

SEPA ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

October 14, 2021

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 [\[HELP\]](#)

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:
Draft Columbia Basin Wildlife Area Management Plan
2. Name of applicant:
Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife

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

Patricia Jatczak
P.O. Box 43141, Olympia, WA 98504-3200
360-489-4253

4. Date checklist prepared:

August 2021

5. Agency requesting checklist:

Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife

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

The Final Columbia Basin Wildlife Area Plan will be published in November 2021 and posted on the WDFW website.

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

Yes, specific projects or actions may be taken to implement elements of the plan. When appropriate, project specific SEPA review will occur.

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

NA

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.

NA

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

NA

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.)

This is a new 10-year management plan for the Columbia Basin Wildlife Area, located in Grant and Adams counties. The plan will direct management activities on 192,000 acres of land managed by WDFW. Proposed uses include weed management, wildlife conservation, and recreation. There are seven agricultural leases which provide revenue as well as food and cover for wildlife. Examples of management activities under the new plan include managing weeds, wetland management, conducting species surveys, recreational activities, improving access, as well as maintaining hunting and fishing opportunities.

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 Columbia Basin Wildlife Area contains 192,000 acres in twelve units. Eleven are in Grant County and one is fully in Adams county, and two (Seep Lakes and Upland Restoration units) are partially in Adams County.

Banks Lake: Parts of T25R8E, T26R28E, T26R829E, T27R29E, T28R830E, T29R830E

Sun Lakes: Parts of T23R26E, T23R27E, T24R27E

Billy Clapp Lake: Parts of T22R28E, T23R28E, T23R29E

Gloyd Seeps: Parts of T20R28E, T21R27E, T21R28E, T21R29E, T22R227E, T22R28E

Rocky Ford: Parts of T20R27E

Winchester Reservoir: Parts of T19R25E, T19R26E

Quincy Lakes: Parts of T18R23E, T18R24E, T19R23E, T19R24E

Desert: Parts of T17R25E, T17R26E, T17R27E, T17R28E, T17R29E, T18R25E, T18R26E, T18R27E, T18R28E

Seep Lakes: Parts of T16R28E, T16R29E, T17R28EM, T17R29E

Upland Restoration: Parts of T17R29E, T18R30E, T19R30E

Lower Crab Creek: Parts of T16R23E, T16R24E, T16R25E, T16R26E, T16R27E

Priest Rapids: Parts of T14R23E, T14R24E, T15R23E

Sprague Lake: Parts of T20R38

B. Environmental Elements [\[HELP\]](#)

1. Earth [\[help\]](#)

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)?

65%

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.

The geology and soils of the wildlife vary widely. The most common soils tend to be shallow, well drained, and steep. Generally, cliffs and talus slopes are common. Channeled scablands characterize several of the units, others have sand dunes, and some contain high quality irrigable soils. Wetlands, caused by irrigation seepage and return flows, with developing organic soils, are interspersed.

Soils include gravelly loam, cobbly loam, subsoil gravelly loam, silt loam, gravelly silt loam, sandy loam, stony loam, and loess.

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

NA

- 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.

NA

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

NA

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

NA

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

NA

2. Air [\[help\]](#)

- 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.

NA

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

NA

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

NA

3. Water [\[help\]](#)

- a. Surface Water: [\[help\]](#)

- 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.

Prior to the Columbia Basin Project, the wildlife area had far fewer wetlands. Greater than 671,000 acres of land are irrigated in the basin, and the number of ponds, lakes and reservoirs quadrupled from 35 to greater than 140 since project development.

The Grand Coulee and Crab Creek watersheds impact the Columbia Basin Wildlife Area; the Crab Creek watershed has the primary influence to wildlife area lands and drains approximately 13,200 square miles. Historically, Gloyd Springs and Rocky Ford Creek were the only perennial water sources feeding Crab Creek and thus in the northern portion of the Gloyd Seeps, Crab

Creek was ephemeral, flowing only during runoff events¹. In the central portion of Gloyd Seeps, irrigation return flows and springs influenced by irrigation cause Crab Creek to become perennial. Irrigation return flows from drains and wasteways within the Desert, Frenchman, Potholes and Winchester units of the wildlife area feed Potholes Reservoir. From the O'Sullivan Dam on Potholes Reservoir, Crab Creek flows perennially through the Columbia National Wildlife Refuge and the Lower Crab Creek Unit 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.

No. Any work done as a result of this plan will complete a project SEPA.

- 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.

NA

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

NA

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

NA

- 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.

NA

b. Ground Water: [\[help\]](#)

- 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.

NA

- 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.

NA

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.

NA

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

NA

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

NA

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

NA

4. **Plants** [\[help\]](#)

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

X deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other

X evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other

X shrubs

X grass

X pasture

X crop or grain

_Orchards, vineyards or other permanent crops.

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

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

_other types of vegetation

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

NA

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

NA

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

NA

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

A full list of noxious weeds is in the Draft Columbia Basin Management Plan, Appendix

B. Weeds of primary concern on the wildlife area include Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*), purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), and non-native reeds.

5. **Animals** [\[help\]](#)

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, waterfowl, hawks, cranes, owls

mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, jackrabbit, badger, bats

fish: trout, bass, catfish, perch, steelhead, salmon walleye
herptofauna: salamander, frog, snakes, lizards

- b. List any threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.
American white pelican, sandhill crane (lesser), ferruginous hawk, greater sage grouse, yellow-billed cuckoo, Oregonvesper sparrow, and northern leopard frog.
- c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.
Yes, it is part of the Pacific Flyway.
- d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:
NA
- e. List any invasive animal species known to be on or near the site.
NA

6. Energy and Natural Resources [\[help\]](#)

- 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.
NA
- b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe.
NA
- 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:
NA

7. Environmental Health [\[help\]](#)

- 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 any known or possible contamination at the site from present or past uses.
NA
 - 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.
NA
 - 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.
NA

4) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

NA

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

NA

b. Noise

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

NA

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.

NA

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

NA

8. Land and Shoreline Use [\[help\]](#)

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 adjacent properties are mainly farm fields and other public land. The Columbia Basin Wildlife Area has managed canals, wetlands, and reservoirs, uplands, and some row crops and pasture. It will not affect current land use on nearby or adjacent properties.

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?

NA

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:

NA

c. Describe any structures on the site.

There is an old barn and old hayshed.

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

Yes, the barn and hayshed will be demolished as part of the implementation of this management plan.

- e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?
Multiple designations occur over the 12 units, predominately Public Open Space and Open Space, as well as Conservation, Rural Remote, Agriculture
- f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?
Multiple designations occur over the 12 units, predominately Public Open Space and Open Space, as well as Conservation, Rural Remote, Agriculture
- g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?
Designations include Natural and Rural Conservancy, as well as Public Recreation, Recreation, High Intensity Public Facility, and Shoreline Residential.
- h. Has any part of the site been classified as a critical area by the city or county? If so, specify.
Some of the areas are classified as Shoreline Jurisdiction Lakes, Stream shorelines of Statewide Significances, and Grant County Lakes of Statewide Significance.
- i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?
NA
- j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?
NA
- k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:
NA
- l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:
NA
- m. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts to agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any:
NA

9. Housing [\[help\]](#)

- a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.
NA
- b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.
NA
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any:
NA

10. Aesthetics [\[help\]](#)

- a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?

NA

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

NA

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

NA

11. Light and Glare [\[help\]](#)

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

NA

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

NA

- c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?

NA

- d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:

NA

12. Recreation [\[help\]](#)

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

Fishing, hunting, boating, wildlife viewing, horseback riding, climbing

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

NA

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

NA

13. Historic and cultural preservation [\[help\]](#)

- 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 ? 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.

Yes, there is evidence of native people and settlers. As specific project locations are identified, WDFW will conduct a cultural review of each project. Any surveys conducted on or near the wildlife area are on file with the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation and WDFW and these will be used to inform project design.

- 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.

As specific projects are conceived, they will be reviewed by WDFW. Project reviews will be informed by the results of prior archaeological and historic research, a review of ethnographies and ethnographic information, information provided by the Tribes during consultation, the results of coordination with stakeholders and wildlife area staff, regional land use practices, local and regional geomorphological conditions, and regional settlement patterns. As needed, WDFW will conduct cultural resource surveys of project area to assess the potential of the project to impact cultural resources, to characterize the impacts, if any, and to make recommendations about reasonable options to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to any archaeological or cultural resources should any be present at the project location.

- 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.

Specific project locations have not yet been identified. As specific projects are designed, they will be reviewed by WDFW as described above. The project reviews will be used to inform project plans. In every case, WDFW will adopt all reasonable measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to any archaeological or cultural resources should any be present at the project location.

14. Transportation [\[help\]](#)

- 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.

NA

- 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?

NA

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

NA

- 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).

NA

- e. Will the project or proposal use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.
NA
- 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?
NA
- 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.
NA
- h. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:
NA

15. Public Services [\[help\]](#)

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

16. Utilities [\[help\]](#)

- 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.
NA

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: *Patricia Jatczak*

Name of signee Patricia Jatczak

Position and Agency/Organization Planner, WDFW

Date Submitted: October 14, 2021

D. Supplemental sheet for nonproject actions [\[HELP\]](#)

(IT IS NOT NECESSARY to use this sheet for project actions)

Because these questions are very general, it may be helpful to read them in conjunction with the list of the elements of the environment.

When answering these questions, be aware of the extent the proposal, or the types of activities likely to result from the proposal, would affect the item at a greater intensity or at a faster rate than if the proposal were not implemented. Respond briefly and in general terms.

1. How would the proposal be likely to increase discharge to water; emissions to air; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise?

NA

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

NA

2. How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish, or marine life?

The goals of the wildlife area are preserve, protect, and enhance habitat for wildlife.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve plants, animals, fish, or marine life are:

See the Goals & Objectives section of the Draft Columbia Basin Wildlife Area Plan for a complete lists of goals, objectives, and output measures for the wildlife area.

3. How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?

NA

Proposed measures to protect or conserve energy and natural resources are:

NA

4. How would the proposal be likely to use or affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated (or eligible or under study) for governmental protection; such as parks, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species habitat, historic or cultural sites, wetlands, floodplains, or prime farmlands?

The goals of the wildlife area are preserve, protect, and enhance habitat for wildlife.

Proposed measures to protect such resources or to avoid or reduce impacts are:

See the Goals & Objectives section of the Draft Columbia Basin Wildlife Area Plan for a complete lists of goals, objectives, and output measures for the wildlife area.

5. How would the proposal be likely to affect land and shoreline use, including whether it would allow or encourage land or shoreline uses incompatible with existing plans?
NA

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce shoreline and land use impacts are:
NA

6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities?
NA

Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demand(s) are:
NA

7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.

The plan meets all federal, local, and state requirements for protection of the environment