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## **SEPA ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST** Washington Geological Survey

### ***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:

*Vellema Sand & Gravel Pit*

2. Name of applicant:

*Ferndale Ready Mix & Gravel, Inc.*

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

*Applicant:*

*Keith Korthuis*

*General Manager*

*144 River Road*

*Lynden, WA 98264*

*425-961-7355*

*SEPA Checklist/Permit Contact:*

*Kurt Siegfried*

*Resource Manager, LG*

*7554 185th Ave NE, Suite 100*

*Redmond WA 98052*

*(206) 678-3131*

4. Date checklist prepared:

*1/29/2019*

5. Agency requesting checklist:

*Washington State Department of Natural Resources*

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

*Aggregate extraction (mining) has been occurring since the 1980's and is now complete. Importation of clean soils proposed to begin upon approval of revised reclamation plan.*

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

*No*

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

*Clean Soils Policy (Ferndale Readymix & Gravel, 2019)*

*Geotechnical Engineering Evaluation (Geotest Services, Inc., September, 2018)*

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.

*Application for a revised reclamation plan, Washington State Department of Natural Resources.*

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

*Revised Reclamation Plan, Washington State Department of Natural Resources  
Whatcom County approval*

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.)

*Revision of the existing reclamation plan (Permit No. 70-011870) to accept clean soils. Imported clean soils are proposed to be used to reclaim the 11.55 acre mine site operated by Ferndale Readymix & Gravel.*

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 site is located at 1861 East Pole Road approximately two miles southwest of the city of Everson, Washington in Whatcom County. Maps included in this reclamation revision depict the proposed location. QRT-Sections; NE 11, NW 11, T39N R03 E*

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

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

a. General description of the site:

(circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other \_\_\_open water\_\_\_\_\_

*The site is a former aggregate mine and is characterized by an open water body of approximately 7.5 acres with a gently sloping access road along the western margin. Near vertical slopes occupy the western boundary and generally measure 10.0 feet in height.*

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

*Generally the steepest slope can be found along the western permit boundary with an overall slope at 1H:1V.*

- c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any agricultural land of long-term commercial significance and whether the proposal results in removing any of these soils.

*The site is predominantly composed of glacial outwash, sand, gravel, silts, and clays.*

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

No

- 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.

*Imported clean soil will be used to fill a previously mined sand & gravel pit, clean fill will also be used to enhance reclamation throughout the former mine site. Imported clean soils will encompass an approximate 11 acre area and total about 400,000 cubic yards. Clean fill will originate from construction sites throughout Whatcom County.*

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

*Some erosion could occur on newly placed fill, however, standard erosion control measures will be used for the duration of the reclamation project, in compliance with the NPDES Sand and Gravel General Stormwater Permit for the site.*

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

*The proposal does not add any additional structures, paved roads, etc.*

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

*Erosion will be controlled by diverting as much stormwater around the proposed fill area as feasible. BMPs included in the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan which will reduce erosion and other impacts to the site include pit buffer zones and proper maintenance of haul roads.*

## **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.

*During reclamation, exhaust from earthmoving equipment would be released to the air. Dust may be generated during onsite activities, however, dust suppression controls will be employed.*

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

None anticipated

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

*All construction equipment will be kept in good working order and will be fitted with standard exhaust systems. Fugitive dust will be controlled through watering or in compliance with other best management practices outlined in the SWPPP for the site.*

### 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 site contains a 7.5 acre lake created from sand & gravel extraction. Water depths reach a maximum of 20.0 feet. This feature has no natural inlet or outlet and exists as an extension of the water table.*

- 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.

*Yes. Reclamation activities will eliminate the water feature by backfilling the open pit with clean soils.*

- 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.

*It is estimated to take approximate 400,000 yards to reclaimed the former mine site. Clean reclamation material will typically come from construction sites throughout Whatcom County.*

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

*No.*

- 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.

No.

- 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.

*No waste material will be discharged to ground.*

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.

*Runoff to the site consists of stormwater. Stormwater runoff will be directed to either the north infiltration feature and or the south property boundary. Both locations will allow runoff to naturally recharge the aquifer.*

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

No.

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

*All stormwater currently drains to the mined out pit. Reclamation actives will eliminate the open pit and redirect stormwater to a northern infiltration feature and to the south where it will be allowed to directly recharge the aquifer.*

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

*Ferndale Readymix & Gravel will adhere to best practices as set forth in its active NPDES permit.*

#### 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

DNR Special Concerns report did not reveal any T&E species in Section. 7/16/2020, Rian Skov

\_\_\_ water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other  
\_\_\_ other types of vegetation

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

*The proposed area has been previously disturbed by mining activities and does not contain appreciable amounts of vegetation.*

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

*No known threatened or endangered plant species are known to be on or near the site.*

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

*Proposed area will be planted with seed mixtures as outlined in the SM-8a.*

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

*Himalayan Blackberry, Scotch Broom*

## 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.

DNR Special Concerns report did not reveal any T&E species in Section. 7/16/2020, R.Skov

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.

*No threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.*

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

*Waterfowl migrate through this area as it is in the Pacific Flyway*

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

*Reclaimed area will bring open space allowing deer and other species to forage.*

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

*No known invasive animal species on or near the site.*

## 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.

*Current energy includes electricity supplied by Whatcom County PUD. No new energy sources anticipated.*

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

*No.*

- 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.

*It is possible that small amounts of oil, diesel or gasoline could accidentally spill onto the ground. Any spill will be immediately isolated and cleaned in accordance with the Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasures Plan for the site.*

- 1) Describe any known or possible contamination at the site from present or past uses.

*No known contamination from past uses.*

- 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.

*No known hazardous chemical or conditions which could affect the project.*

- 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.

*No toxic or hazardous chemicals will be stored on-site. Any fueling of equipment will occur off-site or by a mobile fuel truck.*

- 4) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

*Any spills of oils, lubes or diesel used for equipment will not likely require emergency services.*

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

Ferndale Readymix & Gravel will adhere to the policies of the site SPCC.

**b. Noise**

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

*The main sources of existing noise is traffic on East Pole Road, daytime mining activities from existing operations to the west and south of the site, and Bode's Pre-Cast operation to the north of the site.*

- 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.

*It is not anticipated that the project will create any new types or levels of noise which do not already exist at or near the site.*

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

*Earthworking equipment used at the site will be fitted with low-frequency backup alarms and will only work during the daytime hours.*

**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 current use of the site is aggregate mining, zoned Mineral Resource Lands (MRL) overlay. Nearby and adjacent property zoning includes; Mineral Resource Lands, Rural (R5A, R10A), Light Impact Industrial (LII) and Agriculture (AG).*

- 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?

*It is possible that the site was formally used as working farmlands prior to the aggregate mine. Agricultural activities would have predated current zoning and use.*

- 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.

*The project site is largely void of any structures, a scale platform remains along the western entrance to the site.*

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

*All equipment and structures will be removed during and after final reclamation.*

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

*Mineral Resource Lands (MRL).*

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

*Current zoning Mineral Resource Lands (MRL). Future land use is Recreation Open Space (ROS).*

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

*The project area is not in a shoreline management area, however, parcels within the DNR Reclamation permit boundaries but outside the project area are in the Rural Conservancy Shoreline Management Area.*

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?

*At any given time approximately 3 people would work at the site, this number will be reduced to 0 upon completion of reclamation.*

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

*None*

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:

*The proposal is consistent with current land uses and zoning.*

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

*None. This proposal does not impact agricultural or forest lands.*

**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?

*The project will not alter, affect or obstruct existing views.*

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

*None.*

**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. Work will be performed during daylight hours.*

- 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?

*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?

*Fishing, Hunting, Hiking, Biking, Rafting occur within the vicinity of the project location in Whatcom County.*

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

*No. Opportunities in the vicinity will remain. The project is on private property where no public recreational activities are currently available.*

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

*N/A*

**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. The Washington Information System for Architectural and Archaeological Records Data does not identify any such buildings, structures, or sites.*

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. This has been an active sand and gravel mine pit for over 20 years.*

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.

*N/A*

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.

*N/A*

**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 site is bordered by East Pole Road to the North with direct access via the existing entrance.*

Special Concerns report shows at least one historic structure and one historic register location within the section. The properties are not within the project boundary.  
7/16/2020, R. Skov

- 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?

*No. Public transit access is approximately 2.0 miles northeast to the City of Everson.*

- 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*

- e. 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).

*No.*

- f. Will the project or proposal use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.

*No.*

- g. 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?

*The proposal will temporality increases truck traffic near the immediate vicinity from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. This traffic will be comparable to when the mine was operational. Upon completion of the reclamation project, traffic volume will return to pre-existing conditions and what it has been in time since mining at the site ceased.*

- 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.

*No.*

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

*None proposed.*

## **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.

*No.*

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

None proposed.

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

a. Circle utilities currently available at the site:

electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system,  
other \_\_\_\_\_

i. 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.

*No new utilities are proposed for the project.*

**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 Keith Korhuss

Position and Agency/Organization G.M. - Ferndale Ready Mix & Gravel

Date Submitted: 3/21/19

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

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

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

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

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

The proposal will not significantly change discharge to onsite water systems. A natural infiltration feature will be constructed as part of this reclamation revision.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

N/A

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

No likely adverse impact on plants, animals, fish or marine life as the proposed project area is within an active mine site.

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

The proposal should not impact any environmentally sensitive area.

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

N/A

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?

N/A

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

No known conflict.