

SEPA ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

Purpose of checklist:

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

Instructions for applicants:

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

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

Instructions for Lead Agencies:

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

Use of checklist for nonproject proposals:

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

A. Background

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable: Department of Natural Resources Reclamation Permit Update, Polaris Mine
2. Name of applicant: Ferndale Ready Mix & Gravel, Inc.
3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:

144 River Road
Lynden, WA 98264
(360) 354-1400

Project Contact:

Lesla Starkenburg - Attorney at Law PO Box 231
Lynden, WA 98264
(360) 354-7822 Fax: (360) 354-6929
starkenburgkroontje@msn.com

4. Date checklist prepared: May 13, 2019
5. Agency requesting checklist: Washington State Department of Natural Resources
6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):

Mineral extraction is already permitted onsite and will continue along with the filling of the site over a 15+ year period depending upon market demand of the material extracted and available for reclamation.

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

There are no specific plans at this time.

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

SEPA review was completed on the entire property when previous Washington State Department of Natural Resources reclamation permits were obtained.

A study of the mineral content and quality was completed for the site in 2004.

A wetland delineation for a portion of the site was completed in 2004.

A study of the area hydrology was completed in 2004.

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.

The applicant is unaware of any applications, except those related to mineral extraction.

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

Washington State Department of Natural Resources Reclamation Permit Update

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.)

This is an update to an existing DNR reclamation permit #70-013095. This proposal will modify the reclamation of the 14.74 acre site to restore it to the original grade through importation of up to 2,000,000 cubic yards of clean fill material. All imported fill shall be made with nonnoxious, noncombustible, and relatively incompactible solids and will adhere to the applicant's material handling policy.

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.

Whatcom County Parcel Numbers:
90110 154198 0000
390110 188200 0000

SE quarter of Section 10, Township
39N Range 1E, W.M., Whatcom
County.

Address:
3587 & 3563 Brown Road, Ferndale, WA 98248

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)?

The existing slope for the mineral extraction operation is less than 40%.

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.

Bellingham Glaciomarine Drift and Deming Sand

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

The site is stable. However, storm runoff has previously caused some side wall instability.

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.

Under the reclamation plan that is proposed, clean imported fill from local construction projects will be used to create the final reclaimed topography over most of the 14.74 acre permit area.

Approximately 2,000,000 cubic yards of imported clean fill material will be required for the project.

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

The vegetation on the site will be altered to allow for the mineral extraction. This coupled with the creation of slopes to remove the minerals could increase 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 no additional impervious surfaces on site. The existing buildings will stay in place.

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

The applicant will comply with the requirements of the Department of Ecology's general permit (NPDES). Part of this permit is a requirement that an erosion control plan be developed and implemented. In addition, reclamation of the site will occur in segments to decrease the exposed extraction area. Erosion controls will be implemented on site as necessary.

2. Air

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.

Dust will be generated from the extraction and fill activity. Emissions from a front end loader and truck traffic will result.

At some points in the project screening equipment may be introduced on site. This equipment will be powered by electricity or by a diesel powered electric generator. Emissions in the form of dust and possible diesel fumes may result.

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

No.

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

The dust is controlled in part by maintained access road. In addition, the Applicant has a water truck available that can be used to provide dust suppression measures. Buffers will be intact along the borders of the site and will be vegetated to control transient dust. The Applicant owns the property to the South and can buffer the dust impacts. Equipment is well maintained to minimize emissions from equipment.

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.

There are no streams or standing water bodies on the project site. There is a run off from a county ditch that will continue to cross the site. This run off swale has been relocated to different portions of the property over the past years. As part of the extraction and reclamation the swale will be moved to near the west property line and will discharge through a level spreader in the same fashion and area that currently exists.

- 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.

The work is described above.

- 3) Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.

None.

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

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.

None.

b. Ground Water:

- 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 into the 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.

With the exception of the off site water that will be routed around the site, storm water discharges into the ground and does not run off the site. The extraction and fill activity will be in compliance with a storm water management plan implemented through the Department of Ecology NPDES permit program.

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

It is possible that small amounts of lube, oil and fueling material could drip from equipment and could absorb into the ground. Best management practices and equipment maintenance programs will be implemented to control any potential impact.

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

No drainage patterns will be altered. An overflow from the County ditch will enter the site in the same spot and leave the site in the same spot. The water will be routed around the site.

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

Best management practices for fuels and on site equipment will be implemented. Whatcom County's performance standards for surface mining and accessory activities will also be followed. Spill kits and spill response plans will be kept on site.

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.

DNR Special Concerns report did not show any T&E species in the section.

-R. Skov 9/24/2020

___ wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage, other

___ water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other

X other types of vegetation

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

All vegetation will be removed from the extraction site with the exception of that contained in the buffer areas. However, the vegetation in the buffer areas will be removed if necessary to replace with improved landscaping.

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

None are known to the Applicant's knowledge.

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

The site will be revegetated in accordance with the reclamation plan narrative.

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

None.

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: Skunk, Raccoon, Opossum, Raccoon, Rabbits, Rodents

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

Special Concerns report did not show any T&E species in Section.

-R. Skov
9/24/2020

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

None known to the applicant.

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

Yes, Pacific Flyway.

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

None.

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

None.

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? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.

Diesel fuels will be required for trucks and loaders. Electricity will power the screen plant. However, a diesel powered generator may generate the electricity.

- 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:

None.

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? If so, describe.

The only additional hazard could be from a spill of diesel or other petroleum lubricants. This threat is very minor as the operation will comply with the requirements of the Whatcom County Code for critical aquifer recharge areas. The operator of the machine would detect a spill from a broken line.

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

None known to the Applicant.

- 2) Describe existing hazardous chemicals/conditions that might affect project development and design. This includes underground hazardous liquid and gas transmission pipelines located within the project area and in the vicinity.

None known to the Applicant.

- 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.

None known to the Applicant.

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

None.

- 5) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:
The project design will take into account the potential environmental health hazards. Diesel fueling for the loading equipment is completed through the use of a delivery truck so that no fuel is stored in the extracted portion of the site. Spill kits and emergency response plans will be kept on site.

b. Noise

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

None.

- 2) What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site.

The project will involve noise from truck traffic with back-up alarms and front end loaders. Possible noise from a screen plant may be added at a later date. Hours of operation will be in accordance with the Development and Performance standards adopted by Whatcom County.

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

Hours of operation will be limited to Monday through Saturday and will be in compliance with the Whatcom County Performance Standards. In addition, buffers will remain around a portion of the site. The project will also lower the working area so that the actual extraction activity will be taking place below the surrounding grade thus further blocking the noise.

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.

The current use of the site is as mineral extraction and pasture land. Two habitable residential units and outbuildings exist on the site.

- 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?

Yes, pasture land.

- 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.

There are two houses on the site. There are also accessory outbuildings on the site.

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

No.

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

The site is zoned Mineral Resource Overlay District with an underlying Rural 5 zoning.

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

Mineral Resource Land.

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

Not applicable.

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

No.

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

Approximately 2-3 people will periodically work on site. A number of employees will work as a result of sand and gravel being placed into the stream of commerce.

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

None.

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

None.

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

The proposal is located within Whatcom County's Mineral Resource Overlay District. The purpose of this District is to allow for the removal of mineral

resources. The reclamation of the project will be consistent with the rural uses within the area.

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

The removal of site from pasture use will be temporary. The site will be reclaimed to pasture.

9. Housing

- a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

None.

- b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

None.

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

None.

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?

None.

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

The topography of the land will be temporarily altered.

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

Mineral extraction will take place in phases. Buffer areas will be created and maintained where necessary.

11. Light and Glare

- a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?

None.

- 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:

None.

12. Recreation

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

None.

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

No.

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

None.

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 ? If so, specifically describe.

No.

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.

None.

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.

This property has been the subject of previous permit reviews and approvals. Routing the applications to the interested parties and review of GIS information has not revealed historic or cultural resources.

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.

None.

Two historic properties and one archaeological site (Site ID WH00030) were noted in the Section per Special Concerns report. No new areas of disturbance are proposed by this revision, only inportation of soil for reclamation.
-R. Skov
9/24/2020

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.

The site is served by the North Star Road and the Brown Road. However, all traffic associated with this project will exit to North Star Road.

- 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. Whatcom Transit Authority nearest transit stop is approximately 3 miles away.

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

No formal parking spaces will be created.

- 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). _____

No.

- 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?

Traffic will be limited to Monday through Saturday. It is anticipated that 100,000 cubic yards of material will be removed yearly. The material will be transported from site with truck and trailer units. Assuming a year round operation, approximately thirty-two (32) truck trips (sixteen round trips) per day will remove the material. Peak operation will be during the construction season.

Four trips (two round trips) can be anticipated per day, Monday through Saturday, to account for equipment operators, deliveries and inspections.

The fill material will be on a return trip back haul. to the extent possible.

- 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.

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.

No.

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

None.

16. Utilities

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

No utilities are required for the project.

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.

None.

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 Christy McDonough

Position and Agency/Organization Land Manager, Lehigh Hanson

Date Submitted: 10 Sept 2020