

# **SEPA ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST**

## ***Purpose of checklist:***

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

## ***Instructions for applicants:***

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

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

## ***Instructions for Lead Agencies:***

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:

**Windy Point Commercial Thin – Phase 1**

2. Name of applicant:

**Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)**

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

**Contact: Ben Hartmann**

**Address: Oak Creek Wildlife Area Office, 16601 US Hwy 12, Naches, WA 98935**

**Phone: 509-929-1641**

**Email: Benjamin.Hartmann@dfw.wa.gov**

4. Date checklist prepared:

**January 5th, 2022**

5. Agency requesting checklist:

**Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)**

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

**May 1st, 2022 to November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

**There will be down time for weather and/or wildlife habitat considerations**

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

- A. Reforestation: Planting of fire & drought adapted tree species such as Oregon white oak, ponderosa pine, and western larch may occur to supplement natural regeneration as needed.**
- B. Prescribed Fire: All or portions of the project may have prescribed fire applied as a follow-up treatment in subsequent years**
- C. Phase 2 Commercial Thin: Future commercial thinning units are identified in the vicinity of this project. Phase 2 Units will be reviewed under a future SEPA document.**

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

- **2017 WDFW Oak Creek Wildlife Area Management Plan – Forest Management Plan**
- **2020 WDNR Tieton Planning Area Landscape Evaluation Summary**

- **WDFW Priority Habitat and Species Management Recommendations**
- **Maps showing: soil type, erosion potential, soil stability, and hydrologic maturity from NRCS County Soil Survey data**

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**

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

**A. DNR Forest Practice Notification/Application (FPN/A, #2707234)**

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 Windy Point Commercial Thin is intended to improve the ecological integrity of the forest landscape, benefitting multiple wildlife species and reducing the risk of catastrophic wildfire. This will be achieved by increasing the relative abundance of fire & drought resistant trees like ponderosa pine & western larch, reducing fuel load and connectivity to overstory trees, and increasing cover of native understory vegetation. All units in Phase 1 may have prescribed fire applied within 1 to 5 years after thinning.**

**Approximately 349 acres across 3 units will be commercially thinned in stands where the overstory is 60 to 80 years old. Current stand composition is variable across the project area that starts at 2,400 feet elevation and ends at 4,400 feet elevation. Lower elevations contain ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir & scattered Oregon white oaks, while higher elevations have more western larch, grand fir and Oregon white oak is absent. Patches of conifer regeneration 5 to 25 years old and areas of open grass/shrubland are scattered within the forest landscape. Moderate levels of conifer slash less-than (<) 8 inches diameter are still present from past thinnings, particularly in closed-canopy Douglas-fir stands. Stands will be thinned using the “Individuals, Clumps & Openings” (ICO) Strategy to provide a variety of habitat conditions for wildlife (see attached prescription for details).**

**In order to facilitate thinning operations, this project will include approximately 25,945 feet (4.91 miles) of road maintenance along the FS-1302 & FS-1302-511 roads, 3,988 feet (0.76 miles) of new temporary road construction, and 1,120 feet (0.29 miles) of road rerouting. When the units are prepared for prescribed fire implementation, these same roads may be utilized as fire breaks along with the construction of an additional 36,265 feet (6.86 miles) of fire breaks around the unit perimeters. Constructed fire breaks would be a 24 inch trench dug to the upper level of mineral soil (ie, removing all organic material). Fire lines may be constructed by either heavy equipment or handcrews as needed.**

**(Additional information available on request)**

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 Windy Point Commercial Thin is located approximately 10 miles west of Naches and 10 miles east of Rimrock Lake, along a ridge dividing the Tieton River Canyon & the Cowiche Highlands. It is part of the WDFW Oak Creek Wildlife Area in Yakima County. The units are located in part of Sections 23 & 27 of Township 14 North, Range 15 East W.M. (See attached project map for the location of individual units). Within the project area, pink flagging designates unit boundaries, orange flagging designates new road construction and blue flagging designates riparian features such as springs/seeps. Horizontal orange paint bands indicates leave trees in Units 1 & 2, blue paint designates cut trees in Unit 3. Across all units, blue paint arrows indicate a harvester-created snag, where only the upper part of a tree is cut leaving the lower stem standing. Mile marker signs are posted in both directions along the length of the haul route.**

## **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)?

**70%**

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 on the project area are generally stony to very stony loams that are well-drained with a moderate potential for erosion. They support natural vegetation such as conifer trees (ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, western larch), hardwood shrubs (oceanspray, woodrose, rocky mountain maple), and herbaceous species (pinegrass, arrowleaf balsamroot).**

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

**None**

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.

**Minor erosion could occur from equipment use on old skid trails and roads improved for access and fire containment. If erosion does occur, mitigation measures including installation of straw bales, straw waddles, water bars, drain dips and grass seeding will be used as necessary. Additionally, equipment use during unit preparation will be stopped until mitigation measures are in place.**

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:

- **Ground based equipment and log haul on native-surface roads prohibited during saturated soil conditions where excessive rutting, compaction and runoff may occur.**
- **Ground based equipment will not be allowed on continuous slopes in excess of 60%**
- **Skid trails, temporary roads, fire lines and landing sites will be decompacted, drainage features such as water bars installed, seeded with native species and have harvest slash scattered to rehabilitate disturbed surfaces and discourage channelized water runoff.**

## **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.

**The proposal will result in a temporary increase in vehicle emissions from equipment used for commercial thinning and prescribed fire such as semi trucks, feller bunchers, rubber-tires or tracked skidders, bulldozers, excavators, road graders, cable-yarding towers, pickup trucks, fire engines, water tenders and portable water pumps. Smoke emissions from slash and natural vegetation will occur at the end of the project to reduce wildfire hazard.**

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

**None**

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

Slash haulback along skid trails, abandoned roads, and other areas within the unit provided its accumulation does not create an excessive fire risk. Maximize utilization of cut trees to reduce slash inputs to landing piles. Provide public firewood cutting opportunities at landing piles to further reduce potential fuel loading. Prescribed fire units will be ignited following Washington State Smoke Management Rules, with daily smoke approval determined by DNR. Whenever possible, the atmospheric conditions during ignition should disperse smoke with no significant impact to adjacent towns (Nile, Naches, and Yakima). The burned area will be extinguished (mop-up) within 25 feet of firelines after unit ignition. Additional smokes farther interior, such as stump holes, large logs, and areas of deep conifer needles will be extinguished as needed. Daily burning subject to approval by WDNR Smoke Management.

### 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.

The project was surveyed by the Oak Creek Forester and members of the Timber, Fish & Wildlife Group to verify the existence and type of streams mapped in the area. Water Type Modification Form SE-38-21-0015 was submitted and approved for this project. The project begins along a ridge 400 feet above the Tieton River and has one unnamed stream outside the east boundary of Unit 1. The Unit 1 boundary parallels the unnamed stream for approximately 1,400 feet at a distance approximately 100 to 200 horizontal feet. Unit 1 then continues west away from the stream. The stream lays in the bottom of a steep canyon whereas the unit boundary is along the change in slope between the flat, plateau like ground within the unit and the steep canyon sidewalls along the stream. The stream continues up the steep canyon to its origin on adjacent federal land approximately 300 feet away from Unit 3's east boundary. Two isolated springs are present outside of and downslope of Unit 2 surrounded by dense brush. Surface flow of the primary stream is broken by sections where a defined channel is absent near the origin. The lower reaches of the stream go seasonally dry towards the bottom where it crosses under the FS-1302 via culvert. The stream eventually reaches the Tieton River approximately 0.5 miles down stream from the project area. See attached maps for reference.

- 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.**

- 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.

**Water from the Tieton River may be used by water tenders for dust abatement along the haul road if needed. Water will also be used by fire engines and water tenders during prescribed fire implementation to supplied hoses installed around unit perimeters. Each engine has an approximate capacity of 300-500 gallons, water tenders approximately 2,000 gallons. Tenders may draft 2-5 times per day during burn operations. Water supply sites may also be installed at the spring sites or stream along Unit 1 if flow is sufficient to support operations and wildlife habitat. Off site water support from water may be used if flow is insufficient to support operations and wildlife habitat.**

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: [\[help\]](#)

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.

**N/A**

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.

**N/A**

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.

**Spring runoff from snow melt and rainfall runoff could occur on the forest floor, roads, and skid trails. Water will be dispersed back into undisturbed forest areas for natural filtration through vegetation and soil. Runoff intercepted by roads and ditches will be diverted through existing culverts, water bars, drain dips and ditches to the forest floor. Under extreme weather events, runoff could reach nearby streams.**

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

**There is a remote chance that fuel or oil associated with equipment operations could be spilled and potentially enter ground or surface waters. Equipment operators will be required to have an approved spill kit in each piece of equipment to contain and clean up spills if they occur. Fuel storage is only allowed in approved areas. Contractors and/or WDFW staff will notify the appropriate Department of Ecology Office immediately after a spill occurs.**

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

**N/A**

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

- **Ground based equipment and log haul on native-surface roads prohibited during saturated soil conditions where excessive rutting, compaction and runoff may occur.**
- **Ground based equipment will not be allowed on continuous slopes in excess of 60%**
- **Skid trails, temporary roads and landing sites will be decompacted, drainage features such as water bars installed, seeded with native species and have harvest slash scattered to rehabilitate disturbed surfaces and discourage channelized water runoff.**

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

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?

**Overstory trees designated for harvest will be cut and removed from the site. Areas of health conifer regeneration will be retained as much as possible. The attached thinning prescription provides details on the types of trees that will be retained or removed to promote forest health and wildlife habitat. Vegetation along designated skid trails will likely be removed through frequent traffic during log skidding which will be rehabilitated after thinning is complete. Vegetation within burn units will be variably consumed by the prescribed fire. The range of weather conditions and predicted fire behavior/effects associated with them will limit**



**consumption of vegetation to dead/dormant portions of the plant, leaving the root systems and resprouting areas intact. Unburned areas more than 30 feet from exterior firelines will not be relit to provide mosaic of untreated vegetation, affecting up to 30% of the project area.**

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

**None**

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

**During thinning operations, the operator will utilize only established skid trails to minimize the area disturbed. Native seed mixes will be applied as needed along skid trails, abandoned roads and landing sites during post-thinning rehab. Disturbed areas will also be monitored for noxious weed establishment so they can be treated promptly. One of the objectives of the prescribed fire is to increase the cover of native understory grasses and herbs where there are currently accumulations of dead wood. Additionally, the consumption of dead/decadent portions of existing understory vegetation stimulates growth by increasing available nutrient content of soils. Native seed mixes will be applied as needed along firelines during post-burn rehab. Pre and post-burn monitoring will track vegetation progress, guiding future maintenance treatments.**

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

**Knapweed, Thistle, Hounds Tongue, Cheatgrass**

## **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**, 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.

**None**

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

**No**

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

- **Marked leave trees are variably spaced based on elevation, slope aspect and microsite conditions to provide varied habitat for wildlife (see attached prescription)**
- **Protect existing snags and wildlife reserve trees (WRT's) where there is no risk to operator/public safety**
- **Create new snags (approximately 1-5 per acre) through designated operator-created snag trees marked with blue paint arrows. Snags may also be created during prescribed fire**
- **Protect unique habitat features such as large diameter (>18 inches) downed logs, hardwood trees such as quaking aspen and Oregon white oak**
- **Create a mosaic of dense overstory and improved openings using the Individuals, Clumps and Openings tree marking strategy. Retain clumps of healthy small trees**
- **Consume small dead woody fuels (<3 inches diameter) to promote live native understory vegetation providing food for wildlife**
- **Protect unique habitat features such as large diameter (>18 inches) downed logs, hardwood trees such as quaking aspen and Oregon white oak by managing ignition patterns or scratch lining**
- **Create a mosaic of treatment and non-treatment areas to retain hiding cover/thermal cover and travel corridors for wildlife**

e. List any invasive animal species known to be on or near the site.

**None known**

## **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.

**N/A**

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

**N/A**

- 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:

**N/A**

## **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.

**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 present**

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/oil used chainsaws, mechanized forestry equipment and other vehicles has the potential to spill during refueling.**

4) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

**In the event of a medical emergency, an ambulance or medivac helicopter may be required. In the event of an escaped fire/wildfire conversion, additional firefighting resources from WA DNR, USFS, and county fire districts will be ordered.**

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

**Pumps and fuel cans will be kept within designated areas to limit areas of potential contamination. Containment dams appropriate to pump size will be used at water sources, and absorbent pads made available at designated fueling locations. WDFW uses a combination of hoselays, patrolling fire engines, and supplemental water delivery systems like backpack pumps and ATV/UTV mounted water tanks to keep prescribed burns within their designated perimeter. Additional mitigation actions to enhance containment include pre wetting fuels adjacent daily burn areas, reducing their probability of ignition. The burn plan outlines procedures in the event of a medical emergency or escaped fire.**

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.

**Noise will be generated by forestry equipment, fire resources and semi trucks. Noise will primarily be generated weekdays and is generally isolated to within 500 feet of operating equipment or vehicles.**

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

**None, noise will be confined to the project area and should not be heard offsite.**

## **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 site is within the Oak Creek Wildlife Area management boundaries, and is currently used as wildlife habitat. Public use of the area generally includes hunting during designated seasons, wildlife viewing, and hiking. Adjacent federal land is owned and managed by the USDA Forest Service for multiple uses, also providing similar public recreation opportunities. The project will not fundamentally alter present use of the land.**

- 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?

**WDFW purchased the property in 2007 from the private timber company that previously owned the land. The property has had varying levels of timber harvest occur during the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, most recently in the early 2000's. The status of the land will not be converted from its present designation after the project.**

- 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.

**n/a**

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

**n/a**

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

### **Forest**

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

The project area is listed as a Priority Treatment Area in the 2018 Oak Creek Wildlife Area Management Plan, available online at: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/01902/>

The project area falls within the 2020 Tieton Planning Area identified in the WDNR Forest Health 20-year Plan. The Landscape Evaluation Summary outlining treatment needs of the planning area is available online at: [Tieton LE Summary Final 2020.pdf | Powered by Box](#)

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.

**n/a**

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

**n/a**

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

**n/a**

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

**n/a**

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

**n/a**

m. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts to agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any:

**n/a**

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

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** [\[help\]](#)

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?  
Smoke production from prescribed fires will be of short duration, potentially obstructing views within the vicinity of the project temporarily. Daily smoke emissions will be approved by WA DNR prior to implementing burns greater than 100 tons.
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:

**Vegetation response should occur within 1 to 2 growing seasons. Areas currently shaded by dense overstory will begin to see live vegetation flourish, enhancing the visual appeal and food availability to a variety of wildlife species. While snags are valuable to wildlife, they are not always aesthetically appealing. Interpretive signs/kiosks will be used to communicate the values of these features to the public.**

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

- a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?  
n/a
- b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?  
n/a
- c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?  
n/a
- d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:  
n/a

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

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

**Hunting, hiking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, etc**

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

**During thinning and burning operations, public access would be limited for safety concerns. The post-burn environment may displace hunters use of the area until green-up (ie, spring following a fall burn).**

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

**Public notifications, including signs at the project site and Oak Creek Office, and news releases will be used to increase awareness prior to the thinning. All anticipated impacts and their locations will be addressed to the best of WDFW's ability.**

### **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 buildings, structures, or sites were found during cultural resource survey of project.**

- 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 material evidence or artifacts were observed during the cultural resource survey of the project site. Additional information on the cultural review of the project site may be available by contacting WDFW's Archaeologists.**

- 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 initiated consultation letters were to The Confederated Tribes & Bands of the Yakama Nation, and the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) notifying them that an archaeological survey would be conducted on the project site. The survey was conducted by WDFW Archaeologists. The final copy of the report will be sent to Yakama Nation and DAHP for concurrence.**

- 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.
- **Utilize existing logging roads and previous skid trails to minimize areas of new ground disturbance**
  - **Utilize WDFW's Inadvertant Discovery Plan for Cultural Resources throughout project implementation.**

### **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.

**The FS-1302-511 road which accesses almost the entire project is gated at the bottom. Public vehicle travel on that road is limited to a handful of disabled hunters who apply for the area to hunt in the fall of each year. This connects with the FS-1302, a forest road controlled by the USDA Forest Service and open to the public. The haul route connects with US Hwy 12 at the bottom at an established entry point**

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?  
**n/a**

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

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).

**The existing haul route will need to be graded for log truck and equipment travel at the beginning of the project. Two new roads, one temporary and one reroute will be constructed near the end of the established haul route off the FS-1302-511 road to improve equipment access. The entire route will need periodic grading to maintain the roads during log haul. The FS-1302-511 is gated to exclude motorized access to the site, except one road used seasonally by hunters with Disabled Hunter Access privileges.**

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?  
**n/a**

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.  
**n/a**

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:  
**n/a**

## **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.



Temporary increase in fire protection resources would only be needed in the event of a wildfire declaration. Yakima County fire district resources may be utilized as first responders during the first few work shifts to contain an escaped fire, with state Department of Natural Resources assuming command in the event of a wildfire declaration.

- b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.
  - **Burn operations occurring within range of prescribed weather conditions in the Burn Plan**
  - **Burn operations occurring with minimum number of resources or greater described in the Burn Plan to provide for fire containment**
  - **Notifications issued by the Burn Boss to parties listed in the Burn Plan prior to operations**

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

- a. Circle utilities currently available at the site:  
electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other \_\_\_\_\_

n/a

- 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.

n/a

**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: **Ben Hartmann**

Position and Agency/Organization: **Oak Creek Wildlife Area Forester - WDFW**

Date Submitted: 11/5/2022