vegetation will be monitored and maintained to ensure native species survival and to control invasive species after construction is complete. The City of Yakima may add a 3000 square foot parking area on their ownership in the future.

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

Topographic survey and Engineering designs

Flood Analysis

Cultural Resources Survey and Report

Revegetation Plan

Environmental Permit Applications

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 for Cowiche Creek. If authorizations are obtained for Yakima County to restore floodplain on a nearby property, we will donate excess alluvium and boulders to their project. If Yakima County is not able to obtain authorization, material will be hauled offsite to an approved dump site.

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

NHPA Section 106 consultation with THPO and SHPO

ESA Section 7 consultation with USFWS and NOAA Fisheries

CWA Section 404 from Corps of Engineers

CWA Section 401 from Ecology

HPA from WDFW

SMP Exemption from Yakima County

Floodplain Development Review from Yakima County

Construction Stormwater Permit from Ecology

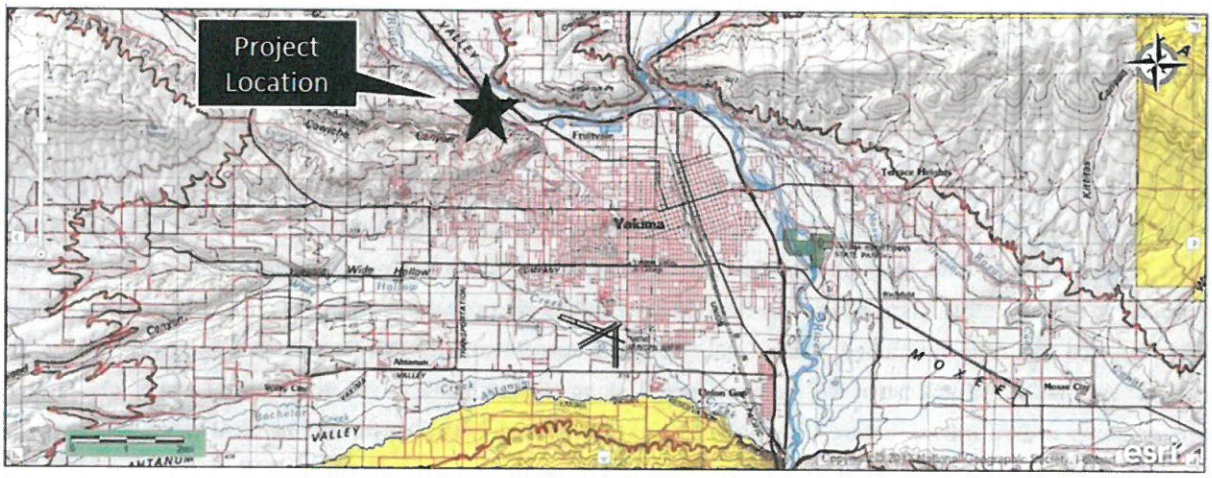
11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site. There are several questions later in this checklist that ask you to describe certain aspects of your proposal. You do not need to repeat those answers on this page. (Lead agencies may modify this form to include additional specific information on project description.)
The purpose of this project is to restore floodplain, riparian, and instream processes that will create and maintain habitat for fish and wildlife. Local fish and wildlife planning efforts have identified the Cowiche Watershed as having excellent potential for increasing steelhead and salmon production. Monitoring efforts have documented juvenile salmon, resident salmonids, and spawning coho salmon near the project area. Impacts to floodplain and riparian processes and habitat have been identified as key limiting factors for this watershed and restoring these processes is the purpose of this project.

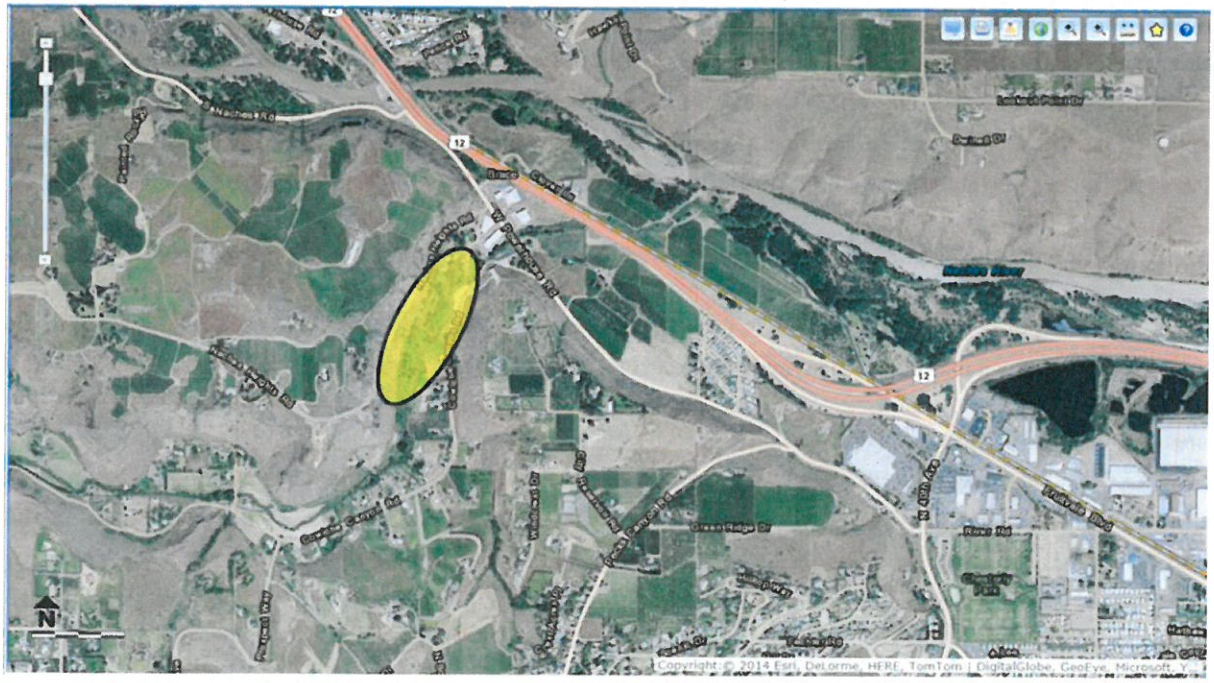
The goal of the project is to restore instream, riparian, and floodplain habitat. Restoration actions will include the removal of a railroad bed (approximately 1100 feet; 900 feet on right bank, 200 feet on left bank), removal of concrete, riprap, and other

debris along 2000 linear feet of the stream, bank reshaping to more natural contours (3:1 in most areas), construction of porous weirs, and reestablishing native riparian and floodplain vegetation throughout the 2000 linear feet and about 1 acre of floodplain. Foreign materials (e.g. concrete) will be disposed of offsite in an approved location. A small setback berm will be constructed on the left bank near the downstream location of railroad bed removal to protect downstream infrastructure. All disturbed areas will be planted with suitable native vegetation.

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.

1. **Lower Cowiche Creek-Stream Miles 0.85-1.25**
2. **WRIA 38—Cowiche Creek is a tributary to the Naches River**
3. **Upstream end of project—5603 Cowiche Canyon Road Yakima, WA 98908**
4. **SW ¼ Section 9, Township 13, Range 18**
5. **Upstream end of project—46.622°N; -120.586°W**
6. **Parcel #s: 18130934403, 18130934014, 18130934013, 18130934012, 18130931002**





B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

1. **Earth**

a. General description of the site (circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other . . . . . .
The project area is generally flat but the floodplain is defined by steep cliffs on the valley walls.

b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?
The slopes within the project area are less than 5%. Cliffs near the project area are steeper, but no work will occur on them or their toe.

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.
Zillah Silt Loam--*Farmland classification:* Prime farmland if drained and either protected from flooding or not frequently flooded during the growing season

d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.
No, the project reach has been heavily armored such that the banks are stable and non-erosive. Surrounding properties appear stable as well.

e. Describe the purpose, type, and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.
The existing railroad berm will be removed along 1100 linear feet adjacent to Cowiche Creek. Concrete, riprap, and other unnatural debris will be removed from streambanks along 2000 linear feet of Cowiche Creek and the banks will be regraded to a more natural slope (2:1 or 3:1) in areas where there is substantial armoring removed. Approximately 6400 cubic yards of material will be removed from the streambed, banks, and floodplain associated with this project and hauled off site to an approved location. A smaller setback berm will be constructed along the left bank at the downstream extent of the dike removal to protect downstream infrastructure. Large boulders that are currently onsite will be used to construct three porous weirs near the upstream extent of the project area. There will be no fill imported for the project.

f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.
Yes, removing the armor from the banks and removing the dikes will also require removal of the existing vegetation. Native vegetation will be preserved as much as possible to help stabilize soils and prevent erosion. Areas of disturbance will be minimized as much as possible to reduce erosion potential. Best management practices will be applied throughout implementation to maintain soil stability and minimize erosion on the site

g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?
Less than 1%; a small concrete pump pad will be poured to replace the concrete pump pad that will be removed adjacent to the concrete lined bank. There will be a net reduction in impervious surfaces upon project completion.

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any:
Disturbed soils will be mulched or protected with jute matting and planted with native vegetation upon completion for short term and long term erosion control. By removing the dikes that restrict the creek, energy will be dissipated throughout the floodplain, minimizing the shear stress that can cause scour and erosion along the banks. Bank armor will be removed such that the creek will have more deformable banks, consistent with habitat forming processes. Best management practices will be applied

throughout construction to ensure stormwater runoff does not enter Cowiche Creek and to minimize erosion in the short and long terms.

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.

Emissions from diesel exhaust from excavators, generators, and trucks into and out of the worksites. Dust control will be accomplished with water trucks as needed.

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:

All equipment will be turned off while not in use and water trucks will be used to control dust during construction.

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.

Yes, Cowiche Creek is a tributary to Naches River which is a major tributary to the Yakima River.

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, most of the work proposed will occur in or within 200 feet of Cowiche Creek. The figure below shows the general locations of the proposed work.

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.

Approximately 6400 cubic yards of dike material, riprap, and concrete will be removed from Cowiche Creek and its floodplain. The only fill imported for this project will be used to construct the temporary coffer dams for instream work and isolation of the work areas (approximately 100 cubic yards). This fill will be temporarily placed and removed prior to completion of the proposed project.

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

There will be no new withdrawals or diversions associated with this project. The existing irrigation diversions within the project area will remain unchanged.

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

Yes, nearly all components of the project will occur within the 100 year floodplain of Cowiche Creek.

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.

There may be temporary increases in turbidity from instream work. Hydraulic lines will be filled with biodegradable fluids to minimize impacts if a line breaks during implementation.

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.

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.

This project is not likely to impact the amount or material associated with runoff, including storm water runoff events. Ground disturbance will be minimized and best management practices will be applied throughout construction. Work will occur during low flows, when there is the least risk of encountering sensitive fish and wildlife species and work will occur during a normally dry time of year, with few storm events. Short term and long term erosion control measures will be applied to minimize risks associated with discharge.

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

There is a chance that petroleum products could leak from equipment or vehicles onto the ground. All equipment will be kept in good working condition to minimize this risk. Refueling will occur at least 150 feet away from the ordinary high water mark and machinery within the channel will have biodegradable fluids in hydraulic lines.

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

Best management practices will be applied to reduce impacts to water quality. The project will be constructed during low stream flows and when there is the least risk of encountering sensitive salmonid species and/or life stages instream. Disturbed areas will be mulched and seeded for temporary erosion control and native plantings will provide long term stabilization to help buffer runoff.

4. **Plants**

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

X_____ deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other

_____ evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other

X_____ shrubs

X_____ grass

_____ pasture

X_____ crop or grain

_____ wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage, other

_____ water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other

X_____ other types of vegetation

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

Much of the existing vegetation that will be disturbed is a mixture of natives and invasive species near the stream banks and invasives occupying most of the upper floodplain areas. Up to 1 acre of floodplain habitat will be restored with native species that is currently a mixture of invasive species and pasture grasses. Up to 2000 linear feet of streambank may have some vegetative disturbance in order to remove the armoring and restore the banks to more natural conditions.

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

None known, but Ute Ladies'-tresses are listed as threatened on the Endangered Species List.

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

Existing native vegetation will be avoided and protected as much as possible while still removing the nonnative material from the bed, banks, and floodplain. A robust revegetation plan will be implemented that includes using locally adapted native materials to revegetated all disturbed areas. Along the banks, jute matting and erosion control seeding will provide short term stabilization and live stakes will be planted on 2' centers to achieve dense riparian growth. Floodplain areas further away from the banks will be planted with native grasses and later, woody vegetation will be incorporated. Invasive species management will be an important part of the restoration of native vegetation and is a component of the revegetation plan.

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.

Middle Columbia River Steelhead
Columbia River Bull Trout

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

Yes, steelhead and salmon are known to migrate through this reach during certain times of the year. Resident fish also could migrate through the project reach. Song birds and mammals likely use the riparian vegetation in the project reach as well.

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

Work is proposed during a time of year when fish are less likely to be migrating through the project area and at a time when young fish should be able to freely swim away from the work area. The project was proposed, designed, and funded to improve fish habitat and will be implemented using numerous BMPs to minimize impacts to aquatic life. Existing native vegetation will be preserved as much as possible. Timing of work in mid-late summer/early fall should ensure that young birds and mammals are also able to move away from equipment and people working in and near the creek and floodplain. Upon project completion and with time, the project reach will provide more diverse instream, riparian, and floodplain habitat that will benefit fish and wildlife in and around Cowiche Creek.

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.

Electricity currently serves the upstream diversion and the service will be moved further away from the creek, but will be maintained to power the existing pump station.

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:

Not applicable.

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.

The use of petroleum based fuels and lubricants may be used for equipment operation. Accidental spills and/or ignition of these materials are a possibility. Using best management practices will reduce risks associated with project implementation.

1) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

If there were a chemical spill, the Washington Departments of Ecology, Military, and Fish & Wildlife might need to respond. The Yakima County Sheriff's Department and/or fire districts would need to respond to any emergencies that might occur on site during implementation.

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

Safety practices required by federal, state, and local regulations will apply to all construction activities.

b. **Noise**

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

Noise from nearby roads and rural living exist, but will not affect the project.

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.

Short-term increases in noise will be associated with trucks, heavy equipment operation, and increased vehicular traffic during construction. Construction will be limited to daylight hours. There will be no long term changes in noise associated with project implementation.

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

Equipment and vehicles will be turned off when not in use and construction activities will not occur outside daylight hours. The project is planned for a time when there are not likely to be any sensitive terrestrial species at a vulnerable phase. Because the work occurs near homes, the project sponsors will continue to work closely with neighbors and clearly communicate construction schedules.

8. **Land and shoreline use**

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

Several rural homes and their associated outbuildings surround the project reach. Small agricultural production is present with livestock and orchards.

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

Yes, prior to increased development pressure, more of the proposed project area was in agricultural production, but some of the area is still in agricultural production. A small orchard and some livestock is present within the project reach. A large cold storage facility is located downstream of the project reach and there are two small irrigation diversions within the project reach and a major canal crosses Cowiche Creek just downstream of the project area. These diversions provide irrigation water for agricultural production.

c. Describe any structures on the site.

Near the upstream extent of the project area, there is a concrete lined bank with a small pump diversion. An old railroad bed that acts like a dike runs adjacent to Cowiche Creek through most of the project area. Near the upstream extent, the railroad

bed is along the right bank, it crosses the stream about 2/3 of the way down the project area then continues along the left bank. Toward the downstream extent of the project is an active irrigation diversion with a fish screen. This irrigation diversion will remain intact and functional as it meets NOAA Fisheries and WDFW criteria. Homes and outbuildings are located near the project area, but hydraulic modeling of existing and proposed conditions indicate that flood risk will not increase for any structures

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

Yes, the concrete bank will be removed but the irrigation diversion will remain. The existing pump location will be removed and a new pump location will be relocated further away from the streambank to eliminate the need for bank armoring at the site. The fill associated with the railroad bed will be removed and hauled off site.

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

Valley Rural & Suburban Residential

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

Rural-Self Sufficient & Urban Growth Area

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.

Cowiche Creek and its associated riparian wetlands are considered environmentally sensitive. Nearby basalt cliffs provide unique habitat as well, but there will be no impacts to those.

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

Not applicable

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

None

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

Not applicable

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

Project sponsors have been working closely with participating landowners and neighbors to garner local support for the project. Additionally, sponsors have met regularly with regulatory agencies, other restoration partners, and other Cowiche Creek user groups. The project is moving forward with broad support.

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.

Not applicable

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

Not applicable

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?

Relocating the existing pump station near the upstream extent will result in moving structures up to 6' fall further away from the streambank. There will not be any additional structures created as part of this project.

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

Temporarily during construction and until native vegetation has reestablished.

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

Project sponsors are working closely with landowners and user groups in the area to mitigate the short term impacts associated with this restoration project. Sponsors are working closely with landowners to revegetated using locally adapted native species that will improve habitat and provide colorful vegetation throughout the year.

11. **Light and glare**

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

There may be some glare produced off of vehicles and equipment during construction, but it will be short term and minor.

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 known

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?

Most of the work occurs on private property. The City owned parcels are not marked as public property and they are not well known as public property. They may receive minimal use for the public to pull off the road and/or to view the creek. There are no formal recreational opportunities in this area at this time.

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

Only temporarily during construction to maintain safe conditions for the workers and the public.

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

Orange construction fencing will be installed on the public property if necessary to keep the public safely removed from the work area. There are no elements of this project that are likely to pose a major safety issue for the public when equipment is not in use. The public will not be allowed onto the work area while equipment is operating without permission from the project sponsor, site superintendent and without the appropriate safety equipment.

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.

An old railroad berm that currently acts as a dike is adjacent to Cowiche Creek.

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

An archaeological and cultural resource survey and report will be prepared for this project.

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.

Cowiche Canyon Road will provide access to all work on the right bank and work on the left bank will be through private property accessed from Naches Heights Road.

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

No, at least 2 miles to public transit.

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

Not applicable

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.

Not applicable

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

Contractors will be responsible for getting any necessary permits from the state or local jurisdictions for hauling equipment and materials to and from the site. There will not be any detours or impacts (other than temporary increase in trucks) to the public roads.

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.

It is not likely that this project will result in an increased need for public services.

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

The project has been planned and designed to minimize risks to humans and existing infrastructure. The careful design and planning phases will result in minimal impacts on public services.

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.

Electrical service to the upstream pumped diversion will be moved further away from the streambank to facilitate habitat restoration.

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: ..... (Neuman)

Date Submitted: May 9, 2014

Signature: ..... (Nelson)

Date Submitted: May 12, 2014