

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:

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

Use of checklist for nonproject proposals:

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

A. BACKGROUND

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

Draft Baker to Bellingham Non-Motorized Recreation Plan, which is referred to as “The Plan” throughout the checklist.

2. Name of applicant:

Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

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

Contact: Laurie Bergvall DNR NW Region Assistant Manager
Address: 919 N. Township St., Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284
Phone: 360-856-3500
Fax: 360-856-2150
Email: bakertobellinghamreclan@dnr.wa.gov

4. Date checklist prepared:

July 27, 2018

5. Agency requesting checklist:

Washington State Department of Natural Resources.

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

See Implementation Section of The Plan. SEPA review will be conducted for any future site-specific project actions at the time the project is proposed, if required. The projects implementing this plan will be conducted in three tiers as shown in Table 2 of The Plan.

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

The Plan will be evaluated and updated as necessary, but no specific additions are anticipated for the next 10-15 years. Hunting and fishing activities are related to this plan, but are regulated by WDFW separately from this plan.

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

See Non-Project Review Form, Part I, 4. "Regulatory Framework" and 5. "Related Documentation."

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 known.

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

None needed for this proposal, however there will be permits required for the site-specific projects to implement this plan at the time they are proposed. These might include Forest Practice approvals, HPA approvals, or local government storm water, shoreline, or critical area approvals for recreation trails, roads, parking lots, or facilities.

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 proposal, entitled, “Draft Baker to Bellingham Non-Motorized Recreation Plan”, consists of a narrative description of the planning area (Sumas, Red Mountain, Black Mountain, North Fork, Middle Fork, South Fork, Van Zandt Dike, Mirror Lake and Stewart Mountain units of DNR-managed land in Whatcom County), the planning process, a set of objectives and strategies, and a Recreation Planning Concept Map. Together these provide a strategy for the management of non-motorized recreation use in Red Mountain, North Fork, Mirror Lake and Stewart Mountain units. These four units comprise approximately 14,000 acres within the planning area. The entire Recreation Planning Area is approximately 86,000 acres in size. The Plan will provide guidance to the Department of Natural Resources to assist in balancing environmental responsibilities, trust management obligations, and recreation management in the Recreation Planning Area.

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 Recreation Planning Area is located in Whatcom County beginning approximately 5 miles east of Bellingham, adjacent to the Canadian border to the north and Skagit County to the south, and Mount Baker/Snoqualmie National Forest to the east. The entire planning area is situated in multiple townships, including:

T37NR04E SEC. 11 – 14, 23 - 26, 34 – 36
T37NR05E SEC. 2 – 5, 7, 9, 10, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 25 – 36
T37NR06E SEC. 3 – 6, 9, 10, 16, 19, 20, 26, 29 – 32, 36
T38NR04E SEC. 19, 20 – 22, 27 – 29, 32, 33, 36
T38NR05E SEC. 3, 4, 6, 7, 9 – 16, 21 – 28, 32 – 36
T38NR06E SEC. 2 – 4, 9 – 11, 14 – 34
T39NR04E SEC. 1, 2, 10, 15, 25
T39NR05E SEC. 1 – 21, 28 - 30, 33, 34
T39NR06E SEC. 2 – 11, 14 – 18, 20 -23, 26 – 29, 34, 35
T40NR04E SEC. 25, 26, 35, 36
T40NR05E SEC. 1, 4, 5, 11 – 17, 19 – 21, 23 – 34, 36
T40NR06E SEC. 6, 7, 18 – 21, 26 – 36

T41NR05E SEC. 33 – 35

During the evolution of the planning process, consideration for recreation planning focused on four units in the planning area (Red Mountain, North Fork, Stewart Mountain and Mirror Lake units), which are situated in the following townships:

T37NR04E SEC. 11 – 14, 23 – 25

T37NR05E SEC. 7, 18, 19, 30

T38NR04E SEC. 19 – 22, 27 – 29, 32, 33

T39NR5E SEC. 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15

T39NR06E SEC. 2 – 11, 14 – 18, 20 – 23, 26 – 29, 34, 35

T40NR05E SEC. 1, 11 – 14, 23 – 27

T40NR06E SEC. 6, 7, 18, 19, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34

For vicinity of proposal, see Figure 1 and Figure 2 (pp. 2 and 6 of plan) and Concept Map (p. 8 of plan). These maps and plans, as well as others, are available on the Department of Natural Resources' SEPA Center webpage:

<https://www.dnr.wa.gov/non-project-actions/draft-baker-to-bellingham-non-motorized-recreation-plan>

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

NOTE TO READER: There are questions and full sections that have been intentionally deleted from Section B. Environmental Elements. This was done under the guidance of the instructions on page 1 of this document, section: *Use of checklist for nonproject proposals: 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.*

1. Earth

- a. General description of the site
(circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous,
other _____

See Non-Project Review Form, Part II, 7. "Earth."

- b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?

See Non-Project Review Form, Part II, 7. "Earth."

- 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.

See Non-Project Review Form, Part II, 7. "Earth."

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

Indications of slope instability are present within the Recreation Planning Area. This evidence exists on two scales: evidence of large, deep-seated landslide processes, and relatively small-sized, shallow landslide processes.

- 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.

This is a management strategy non-project proposal and contains no specific recommendations for filling or grading. Any future site-specific project actions that require grading and/or filling will include additional environmental review, as required.

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

Issues related to erosion, such as trail construction, are expected to be minimal and measures to mitigate any potential erosion will be part of site-specific proposals. Areas of highly erodible soils were mapped and ranked as low suitability for recreation facilities and trails (see suitability assessment). In addition, The Plan includes restoration strategies intended to address existing erosion within the planning area. Future trail use may cause some additional erosion.

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

There will be the need for road access to trailheads and day-use facilities such as a paragliding/hang gliding launch site, a water access facility and picnicking facilities. Including proposed facilities and trail systems, the total impervious area in the Recreation Planning Area comprises approximately 0.09 percent of the planning area.

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

This proposal by itself will not result in the need for erosion control measures. However existing and future activity supported by this non-project proposal, such as restoration work, trail building or other recreational activities, may require erosion control measures such as silt fencing, wattles, compost socks, check dams or biodegradable erosion control blankets during construction and maintenance activities of trails and recreation facilities. Restoration of impacted areas caused by illegal trails is a key element of the Plan. Proposed strategies for accomplishing restoration include working with the public to assist with restoration efforts and to redirect or restrict recreational uses to prevent further resource damage. Restoration efforts will be prioritized, focusing on public health and safety concerns first, followed by reducing or eliminating sediment delivery to streams, stabilizing stream banks, and restoring soil and vegetation on impacted wetland and riparian buffers.

3. Water

- a. Surface Water:

- 1) Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.

See Non-Project Review Form, Part II, 7. "Water."

- 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.

This is a non-project proposal for a recreation plan that will provide guidance for future recreation management activities in the Recreation Planning Area. Trails will cross over water or could be near the described waters in some cases. Trails will be designed to comply with Whatcom County Critical Area Ordinance, as well as guidance from the Plan (the subject proposal), and other policies in the Non-Project Review Form, Part 1, numbers 4 and 5. In addition, any future site-specific project actions will go through appropriate environmental review, including permit review and additional SEPA review, if required, at the time the project is proposed.

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

Yes, portions of the proposal area are within the 100-year floodplain. The 100-year floodplain and Riparian Management Zones were mapped during the suitability assessment process. Site-specific projects, including any restoration projects that require actions within these floodplains or within Riparian Management Zones, will go through environmental review, SEPA, and permit process, if required.

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

This is a non-project proposal and will not directly result in surface, ground, or runoff water impacts. However, future site-specific project actions will be evaluated separately. For example, such actions may include the following types of measures to control surface, ground, and runoff water impacts:

- **Channel water through ditches and from culverts emptying out onto the forest floor to prevent direct entry to surface waters from overland storm flow.**
- **Collect storm water runoff generated during and after future site-specific project actions by trail surfaces, road surfaces and ditches and then divert it through drainage structures onto the forest floor.**
- **Recreation use impacts to water quality will be monitored and access can be restricted. Trails can be relocated, or seasonal time of use restricted when and if needed to reduce impacts to water quality.**
- **Stabilize soils exposed by trail work with straw bales or revegetation and slash or woody debris as needed.**
- **Some trail areas might be hardened with rock to reduce soil movement toward water.**
- **On newly constructed trails, cross-drain culverts will be utilized as necessary to prevent concentration of runoff to the extent that it would cause gulying of hillsides. Cross-drain culverts will minimize the amount of ditch water that flows into surface waters. Rip-rap will be utilized at culvert inlets and outlets to prevent erosion at these vulnerable points.**

- Stream approaches can be elevated to assure storm runoff is discharged to the forest floor prior to stream crossings.

4. Plants

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:

See Non-Project Review Form, Part II, 7. "Plants and animals."

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

This is a non-project proposal for a recreation plan. Within this proposal are restoration objectives. Restoration activities will be site specific and may include re-vegetation. The Plan supports establishing designated trails and facilities. In both cases, vegetation could be altered by the cutting and removing of trees and other forest vegetation. Recreational use of both designated and non-designated areas can also cause some vegetation changes. Future site-specific project actions that require SEPA environmental review (including evaluation for sensitive plants) will address work at the time the project is proposed.

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

See Non-Project Review Form, Part II, 7. "Plants and animals."

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

All site-specific activities guided by this proposed recreation plan will comply with DNR's 2006 Policy for Sustainable Forests, all Forest Practices Rules and Regulations, as well as the other policies listed in the Non-Project Review Form, Part I, Sections 4 and 5. Restoration work will consider the use of native species and elimination of weeds and invasive species.

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

Weed species documented in the Recreation Planning Area include:

- Garlic Mustard

Weed species listed by the Whatcom County Noxious Weed Control Board (2018 Whatcom County Noxious Weed List):

Class A – Common Name	Class B – Common Name	Class C – Common Name
Bighead Knapweed	Annual Bugloss	Bull Thistle
Clary Sage	Black Knapweed	Canada Thistle
Common Cordgrass	Bohemian Knapweed	Cattail species (non-native)
Eggleaf Spurge	Brazilian Elodea	Common St. Johnswort
False Brome	Brown knapweed	Common Tansy
Flowering Rush	Butterfly Bush	Curly-leaf Pondweed
Garlic Mustard	Common Bugloss	English hawthorn
Giant Hogweed	Common Fennel	English Ivy – four cultivars
Milk Thistle	Common Reed	Evergreen Blackberry
Spanish Broom	Dalmatian Toadflax	Fragrant Waterlily
	Diffuse Knapweed	Himalayan Blackberry
	Eurasian Watermillfoil	Italian Arum
	Garden Loosestrife	Jubata Grass
	Giant Knapweed	Old Man’s Beard
	Hairy Willowherb	Pampas Grass
	Hawkweed species (non-native)	Reed Canarygrass
	Herb-Robert	Spotted Jewelweed
	Himalayan Knotweed	Yellowflag Iris
	Japanese Knotweed	
	Kochia	
	Lesser Celandine	
	Meadow Knapweed	
	Orange Hawkweed	
	Parrotfeather	
	Perennial Pepperweed	
	Poison Hemlock	
	Policemen’s Helmet	
	Purple Loosestrife	
	Saltcedar	
	Scotch Broom	
	Scotch Thistle	
	Shiny Geranium	
	Spotted Knapweed	
	Spurge Laurel	
	Sulfur Cinquefoil	
	Tansy Ragwort	
	Velvetleaf	
	Wand Loosestrife	
	Yellow Archangel	
	Yellow Floating Heart	
	Yellow Nutsedge	
	Yellow Starthistle	

5. Animals

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

birds: hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other:
mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, other:

fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other _____

See Non-Project Review Form, Part II, 7. "Plants and animals."

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

See Non-Project Review Form, Part II, 7. "Plants and animals."

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

See Non-Project Review Form, Part II, 7. "Plants and animals."

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

See Non-Project Review Form, Part II, 8. "Key Issue Assessment."

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

None known.

7. Environmental health

b. Noise

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

See Non-Project Review Form, Part II, 7. "Environmental health."

- 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.

At the time of site-specific trail and facility construction potential short term noise impacts will be addressed through site-specific SEPA review, if required. This is a recreation plan for non-motorized recreation only, there is no anticipated increase of noise. Restoration work will create some other new equipment noise such as excavator or dump truck sounds.

There will be a long term increase in noise at future parking areas which will be addressed during SEPA environmental review for site-specific projects, but noise will also be eliminated where non-designated motorized use areas are closed or relocated.

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

See Non-Project Review Form, Part II, 7. "Environmental health."

At a minimum, conceptual facility locations have been proposed in an effort to be consistent with Department of Ecology noise regulations contained at Washington Administrative Code Chapter 173-60. Noise attenuation is heavily dependent on topography, vegetative conditions, and other site-specific considerations. For this conceptual plan, guidance provided in a June 25, 2009 consultant prepared analysis entitled "Noise Planning for

Motorized Recreation Uses” has directed conceptual location of trailheads. Site-specific proposals for trailheads with the potential for noise impacts will be further analyzed through site-specific SEPA analysis and any local government permitting requirements, as required.

8. Land and shoreline use

- a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties? Will the proposal affect current land uses on nearby or adjacent properties? If so, describe.

See Non-Project Review Form, Part II, 7. “Land and shoreline use.”

- 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?

All of the units in the Planning Area are considered working forest, managed by DNR. Because the proposal is a non-project action, forest land will not be converted to other uses.

- 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:

This non-project proposal will not be affected by any normal farm business operations. Recreation access can be temporarily restricted on DNR forest trust lands to accommodate trust mandated revenue production associated with logging activities.

There are agricultural lands in proximity to the planning area. The future projects associated with this plan will not affect farm or forest operations.

- c. Describe any structures on the site.

There are no structures in any of the units in the planning area.

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

No.

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

See Non-Project Review Form, Part I. “Regulatory Framework.”

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

See Non-Project Review Form, Part I. “Regulatory Framework.”

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

There are multiple designations of the master shoreline program within or adjacent to the Planning Area (Whatcom County Shoreline Management Program: Shorelines of the State Map, March 2007). They include:

- **Shoreline Program Areas of Statewide Significance:**
 - North Fork Nooksack River (from Glacier Creek, east of the Planning Area)
 - South Fork Nooksack River (from Hutchinson Creek)
- **Shoreline Program Coastline and Streams:**
 - Hutchinson Creek
 - Clearwater Creek
 - Middle Fork Nooksack River
 - Racehorse Creek
 - Coal Creek
 - Anderson Creek
 - Maple Creek
 - Skookum Creek
 - Orsino Creek

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

The Recreation Planning Area contains areas classified as critical areas by Whatcom County. During the Land Suitability Assessment process, critical areas were identified and then classified and mapped accordingly:

- Wetlands and Wetland Buffers
- Riparian Areas
- Fish Habitat
- Elk habitat
- Elk Late Summer Forage Areas
- Cliffs, Balds, Talus, and Bluffs
- High Quality and Rare Plant Communities
- Sensitive, Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat
- Soils With High Erosion Potential
- Poorly Drained Soils
- Steep Slopes
- 100-Year Floodplains
- Areas That Have Moved in Previous Landslides
- Areas With High Potential for Landslides

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

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

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

This proposed plan meets the terms of the Washington State Department of Natural Resources Habitat Conservation Plan, dated September 1997 and Policy for Sustainable Forests, December 2006. This proposal is consistent with both Whatcom County's Comprehensive Plan. See also the description of this proposal in the attached SEPA Non-project Review Form, Part I, numbers 1.a. "Background," 1.d. "Planning Process and Schedule/Timeline," 2.c. "Legal Mandates," and 6 "Public Involvement."

- m. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with nearby agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any:

The Plan proposes non-motorized zones for trail development in the interior of several units in the planning area, not in proximity to agricultural lands. Recreation facilities are proposed in several locations within the Recreation Planning Area to minimize impacts to adjacent property.

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?

This is a proposal for a recreation plan and structures generally less than 20 feet in height are included, such as restrooms, kiosks, bridges, and shelters.

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

Proposed structures may affect views in the immediate area where they are located, however these structures will likely be screened by forest trees/vegetation when viewed from a distance.

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

Management practices are site-specific and will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. The restoration of extensive non-designated use impacts on the landscape may improve the aesthetic experience for future users.

12. Recreation

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

See Non-Project Review Form, Part II, 7. Built Environment, b. "Land and shoreline use."

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

See Non-Project Review Form, Part II, 7. Built Environment, b. "Land and shoreline use."

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

Implementing the projects within this proposal will provide the mechanism for sustainable recreation opportunities to develop in this area. The proposed recreation plan will serve to direct recreation use to trails and facilities that are designed to accommodate specific use types. Trails will be designed to minimize environmental damage and increase user safety and satisfaction. This, in conjunction with restoration efforts, will increase the potential for long term recreational

activities to occur in the area. Dispersed trails that are currently causing environmental damage will be repaired, restored, or eliminated, reducing the environmental impacts.

13. Historic and cultural preservation

- a. Are there any buildings, structures, or sites, located on or near the site that are over 45 years old listed in or eligible for listing in national, state, or local preservation registers located on or near the site? If so, specifically describe.

None known.

- 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 are places or objects recorded in the DAHP database.

- 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.

Consulted with DNR's archaeology program, interested tribes and utilized the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) database. As projects are proposed there will be additional consultation in accordance with regulations policies and procedures. Pursuant to Governors Executive Order 05-05 site-specific capital projects will be required to go through a formal consultation process with Tribal entities and DAHP.

- 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.

This is a non-project proposal and will not reduce DNR protection of any areas of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance. The 2006 Board of Natural Resources policy for protection of cultural resources in the 2006 Policy for Sustainable Forests will be followed. WDFW and DNR will comply with Executive Order 05-05, RCWs 27.44 and 27.53, and WAC 365-196-450 to protect cultural and historic sites in the Recreation Planning Area.

14. Transportation

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site or affected geographic area and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.

See Non-Project Review Form, Part II, 7. "Transportation."

- 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?

Yes. See Non-Project Review Form, Part II, 7. "Transportation."

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

This is a proposal for a recreation plan; site-specific project actions that require environmental review will be addressed during specific project proposals. Three trailheads are proposed. Parking capacity will be established during facility design.

- 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).

This is a non-project proposal. Site-specific project actions that require environmental review will be addressed during specific project proposals. This proposal includes future trailhead construction that will include minimal road work. In addition, all units in the planning area are working commercial forest and it is expected that future project proposals will include both new forest road construction and road abandonment.

- 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?

This is a non-project proposal. Vehicular trips will be assessed when SEPA review is needed at the time of specific project proposals. The type of use and traffic in the area is expected to change and vehicular trips may decrease. Historic recreation activities have occurred in the Recreation Planning Area throughout the year, with seasonal increases from Memorial Day through Labor Day. There is also an increase in activity during hunting season each year. Visitors access the forest from multiple locations. Vehicular assessment will occur as part of the trailhead development.

- 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.

Forest products will not be impacted because of the DNR forest land trust mandate requiring commitment to the trust. The primary interest of the trust is protecting the revenue generating capability of the land, keeping it productive. The Multiple Use Act providing recreation comes second and recreation access can be temporarily restricted. In Whatcom County, there are family farming and ranching operations that use the existing county road network throughout the year. Following the development of trailheads in the Recreation Planning Area, there is the potential for reducing usage and improving conditions for local agricultural use.

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

Monitoring and adaptive management will help assure recreational uses are sustainable. Extensive road system and parking planning with a wide stakeholder group for this plan should prevent most transportation issues across the landscape. Project planning studies including project SEPA analysis will help address site-specific issues at the time of each project proposal.

15. Public services

- a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, public transit, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.

Since no public services exist in the Recreation Planning Area, there may be a need for future public services. Future site-specific projects that require SEPA environmental review will be evaluated at the time they are proposed. It is anticipated that the type amount of use, will be better managed. Uses and behaviors will less frequently result in emergency or police response as facilities are designed, maintained, and monitored. A designed developed trail system will be mapped and should provide easier emergency access.

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

Providing designated recreation use areas and more enforcement should reduce the current need for public services.

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:  _____

Name of signee: Laurie Bergvall

Position and Agency/Organization: NW Region Assistant Manager, DNR

Date Submitted: July 25, 2018

D. SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS

(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.

****Note to reader: Attached to this Environmental Checklist is a Non-project Review Form (NPRF) prepared by DNR for this proposal. This form contains supplemental information that goes into more detail about the elements of the environment and provides more background information about The Plan that is the subject of this non-project proposal.**

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?

The Plan is intended to improve conditions in the Recreation Planning Area and should not result in any increase in impacts to the resources listed above. Central components of The Plan include restoration as well as directing recreation use to appropriate areas within the planning area. This will likely reduce impacts to the listed resources. The trail and facility management recommendations within the plan address noise production considerations and direct uses to specific areas. For more detail, see checklist answer to 7.b.3.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

See Non Project Review Form, Part II. 8. "Key Issue Assessment."

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

Affects to plants, animals, fish, or aquatic life habitats were addressed during the biological suitability assessment portion of the planning process. The biological suitability assessment identified areas with particular sensitive habitats and, to the degree possible, conceptual trail and facility locations avoid these areas as possible when mapped at a broad scale. Site-specific analyses will be required for all project proposals to address site-specific field conditions. If there are cases where avoidance is not possible, DNR biologists will be consulted to determine site-specific management strategies to minimize recreation disturbance in such areas. Restoration work will reduce existing impacts to all listed resources.

Activities in the Recreation Planning Area will be managed consistent with the proposed recreation plan, DNR's Habitat Conservation Plan, Washington Forest Practices Rules and Regulations, and the Board of Natural Resources adopted Policy for Sustainable Forests (2006). Management activities proposed will undergo site-specific environmental review in compliance with the State Environmental Policy Act when required.

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

See Non Project Review Form, Part II. 8. “Key Issue Assessment.”

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

The proposal will not result in a depletion of energy or natural resources.

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

Does not apply.

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?

This nonproject proposal will not reduce protection for environmentally sensitive or governmentally protected areas within the Recreation Planning Area because of restoration and conceptual location of trail and facility elements in the proposed plan, and the suitability assessment that was conducted for proper location of any new recreational use areas. There are several Whatcom County parks adjacent to the planning area, including Lake Whatcom Park, Silver Lake Park, and Canyon Lake Community Forest. Site-specific projects adjacent to these areas will be coordinated with the other land management agencies as appropriate.

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

All activity will be subject to DNR’s 1997 HCP and 2006 Riparian Forest Restoration Strategy, Board of Natural Resources’ 2006 Policy for Sustainable Forests (Habitat, Riparian Conservation, Cultural Resources and Public Access and Recreation policies), DNR’s trail guidelines, WDFW’s conservation and management strategies for Priority Habitats and Species and applicable species’ recovery plans for both federally and state-listed species of conservation concern (i.e., threatened, endangered, or other special legal status).

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?

This non-project proposal would not change any land or shoreline uses. See Part B.8.g. for shoreline designation. Also see answer to question 4.a. “Regulatory Framework” in the attached SEPA Non-Project Review form for more information on the Shoreline Management Act.

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

DNR will consult with the local governments and interested tribes concerning specific shoreline protection measures during project design and permit review at the time projects are proposed to implement this plan.

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

Not much increase is anticipated; see questions 14, 15, and 16 in this checklist. Further environmental analysis will be conducted when any future site-specific road, parking, trail, or other transportation related proposals that implement The Plan require project-phase SEPA review.

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

None at this time.

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

The likelihood of any such conflicts is low, given the extensive public, agency, tribal, and stakeholder collaboration in the planning process as documented in The Plan. Consultation with all stakeholders, tribes and agencies will continue during the planning and design of each future project, including site-specific SEPA review when required.