



Environmental Justice Assessment Checklist

COVER SHEET

An environmental justice assessment (EJA) is an opportunity to assess the potential environmental justice impacts of an agency action. Developed in collaboration with the HEAL Interagency Workgroup and the Environmental Justice Council, this checklist is designed to meet the environmental justice assessment requirements established under Washington’s [Healthy Environment for All \(HEAL\) Act](#). Each agency mandated within the HEAL Act has a version of this template with an accompanying guidance document to specifically address individual agency needs and processes.

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| 1. Primary agency staff contact(s) | Brian Considine, Brian.Considine@dnr.wa.gov |
| 2. Secondary agency contact(s), if applicable | Olgy Diaz, Olgy.Diaz@dnr.wa.gov |
| 3. Description of proposed significant agency action (SAA) | This Agency Request Legislation would establish a Smokey Bear license plate that would be available for purchase in October 2024. Revenue from Smokey Bear License plates would be devoted to wildfire prevention programs administered by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). This would be the agency’s first license plate, the state’s only license plate for wildfire prevention, and is the symbol of support for wildland fire fighters. |
| 4. Date EJA was initiated | 12/8/2023 |
| 5. Type of SAA (check all that apply) | <input type="checkbox"/> The development and adoption of significant legislative rules as defined in RCW 34.05.328 . <input type="checkbox"/> The development and adoption of any new grant or loan program that a covered agency is explicitly authorized or required by statute to carry out. <input type="checkbox"/> A capital project, grant, or loan award by a covered agency of at least \$12,000,000 or a transportation project, grant, or loan by a covered agency of at least \$15,000,000. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The submission of agency request legislation to the office of the governor or the office of financial management for approval. <input type="checkbox"/> Programs requiring the labor of vulnerable and/or incarcerated populations. |



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| | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other agency actions deemed significant by a covered agency consistent with RCW 70A.02.060 , if so, please name: Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 6. Link(s) to initial notification with Office of Financial Management and/or other postings, such as publicly available results, materials, or reports related to the assessment. | TBD |

Environmental Justice Assessment Checklist

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This checklist is intended to guide staff and provide structure for reporting the outcomes of an environmental justice assessment. For more detailed guidance on how to complete each section of this template, see the Environmental Justice Assessment Guidance Document. For detailed guidance on how to engage with tribal governments and tribal communities, see [DNR’s Tribal Government Consultation Policy](#).

Section 1: Significant Agency Action Description

1. Describe the significant agency action (SAA) in 3-5 sentences.

This Agency Request Legislation would establish a Smokey Bear license plate that would be available for purchase in October 2024. Revenue from Smokey Bear License plates would be devoted to wildfire prevention programs administered by the Department of Natural Resources. This would be the agency’s first license plate, the state’s only license plate for wildfire prevention, and is the symbol of support for wildland fire fighters.



Section 2: Identify Overburdened Communities and Vulnerable Populations

1. Describe the geographic area(s) where there may be environmental and health impacts as a result of the agency action.

The scope of this Agency Request Legislation is statewide. Revenue may be collected anywhere where vehicle license plates are purchased. The locations of the resulting wildfire prevention programs are yet to be determined.

In accordance with 46.16A.210 RCW, the Department of Licensing determines how and where license plates are obtained and has the authority to purchase from a metal working plant at a state correctional facility or from any source with existing state of Washington purchasing procedures. Most license plates in Washington are manufactured at the Monroe Correctional Complex. This location does not sit within a disadvantaged community (Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool) and has a score of 5 (out of 10) on the state's Environmental Health Disparities Map.

2. Describe overburdened communities identified within the geographic area(s) where there may be environmental and health impacts as a result of the agency action. For a definition of 'overburdened communities' see Chapter [70A.02.010](#) RCW Section 11.

There are not specific overburdened communities identified within the geographic area of the Significant Agency Action.

3. Describe vulnerable populations identified within the geographic area(s) where there may be environmental and health impacts as a result of the agency action. For a definition of 'vulnerable populations' see Chapter [70A.02.010](#) RCW Section 14 (a) and (b).

Incarcerated individuals are the primary vulnerable population impacted by this Significant Agency Action, as they are the labor required for manufacturing license plates in Washington State.

Section 3: Analyze Environmental Benefits and Harms

1. Describe likely environmental **benefits** for overburdened communities, vulnerable populations, and Tribes associated with this action. For a definition of 'environmental benefits' see Chapter [70A.02.010](#) RCW Section 4(a)-(c).

Revenue generated from the sale of license plates would go towards wildfire prevention programs, which in turn would reduce the impact of wildfire and smoke and the loss of



property and life. The geographic distribution of those programs and their beneficiaries are not yet determined.

2. Describe likely environmental **harms** for overburdened communities, vulnerable populations, and Tribes associated with this action. For a definition of 'environmental harms' see Chapter [70A.02.010](#) RCW Section 5(a)-(d).

This agency action is unlikely to create environmental harm, except during the manufacturing of the license plates. Certain materials may be considered hazardous if exposed without proper protective equipment and safety protocols.

3. Describe likely associated **positive** health impacts for overburdened communities, vulnerable populations, and Tribes associated with this action.

While new license plates may not create direct positive health impacts, the funded wildfire prevention programs may indirectly create benefits associated with lower incidents of wildfires. These may include improved respiratory functions, lower stress, improved well-being and mental health, and reduced risk of injury or death.

4. Describe likely associated **negative** health impacts for overburdened communities, vulnerable populations, and Tribes associated with this action.

The negative health impacts from license plates may include impacts associated with light manufacturing and machine work. Without property protective equipment and safety protocols, these health impacts may include temporary respiratory issues, physical injury, and hearing loss.

Section 4: Tribal Consultation and Engagement of Indian Country

1. Summarize Tribal engagements and invitations for Tribal consultation to date.

Tribes have not yet been consulted on this Significant Agency Action.

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2. Describe likely impacts to Tribal rights and resources associated with this action.

This new license plate is not expected to impact Tribal rights and resources.

3. Describe any plans for ongoing and/or future Tribal consultation.



DNR will formally invite Tribes to provide feedback on all the Agency Request Legislation for the upcoming legislative session. Comments will be received through an online portal and may be directed to individual DNR staff members, as well.

4. Summarize other engagement and feedback from Indian Country.

No formal engagement has been conducted yet.

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Section 5: Community Engagement Summary

1. Summarize engagement with people from overburdened communities and vulnerable populations to date.

Since this is statewide in scope and does not include specific overburdened communities nor vulnerable populations, no community engagement has been conducted.

2. Summarize information received from people from overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

No community engagement has been conducted.

3. Summarize how information received from people from overburdened communities and vulnerable populations informed decision-making about this action.

No community engagement has been conducted.

4. Describe plans for ongoing engagement with people from overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

DNR will formally invite stakeholders to provide feedback on all the Agency Request Legislation for the upcoming legislative session. Comments will be received through an online portal and may be directed to individual DNR staff members, as well. Stakeholders are also encouraged to participate in the legislative process through public comment and engagement with elected representatives.



Section 6: Strategies to Address Environmental Harms and Equitably Distribute Environmental Benefits

1. Which of the following approaches will the agency pursue to eliminate, reduce, or mitigate environmental harms and equitably distribute environmental benefits (check all that apply):

- Eliminating the disparate impact of environmental harms on overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.
- Reducing cumulative environmental health impacts on overburdened communities or vulnerable populations.
- Preventing the action from adding to the cumulative environmental health impacts on overburdened communities or vulnerable populations.
- Providing equitable participation and meaningful engagement of vulnerable populations and overburdened communities in the development of the significant agency action.
- Prioritizing equitable distribution of resources and benefits to overburdened communities.
- Promoting positive workforce and job outcomes for overburdened communities.
- Meeting community needs identified by the affected overburdened community.
- Modifying substantive regulatory or policy requirements.
- Any other mitigation techniques, including those suggested by the Environmental Justice Council, the Office of Equity, or representatives of overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

2. Briefly describe the proposed action DNR will take for each approach selected in **Section 6, Question 1.**

With regards to incarcerated labor, DNR does not have the authority to determine the manufacturing of and procurement methods for Washington State license plates.

For equitable distribution of resources and benefits, DNR will continue to support its wildfire prevention program prioritizing working with overburdened communities throughout the state.

3. Describe additional options the agency has to eliminate, reduce, and/or mitigate harms and equitably distribute benefits.

N/A



4. Describe how any environmental benefits will be equitably distributed and the resulting cumulative impacts of the proposed action.

N/A

5. In the absence of ability or authority, to fully eliminate, reduce, or mitigate environmental harms caused by the significant agency action, or does not address the equitable distribution of environmental benefits, provide an explanation.

With regards to incarcerated labor, DNR does not have the authority to determine the manufacturing of and procurement methods for Washington State license plates.

Thank you for participating in this assessment and for your ongoing work toward equity and environmental justice at Department of Natural Resources. The final version of this document will be posted to the [Office of Equity & Environmental Justice page](#).