

WAC 197-11-960 Environmental checklist.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

Purpose of checklist:

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), chapter 43.21C RCW, requires all governmental agencies to consider the environmental impacts of a proposal before making decisions. An environmental impact statement (EIS) must be prepared for all proposals with probable significant adverse impacts on the quality of the environment. The purpose of this checklist is to provide information to help you and the agency identify impacts from your proposal (and to reduce or avoid impacts from the proposal, if it can be done) and to help the agency decide whether an EIS is required.

Instructions for applicants:

This environmental checklist asks you to describe some basic information about your proposal. Governmental agencies use this checklist to determine whether the environmental impacts of your proposal are significant, requiring preparation of an EIS. Answer the questions briefly, with the most precise information known, or give the best description you can.

You must answer each question accurately and carefully, to the best of your knowledge. In most cases, you should be able to answer the questions from your own observations or project plans without the need to hire experts. If you really do not know the answer, or if a question does not apply to your proposal, write "do not know" or "does not apply." Complete answers to the questions now may avoid unnecessary delays later.

Some questions ask about governmental regulations, such as zoning, shoreline, and landmark designations. Answer these questions if you can. If you have problems, the governmental agencies can assist you.

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

Use of checklist for nonproject proposals:

Complete this checklist for nonproject proposals, even though questions may be answered "does not apply." IN ADDITION, complete the SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS (part D).

For nonproject actions, the references in the checklist to the words "project," "applicant," and "property or site" should be read as "proposal," "proposer," and "affected geographic area," respectively.

A. BACKGROUND

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

Spears Unit Berm Breach and Ditch Cleanout

2. Name of applicant: **Washington Dept. Fish & Wildlife – Cowlitz Wildlife Area**

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

Cowlitz Wildlife Area

PO BOX 758

Morton, WA 98356

Mark Grabski – 360.496.6223

4. Date checklist prepared: **Sept 1, 2008**

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

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

August 01, 2009 – September 30, 2009 (We are requesting a three year HPA to accommodate the project if the ground is too wet to work. Work window in subsequent years would be consistent with 2009)

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain. **Yes, future plans (dependent on the site being accessible) include reshaping Channel A to create some sinuosity to the otherwise straight channel. Also, tree and shrub plantings are planned when the ground can support different communities. Currently the site artificially impounds approximately 3 feet water and reed canarygrass is growing as a suspended floating mat.**

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal. **Sheldon and Associates prepared a restoration plan for this site in December 2004. This plan is the general template for the slated work.**

9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain. **No**

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known. **A JARPA is being submitted to WDFW for an HPA, Lewis County for a Shorelines and Critical Areas exemption, Army Corp of Engineers Section 404 Permit and Department of Ecology 401 Water Quality Permit.**

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.)

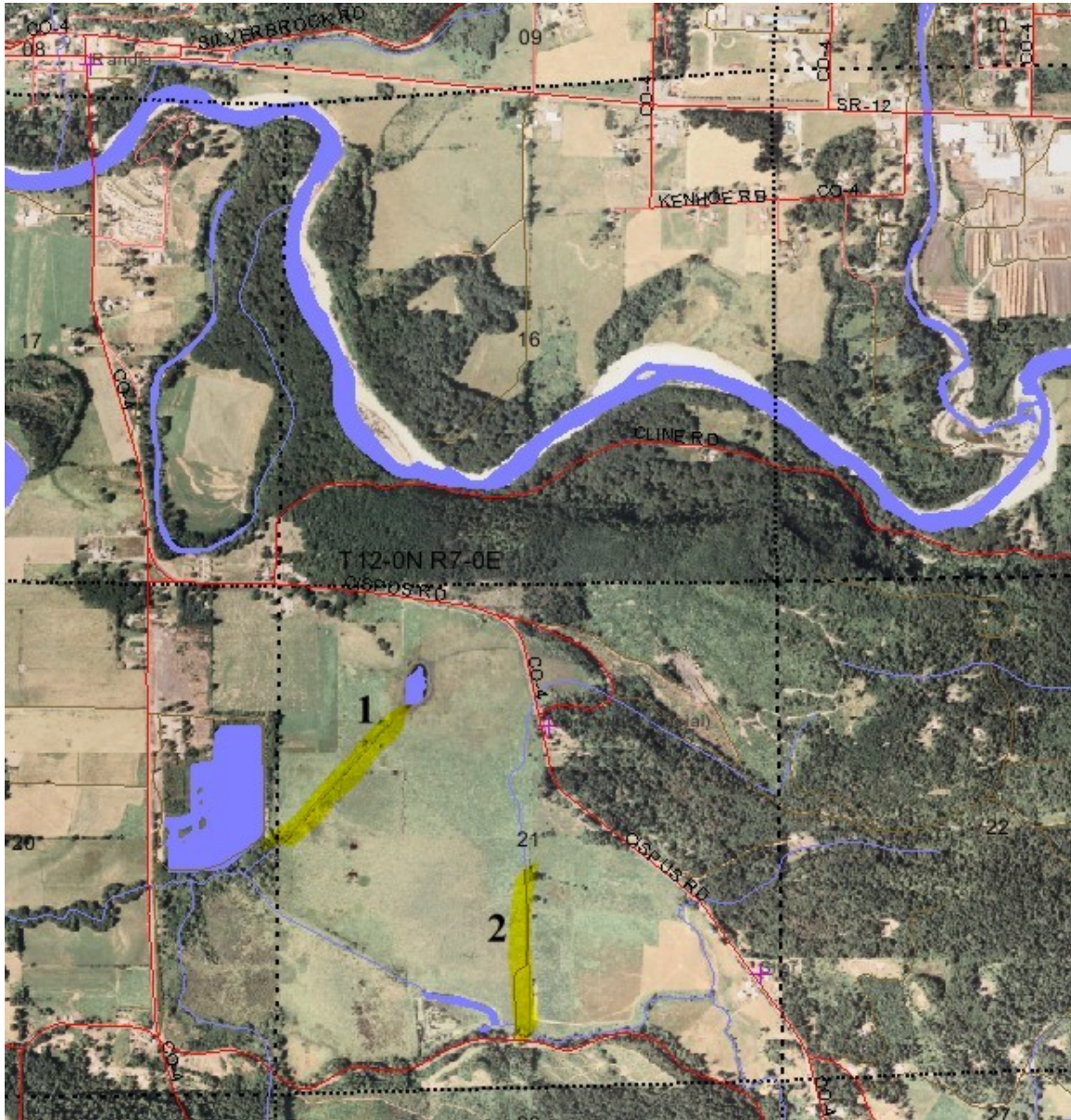
The southern berm of "Channel A", created from historic management activities, is creating a *de facto* dike that is acting to disrupt natural hydrology by impounding and maintaining artificially high water over most of the central portion of the area. Surveys of "Channel A" show a gradient drop of six inches over 1800 feet of channel and a bottom composition of fine sands and silt. 200' downstream of the unit where hydraulic function is more natural there is gravels visible and riffle-pool sequences. It is necessary to partially dewater the area lying east and south of "Channel A" to restore the natural hydrology and a more diverse vegetation community. Portions of the berm that are left in place would provide opportunities to establish a broader range of vegetation community types in the riparian corridor. This project is part of a larger restoration plan to restore the site to more natural historic conditions and provide a hydrologic regime that would protect water quality and provide optimal habitat for fish and wildlife resources. Flooding to neighboring properties most likely will be lessened.

Cleaning the agricultural ditch that drains to Siler Creek will facilitate managing the fields as wildlife forage fields through standard agricultural and wet soil management practices. The sediment from the ditch will be reincorporated into the adjacent agricultural field.

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.

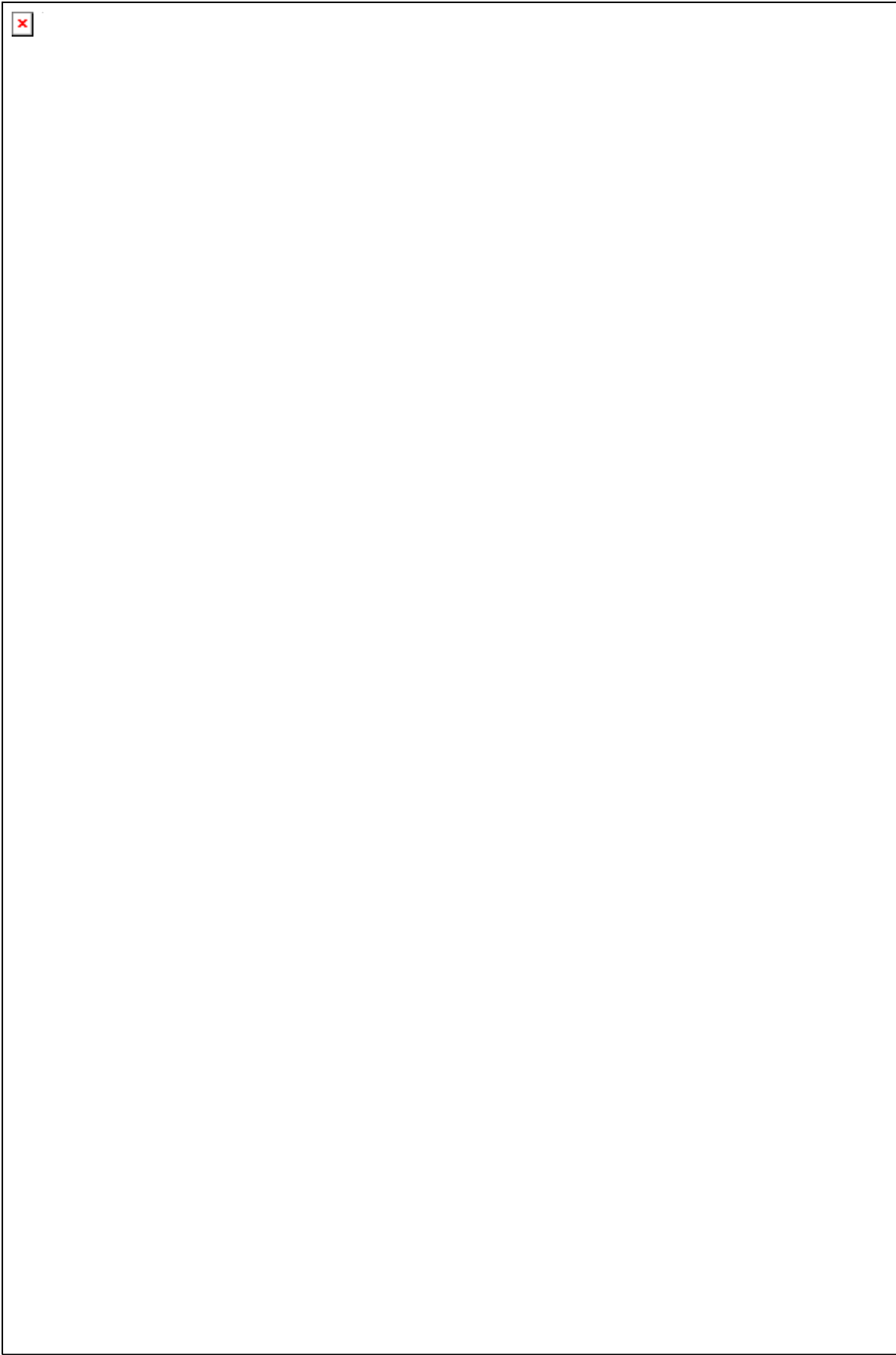
Township 12N 7E Section 21

South of Randle Washington Bordered by State Route 131, Cispus Road and Spears Road.



Map 1. Spears Unit Project Locations

1. Shows the location of Channel A. This is where the berm breaches will be constructed
2. Shows location of the agricultural ditch that will be cleaned out.



Map 2. Topographic Map of the Spears Unit where the work on Channel A will be conducted.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

1. **Earth**

- a. General description of the site (circle one): **Flat**, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other
- b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)? **There really isn't much slope. The channel where the berm breaches will be located slopes approximately six inches over 1800 feet.**
- c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any prime farmland. **The soils in this area are comprised of Schooley silt loam which is a very deep poorly drained soil in shallow depressional areas on river flood plains and low terraces. According to the soil survey of Lewis County this area can also contain about 10% Cloquato, Newberg and Siler soils, which are very well drained soils. The poorly drained Semiahmoo muck can also be found in small areas.**
- d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe. **No**
- e. Describe the purpose, type, and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill. **The only grading being proposed is located on the southeast side of Channel A where the berm will be breached to allow proper hydrology function of the surface waters. The berm will be reshaped / graded to remove excess soils creating the de facto dike artificially impounding the surface waters.**

The ditch cleanout project will be removing sediment from the agricultural ditch and placing it back into the agricultural field from which it originated. This area is identified by the NWI as a wetland site so technically the sediment is considered fill. However, it will be disked in and reincorporated into the agricultural field as part of our wet soil management regime

- f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe. **Yes, though highly improbable, the soil will be exposed and flooding does occur in this area. However, the site is flat in topography and by timing the project to late summer, using silt fencing and by reseeding the area when completed, erosion will be controlled.**
- 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: **Outlined in f.**

a. **Air**

- a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal (i.e., dust, automobile, odors, industrial wood smoke) during construction and when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known. **None**
- 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: **NA**

3. **Water**

a. Surface:

- 1) Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into. **The work is being conducted alongside “Channel A” which is a no name tributary that at Gibbs Lake and drains to the west where it eventually empties into the Cowlitz River. The agricultural ditch drains to Siler Creek which empties into the Cowlitz River after it connects with Channel A. The Spears Unit is largely classified as wetland by the NWI and as agricultural significant land by Lewis County. Two man-made ponds can be found on the site.**
- 2) Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? **Yes** If yes, please describe and attach available plans. **See number 11 above (description of project) and JARPA for details.**
- 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. **The berm breach project will not be filling or dredging wetland soils. However, approximately 100 yards of soil will be removed from the agricultural ditch and placed into the adjacent agricultural field. This would technically be considered fill material.** Indicate the source of fill material. **See e. under Earth.**
- 4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known. **The projects purpose is to drain surface water that has been artificially impounded by a berm functioning as a *de facto* dike. The depth is on average three feet deep but its extent is not surveyed do to an inability to access the area. This is a restoration project to replace the climax species reed canarygrass with a more diverse vegetation population. The reed canarygrass is floating on the surface of the water and cannot be controlled until the natural hydrology is restored.**
- 5) Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? **Yes** If so, note location on the site plan. **The whole project lies within the 100-year flood plain.**
- 6) Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? **No** If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.

b. Ground:

- 1) Will ground water be withdrawn, or will water be discharged to ground water? **No** Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.
- 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**

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water impacts, if any: **NA**4. **Plants**

a. Check or circle 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
 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? **The purpose of this project is to restore the site to a more natural vegetation population which would be mixed deciduous and wetland marsh. The reed canarygrass that dominates the site will be controlled to allow diversity. Draining the artificially impounded water will allow for some upland zones for tree and shrub species to be reestablished.**

c. List threatened or 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:
See b. – Native species will be used for revegetation enhancements.

5. **Animals**

a. Circle any birds and animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site:

birds: **hawk**, heron, eagle, **songbirds**, other: **waterfowl**
mammals: **deer**, bear, **elk**, **beaver**, other:
fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other: **salmonids are expected and others possible**

b. List any threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site. **None**

- c. Is the site part of a migration route? **Yes** If so, explain. **Migrating winter waterfowl**
- d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any: **The whole project is designed to preserve and protect wildlife and their habitat.**

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? **None** Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.
- b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? **No** If so, generally describe.
- c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? **None** List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any: **NA**

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? **No** If so, describe.
 - 1) Describe special emergency services that might be required. **None**
 - 2) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any: **None**

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)? **The equipment will provide additional ambient noise but only during the course of the project.** Indicate what hours noise would come from the site. **Daylight hours only.**

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? **Wildlife Area – Tacoma Power mitigation lands. There is some residential and agricultural land adjacent to the project site.**
- b. Has the site been used for agriculture? If so, describe. **Yes – historically pasture and hay ground.**
- c. Describe any structures on the site. **None**
- d. Will any structures be demolished? **NA** If so, what?
- e. What is the current zoning classification of the site? **Agricultural**
- f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site? **Class B Agricultural Land**
- g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site? **NA**
- h. Has any part of the site been classified as an "environmentally sensitive" area? **No** If so, specify.
- 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: **NA**
- l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any: **Land use will stay the same.**

9. Housing

- a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? **None** Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.
- b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? **None** Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any: **NA**

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? **NA**
- b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed? **None**
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any: **NA**

11. Light and glare

- a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? **None** What time of day would it mainly occur?
- 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: **NA**

12. Recreation

- a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity? **Hunting, Fishing, Birdwatching and etc.**
- b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? **No** If so, describe.
- 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

- a. Are there any places or objects listed on, or proposed for, national, state, or local preservation registers known to be on or next to the site? **No** If so, generally describe.
- b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site. **None**
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts, if any: **A cultural survey will be conducted prior to any digging.**

14. Transportation

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site, and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any. **None**
- b. Is site currently served by public transit? **No** If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop? **Unknown**
- c. How many parking spaces would the completed project have? **None** How many would the project eliminate? **None**
- d. Will the proposal require any new roads or streets, or improvements to existing roads or streets, not including driveways? **No** If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).
- e. Will the project use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? **No** If so, generally describe.
- f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project? **None** If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur.
- g. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any: **NA**

15. Public services

- a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, health care, schools, other)? **No** If so, generally describe.
- b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any. **NA**

16. Utilities

- a. Circle utilities currently available at the site: electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other.
- b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed. **NA**

C. SIGNATURE

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

Signature:

Date Submitted:

D. SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS

(do not 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? **In time the water quality, temperature and the streambed composition is expected to be more conducive to the needs of fish, amphibians and other wildlife.**

Proposed measures to protect or conserve plants, animals, fish, or marine life are: **None**

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? **NA**

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

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. **It is believed that this project is compliant with all environmental laws and provides only positive benefits for environmental resources.**

TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICANT

EVALUATION FOR
AGENCY USE ONLY