

SEPA ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

UPDATED 2014

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: [\[help\]](#)

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: [\[help\]](#)

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

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable: **Colockum Wildlife Area Post-Wildfire Hazard Tree Treatment and Harvest.**
2. Name of applicant: **Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)**
3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:

600 Capitol Way North
Olympia, WA 98501-1091
Contact: Paul Dahmer
Ph # (360-902-2480)
or
Contact: Richard Tveten
Ph # (360-902-2367)

4. Date checklist prepared: **5/8/2014**

5. Agency requesting checklist: **Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)**

6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):
Felling of trees 7/1/2014 - 10/1/2016
Replanting: Spring 2016

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.

- **Section 107 Consultation with the USFWS pertaining to potential effects on threatened and endangered species.**
- **The cultural resources survey has been completed and a culture resources protection plan has been prepared.**

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.
No.

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known. **DNR Forest Practice Application (FPA).**

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.)

Hazard Tree Treatment (Approximately 7.8 linear miles plus adjacent campsites – Approximately 280 Acres):

This project would cut down hazard trees along approximately 7.8 miles of road and associated campgrounds. Hazard trees will be removed within 1.5 tree heights (usually about 150 feet) of roads and campgrounds per Labor and Industry safety standards. Trees cut within riparian buffers will be left on the ground. Outside of riparian buffers cut Douglas fir will be harvested to offset project costs, partially restore biomass levels, support local economies and help create fuel breaks. Non merchantable slash outside of riparian buffers will be piled and burned to create road side fuel breaks.

Proactive treatment of unburned forest (Approximately 42 acres):

Grand fir and Douglas fir will be selectively thinned from a 42-acre unburned forest stand to improve forest health and reduce susceptibility to stand replacing wildfires. WDFW will retain an average of at least 25 large, fire-resistant trees (ponderosa pine, western larch or Douglas fir).

Thin Douglas fir from a burned Ponderosa pine-dominated forest (Approximately 144 acres):

Douglas fir will be removed from a burned ridge that was dominated by ponderosa pine but had a substantial component of younger Douglas fir in it. All old, wolfy Douglas-fir (live + dead) will be retained. In most cases there will be sufficient Ponderosa pine trees in the dominant size class to meet or exceed the retention standard of 10-15 large or old trees (snags + live trees). If there are areas without sufficient dominant ponderosa pine or old, wolfy Douglas fir, additional Douglas-fir will be retained to meet the retention the standard.

Reforestation:

Harvested areas will be planted with ponderosa pine where necessary to meet Forest Practice standards.

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 project will occur within Township 20, Range 20 and Township 20, Range 21 on the Colockum Wildlife Area in Kittitas County. See attached map for locations where project activities will occur.

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)? **Approximately 60% within the hazard tree area. Other parts of the property approach vertical cliffs.**

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. **Soils consist primarily of**

- loam (very cobbly, very stony or stony)
- ashy loam (very cobbly, cobbly, very stormy, stony or gravelly)
- rock outcrops and rubble

d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe. **Yes. Substantial erosion occurred during a severe storm event on September 5, 2013 shortly after the Colockum-Tarps wildfire. Most erosion resulted from streams overtopping their banks. Ancient slides are mapped in Sections 14 and 15.**

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.

Minor grading will occur to smooth out landings along roads.

- **Estimated total area 10 acres.**
- **Estimated quantity of native soil moved 200 yards**

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

Erosion could occur on or near roads and landings during construction, hauling operations and in areas where trees are harvested. Erosion is expected to be minimal because work is largely scheduled for the dry season, existing roads will be used and non-hazard tree harvesting is largely limited to relatively flat ridge tops.

g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)? **None.**

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

- **Most work will be conducted from of existing roads.**
- **Work is scheduled for the dry season.**
- **Harvest areas will be replanted per Forest Practice standards.**
- **Limbs and tops will be used to help stabilize yarding routes and reduce erosion.**
- **Disturbed soils will be seeded with native species to bring back vegetation quickly and increase resistance to weeds.**

2. Air

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. **This proposal will involve emissions and dust from chainsaws and trucks hauling logs. There should be no significant impact to air quality.**

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:
Ensure equipment operators have safety mufflers for emission control.

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 are two year-round streams and numerous seasonal tributary streams in the project vicinity. Named streams include Tarpiscan Creek and South Fork Tarpiscan Creek. Some small wetlands are present in association with streams. All streams drain to the Columbia 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.
Hazard trees will be felled within stream buffers and left in place as habitat features.
- 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. **None.**
- 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. **No.**
- 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 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.
No groundwater will be withdrawn and no water will be discharged to groundwater.
- 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.
Rainfall runoff could occur on the forest floor, roads and landings. Water will be dispersed back into undisturbed forest areas for natural filtration in vegetation and soil. If extreme events occur, runoff could reach nearby streams.
- 2) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe. Fuel or oil associated with equipment operations, if spilled could enter ground or surface

waters. The contract will require equipment to prevent, contain and clean up spills, fuel storage only in approved areas and to notify the sale administrator of any spills.

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

No. Roads will be maintained to Forest Practice standards for protecting drainage patterns.

- 4) Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water, and drainage pattern impacts, if any:

- **Meet or exceed Forest Practice rules.**
- **Felled trees will be left on the ground to stabilize soils within riparian buffers.**
- **Timber fallers will leave limbs and unmerchantable tops where needed to help stabilize vulnerable soils.**
- **Reforest harvest areas and re-vegetate with native seed.**

4. Plants

- 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?

- **All trees (mostly conifers) that pose safety risks will be cut down along (within 150 feet) approximately 7.8 miles of road and adjacent campsites.**
- **Grand fir and Douglas fir trees will be harvested from an estimated 342 acres of ponderosa pine-dominated forest.**

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

The Wenatchee checkermallow is known to exist near the wildlife area. It is not been observed, however, within the proposed project area.

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

- **Harvest areas in burned forest will be reforested, as necessary, with ponderosa pine. Locate**
- **Landings will be seeding with native grasses.**

- e. List all noxious weeds and invasive species known to be on or near the site.
Diffuse knapweed, Canada thistle, cheat grass and tumble mustard.

5. Animals

- a. List any birds and other animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site. 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.
Animals: Northern spotted owl, Steelhead, Chinook, possibly gray wolf.

- c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain. **Yes, the general area is used as elk and mule deer summer range and migration route.**

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

- **All felled hazard trees within riparian buffers will be retained on site as habitat features.**
- **All felled outside of riparian buffers excluding Douglas-fir will be left on site as habitat features.**
- **Tree harvesting outside of hazard tree removal areas will be limited to Douglas fir and grand fir (excluding old, wolfy trees) to restore historic trees species composition.**
- **Tree harvesting outside of hazard tree removal areas will retain 10-15 large trees (live or dead) or more to match the presumed historic tree density.**

- e. List any invasive animal species known to be on or near the site. **None of consequence.**

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. **Fuels to operate equipment for cutting, loading and hauling timber and any related road maintenance work.**

- 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.

There could be fuel spills when refueling equipment or oil spills while performing equipment maintenance. There is always the risk of fire from equipment operation in the woods, however, most of the area recently burned and the risk of repeat fire is low.

- 1) Describe any known or possible contamination at the site from present or past uses. **None known.**
- 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.
There is a buried natural gas main under the powerlines. It should not be a factor as no road construction is planned.
- 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.
Fuel (gasoline and diesel) and lubricants will be used in conjunction with equipment.
- 4) Describe special emergency services that might be required.
 - **DNR fire protection resources will be notified if a wildfire occurs.**
 - **Washington State Department of Ecology and WDFW will be notified if any spills occur.**
- 5) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:
Contractors are required as plants and equipment for.
 - **Spill prevention, containment and countermeasures**
 - **Wildfire prevention and control with.**

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. **None.**
- 3) Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:
 - **Maintain mufflers on equipment.**
 - **Workers use ear protection.**

8. **Land and shoreline use**

- a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties? Will the proposal affect current land uses on nearby or adjacent properties? If so, describe. **The site is managed as wildlife habitat. Adjacent properties are managed as working forests.**
- 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? **The project site has not been used for agriculture. Some wheat farming has occurred in the past in adjacent non-forest areas.**
- 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: **No.**
- c. Describe any structures on the site. **There are no structures on the project site. The nearest structures are miles away.**
- d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what? **No.**
- e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?
Commercial forest.
- f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?
Commercial Forest (Kittitas County 2013 Comprehensive Plan)
- g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?
Not applicable.
- h. Has any part of the site been classified as a critical area by the city or county? If so, specify.
Yes streams are classified as critical areas.
- h. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?
None.
- i. 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: **Reducing safety hazards and restoring historic tree densities/species composition is consistent with the wildlife area management plan.**
- m. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with nearby agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any:
Not applicable.

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: **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? **Not applicable.**
- b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?
Views will be less obstructed, especially along roads where dead trees are removed.
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:
Tree planting to accelerate reforestation.

11. Light and glare

- a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur? **Potentially vehicle headlights early in the morning.**
- b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?
Not applicable.
- c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?
Not applicable.
- d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any: [help]
Not applicable.

12. Recreation

- a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?
Hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, viewing wildlife, horse riding, mountain biking and cross country skiing.
- b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.
Yes. Recreation activities would be temporarily displaced during tree felling activities for safety reasons.
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:
Signs will designate camping areas which are temporarily closed for their safety while operations are in progress. Wildlife area staff can direct recreationists to alternate locations.

13. Historic and cultural preservation

- a. Are there any buildings, structures, or sites, located on or near the site that are over 45 years old listed in or eligible for listing in national, state, or local preservation registers located on or near the site? If so, specifically describe.

No, none identified in a survey conducted by qualified archeologists in late 2013 (Timothy Smith, Pamela Mckinney and Stan Gough, 2014. AHS Short Report 1188: Culture Resource Survey for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's Colockum Wildlife Area Salvage and Restoration Project, Kittitas County, Washington. Archeological and Historic Services, Eastern Washington University).

- 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.

Yes, precontact archeological sites were located in the general vicinity per a professional cultural resource study (Timothy Smith, Pamela Mckinney and Stan Gough, 2014. AHS Short Report 1188: Culture Resource Survey for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's Colockum Wildlife Area Salvage and Restoration Project, Kittitas County, Washington. Archeological and Historic Services, Eastern Washington University).

- 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.

WDFW consulted with the Yakama Nation and the Department of Archeological and Historic Preservation prior to conducting a study then hired professional archeologists to conduct an intensive survey. (Timothy Smith, Pamela Mckinney and Stan Gough, 2014. AHS Short Report 1188: Culture Resource Survey for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's Colockum Wildlife Area Salvage and Restoration Project, Kittitas County, Washington. Archeological and Historic Services, Eastern Washington University).

- 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.

Avoidance is the strategy to protect archeological resources. The project has been designed to exclude known sites. The archeological resources protection plan provides direction should unanticipated discoveries occur.

14. Transportation

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site or affected geographic area and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.

Only remote dirt roads will be used: Colockum Road, North Fork Road, Brewton Road, Tarpiscan Road and Cross Over Road. See attached project area map.

- 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?

No, not applicable.

- c. How many additional parking spaces would the completed project or non-project proposal have? How many would the project or proposal eliminate? **Not applicable.**
- 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). **No.**
- e. Will the project or proposal 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 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? **This is not a development project so no additional trips will be generated once the work is completed.**
- 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. **No.**
- i. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:
Signs will notify the public of the operation and temporary road closures.

15. Public services

- a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, public transit, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe. **No.**
- b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.
Not applicable.

16. Utilities

- a. Circle utilities currently available at the site:
electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system,
other _____ . **None.**
- b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed. **Not applicable.**

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: Richard Tveten

Name of signee Richard Tveten

Position and Agency/Organization Ecologist - WDFW

Date Submitted: 5/15/2014