

SEPA ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

JUNE 2015

Purpose of checklist:

Governmental agencies use this checklist to help determine whether the environmental impacts of your proposal are significant. This information is also helpful to determine if available avoidance, minimization or compensatory mitigation measures will address the probable significant impacts or if an environmental impact statement will be prepared to further analyze the proposal.

Instructions for applicants:

This environmental checklist asks you to describe some basic information about your proposal. Please answer each question accurately and carefully, to the best of your knowledge. You may need to consult with an agency specialist or private consultant for some questions. You may use "not applicable" or "does not apply" only when you can explain why it does not apply and not when the answer is unknown. You may also attach or incorporate by reference additional studies reports. Complete and accurate answers to these questions often avoid delays with the SEPA process as well as later in the decision-making process.

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

Instructions for Lead Agencies:

Please adjust the format of this template as needed. Additional information may be necessary to evaluate the existing environment, all interrelated aspects of the proposal and an analysis of adverse impacts. The checklist is considered the first but not necessarily the only source of information needed to make an adequate threshold determination. Once a threshold determination is made, the lead agency is responsible for the completeness and accuracy of the checklist and other supporting documents.

Use of checklist for nonproject proposals:

For nonproject proposals (such as ordinances, regulations, plans and programs), complete the applicable parts of sections A and B plus the SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS (part D). Please completely answer all questions that apply and note that the words "project," "applicant," and "property or site" should be read as "proposal," "proponent," and "affected geographic area," respectively. The lead agency may exclude (for non-projects) questions in Part B - Environmental Elements –that do not contribute meaningfully to the analysis of the proposal.

A. Background

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable: **South Puget Sound Prairie Restoration, West Rocky Prairie Wildlife Area**
2. Name of applicant: **David Hays, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife**

3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person: **1111 Washington St SE , 5th Floor Wildlife Program, Olympia, WA 98501**

4. Date checklist prepared: **May 23, 2016**

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

6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable): **July 2016 – May 2017**

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain. **Yes, work is planned to be conducted annually at similar levels.**

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

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. **Application pending for burn permit from DNR**

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

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.)

West Rocky Prairie is home to rare plants, animals, and plant communities of remnant South Puget Sound grasslands and oak woodlands. The site are of conservation concern due to degradation pressure from a number of threats, including invasive species and altered disturbance regimes. The project goal is to restore these rare habitats, emphasizing needs for federal- and state-listed threatened and endangered species and WDFW's Species of Greatest Conservation Need. This project will: a) acquire native seeds and transplants; b) prepare areas for seeding (prescribed fire and invasive control); c) conduct seeding and transplanting; d) control high priority invasive grasses and forbs; and e) implement integrated Scot's broom control.

West Rocky Prairie Wildlife Area is managed to restore and protect high-quality native grassland communities and wildlife populations. A major focus at West Rocky Prairie is recovery of two endangered butterflies, the Mardon Skipper and Taylor's checkerspot, and a medium sized mammal, the Mazama pocket gopher. Recovery of the federally listed golden paintbrush (*Castilleja levisecta*) is also an emphasis at the site. Additionally, 4 of WDFW's species of Greatest Conservation Need, the Puget blue, Valley silverspot, great spangled fritillary, and Oregon vesper sparrow occur in grassland habitats. The butterflies require low density of Scot's broom, short native vegetation, and specific foodplants throughout the year. The Mazama pocket gopher needs areas without dense Scot's broom. The golden paintbrush needs short native vegetation and low thatch. The prescribed burns are specifically delineated to provide habitat for all of these species.

Restoration goals include establishment of a roemer's fescue dominated grassland with native forbs. Restoration necessitates control of non-native prairie grasses such as tall oatgrass, sweet vernalgrass, velvetgrass, and bentgrass. Bentgrass is the dominant grass at West Rocky Prairie. Exotic herbaceous species including cat's ear, St. Johnswort, sorrel and oxeye daisy also occur extensively and require control. Fire is a pre-planting tool that kills Scot's broom

effectively, reduces moss and increases bare ground. No more than 37 acres will be treated with prescribed fire and subsequent herbicide application, seeding, and planting in fall 2016 through spring 2017.

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 is located in Thurston County. The parking area for West Rocky Prairie is on 143rd Ave SE, between Knowles Rd and the main BNSF rail line; and just west of #1940 – 143rd Ave. T 16N R 02W sections 1 and 12.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

1. Earth

a. General description of the site: **Extensive upland prairie encroached by trees and invasive shrubs.**

(circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other _____

b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)? **Essentially level; mima mounds have a slope of 20%.**

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. **Spanaway-Nisqually complex with some Nisqually, Norma and Alderwood**

d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe. **NO**

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. **NONE**

f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe. **NO**

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: **None necessary, but seeding will occur after prescribed fire**

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. **Smoke from grass fires during burning phase. Burns are managed to minimize smoke production and to utilize wind direction to disperse smoke away from residences and roads. Smoke production rarely exceeds an hour at a time.**
- 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: **Burns are managed to minimize smoke production and to utilize wind direction to disperse smoke away from residences and roads. Smoke production rarely exceeds an hour at a time.**

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.
- 2) **Beaver Creek runs through the southern end of the wildlife area. It is typically dry from April through December in this reach, and during the dry season, the creek bed is a dry swale of solid reed canary grass and yellow flag iris. Beaver Creek flows into the Black River in Littlerock. There is also a wetland associated with Beaver Creek.**

- 3) 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.

4)

Yes – see map attached. Procedures are identical to other units except no herbicide will be applied within 150 feet of the stream (wet or dry).

- 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.

The 100-year floodplain flows through three of the planned restoration units.

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

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.

NONE

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.

No changes to impervious surfaces will occur.

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

NO

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

NO

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

NONE

4. Plants

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

- deciduous tree: **alder, maple**, aspen, other **Oregon white oak**
- evergreen tree: **fir, cedar, pine**, other
- shrubs; **Scot's broom**
- grass**
- pasture
- crop or grain
- Orchards, vineyards or other permanent crops.
- wet soil plants: cattail**, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage, other **reed canarygrass**
- water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other; **invasive yellow iris**
- other types of vegetation

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

Project is intended to remove Scotch broom and nonnative grasses, and replace them with native bunchgrass and wildflowers.

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

c.

Golden paintbrush, *Castilleja levisecta* has been planted on site. Water howellia, *Howellia aquatilis* grows in a portion of the wetlands but is not within the restoration area.

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

Project is intended to restore native prairie vegetation and control noxious and invasive species. Seeding and enhancement of *Castilleja levisecta* is planned.

e. List all noxious weeds and invasive species known to be on or near the site.

Project is intended to restore native prairie vegetation.

Scot's broom, various exotic grasses, including tall oatgrass, reed canarygrass, sweet vernal grass, bromes, orchardgrass, tall fescue, Timothy, Kentucky bluegrass, and various species of bentgrass; ox-eye daisy, cat's ear, St Johnswort, yellow flag iris, Canada thistle, bull thistle, tansy ragwort, cudweed, sulfur cinquefoil, creeping buttercup, Himalayan blackberry, sheep sorrel, cattail, dandelion, Vinca.

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: various species, including savannah sparrow, harrier.**

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. **Mazama pocket gopher**
- c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain. **Sandhill cranes occasionally stop in.**
- d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any: **Project is intended to restore native habitat for wildlife, including Mazama pocket gopher. Units are relatively small in size (less than 10 acres). Areas are selected through consultation with species experts. Units are surveyed for T and E and species of greatest conservation need prior to prescribed fire.**
- e. List any invasive animal species known to be on or near the site. **None known.**

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:

NO

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. **Brief periods of herbicide applications. Glyphosate is sprayed within 2 weeks of prescribed fire to control invasives that immediately emerge before natives. Fusliade, a grass specific herbicide is sprayed later in the fall or in the following spring after greenup.**

- 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.

NONE KNOWN

- 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.

NONE Beyond herbicide, discussed above

- 4) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

Tenino fire department is 4 miles away

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

Minimization of herbicide use and no applications unless needed to control exotics. Avoidance of drift during application. Selection of aquatic-compatible herbicides and surfactants where applicable.

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.

Short term noise from vehicles, including tractors.

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

NONE

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.

a. ? **Open space, walking and bird watching.**

- 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?

Historically but not since the 1940s or so.

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.

NONE

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

NO

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

Open space

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

Open space

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

N/A

h. Has any part of the site been classified as a critical area by the city or county? If so, specify.
Oregon white oak and prairie

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 NEEDED

- L. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:
- l. **The property was purchased for recovery of threatened and endangered prairie, oak woodland, and wetland species. The proposed measures are planned enhancement activities to help recover these species.**
- m. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with nearby agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any:
NONE NEEDED

9. Housing

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

N/A

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?

N/A

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

N/A

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

N/A

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?

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?

Walking, hunting, bird watching.

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:

None

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

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.

NO

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.

Consultation with tribes, and Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation Review

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.

Prescribed fire uses mowed firebreaks, no digging or trenching.

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.

Parking area on 143rd Ave SE.

- 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

- c. How many additional parking spaces would the completed project or non-project proposal have? How many would the project or proposal eliminate?

NONE

- 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.

Rail line ½ mile to the east commonly used.

- 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?

No change

- 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

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

None needed

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.

NO

16. Utilities

a. Circle utilities currently available at the site:
electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system,
other _____ NONE

e. 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 [help]

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the
lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

Signature: _____

Name of signee _____

David Hays

Position and Agency/Organization _____

Ecological Restoration

Date Submitted: _____

Washington Dept. of Fish and
Wildlife

