

## WAC 197-11-960 Environmental checklist.

### ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

#### *Purpose of checklist:*

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

**Point Defiance Bypass Project required a federal decision subject to the National Environmental Policy Act, an environmental assessment (EA) needed to be prepared. SEPA Rules allow use of an EA in place of a DNS. This checklist is being used to document the fact that the EA addresses the elements of the environment that are included in the checklist.**

#### A. BACKGROUND

1. Name of proposed project:

**Point Defiance Bypass Project**

2. Name of applicant: **Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)**

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

**Carol Lee Roalkvam**

**310 Maple Park Avenue SE**

**Olympia, WA 98504-7331**

**360-705-7126**

4. Date checklist prepared:

**March 11, 2013**

5. Agency requesting checklist:

**Washington State Department of Transportation**

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

**Construction of the project would begin in 2015 and would be finished in 2017**

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

**WSDOT is implementing a program of infrastructure improvement projects along the Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor (PNWRC). To fund these projects, WSDOT applied for and was selected for grant funding through the Federal Railroad Administration's High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Program. The PNWRC Improvement Program would improve the reliability of service and allow for two additional Amtrak Cascades service round trips between Seattle, Washington, and Portland, Oregon. PNWRC improvements would also support Amtrak's longer-distance Pacific Northwest passenger rail service, the Coast Starlight. The PNWRC Improvement Program is made up of approximately 17 component projects. The Federal Railroad Administration issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) in November 2010 on the PNWRC Improvements based on a programmatic environmental assessment (completed in September 2009). In advancing the corridor improvements, WSDOT and FRA collaborated on developing project-level environmental documents to assess the potential impacts of the component projects along the corridor.**

**One of the component projects is the Point Defiance Bypass Project, which would address deficiencies in the existing passenger rail operations around Point Defiance between Tacoma and Nisqually in Washington State.**

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

**Point Defiance Bypass Project Environmental Assessment prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for U. S. Department of Transportation Federal Railroad Administration (issued for public review October 1, 2013, revised February 22, 2013 and issued with federal decision – FONSI - March 1, 2013).**

**Note that the Project Environmental Assessment and its supporting technical reports are posted on-line [http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/Rail/PNWRC\\_PtDefiance/ProjectEnvironmental.htm](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/Rail/PNWRC_PtDefiance/ProjectEnvironmental.htm) and CDs are available by contacting the WSDOT Rail Office at (360) 705-7900.**

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.

**At the time this checklist was prepared, no permits were pending for other proposals directly affecting the property covered by this project.**

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

**See Pages 3-7 and 3-8 of the EA**

11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site.

**See Pages 3-2 through 3-6 of the EA**

12. Location of the proposal.

**See Page 3-3 of the EA, Figure 2**

## **B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS**

### **1. Earth**

a. General description of the site:

**See Page 4-19 of the EA See Pages 14-23 of the Geology & Soils Discipline Report (DR)**

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

**See Page 4-19 of the EA**

c. What general types of soils are found on the site

**See Page 4-19 of the EA**

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

**See Page 4-19 of the EA, Table 7**

e. Describe the purpose, type, and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.

**New fill: Approximately 60,000 cubic yards; Grading: Approximately 90,000 cubic yards**

**See Pages 31-32 of the Geology & Soils DR for sources of fill**

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

**See Page 4-19 of the EA; See Pages 29-30 of the Geology & Soils DR**

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

**New impervious surface: Approximately 15,000 square feet; See Page 30, 32 of the Water Resources DR**

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

**See Page 4-20 of the EA**

### **2. Air**

a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal (i.e., dust, automobile, odors, industrial wood smoke) during construction and when the project is completed?

**See Pages 4-2 and 4-3 of the EA; See Pages 27-29 of the Air Quality DR, specifically Exhibit 5 on Page 29 for operational quantities**

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

**See Page 4-3 of the EA**

1) Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:

**See Page 4-3 of the EA**

### **3. Water**

a. Surface:

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

**See Pages 4-21 and 4-22 of the EA, specifically Table 8 and Figure 7; See Pages 19-23 of the Water Resources DR**

- 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.

**See Page 4-23 of the EA; See Pages 29-30 of the Water Resources DR for the work over or adjacent to**

- 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.

**See Page 4-27 of the EA;**

- 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.

**See Page 4-21 to 4-23 of the EA; See pages 24-25 of the Water Resources DR**

- 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.

**See Page 4-23 of the EA;**

b. Ground:

- 1) Will ground water be withdrawn, or will water be discharged to ground water?

**See Page 4-23 of the EA;**

- 2) Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any

**See Page 4-23 of the EA;**

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.

**See Page 4-23 of the EA; See Pages 33-34 of the Water Resources DR**

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

**See Page 4-23 of the EA; See Pages 31-34 of the Water Resources DR**

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

**See Page 4-23 of the EA; See Pages 35-37 of the Water Resources DR**

#### 4. Plants

a. Types of vegetation found on the site:

**See Pages 4-24, 4-26 of the EA; See Pages 21-23 of the Fish, Wildlife, and Vegetation DR**

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

**See Page 4-27 of the EA; See Page 24 of the Fish, Wildlife, and Vegetation DR**

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

**See Page 4-26 of the EA; See Page 23 of the Fish, Wildlife, and Vegetation DR**

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

**See Pages 4-27 and 4-33 of the EA; See Page 26 of the Fish, Wildlife, and Vegetation DR; and Pages 53-54 of the Visual Quality DR**

#### 5. Animals

known to be on or near the site.

**See Pages 4-25, 4-26, and 4-27 of the EA; See Pages 17-21 of the Fish, Wildlife, and Vegetation DR**

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

**See Pages 4-25, 4-26, and 4-27 of the EA; See Pages 17-21 of the Fish, Wildlife, and Vegetation DR**

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

**See 4-26 of the EA. The site is an existing rail line adjacent to Interstate 5. It is not part of a known migration route. Most of the terrestrial habitat in the proposed Project vicinity is fragmented and provides poor habitat for most wildlife species, except those that have adapted to urban areas. Lakes and other surface waters that surround the proposed Project are utilized by waterfowl which fly between waterbodies, but these aerial migration routes, due to high existing baseline disturbance, will not be affected during construction or subsequent operation of the passenger rail service.**

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

**See Page 4-27 of the EA; Federal resource agencies concurred with no effect on listed species, See Appendix S: Agency Correspondence.**

## 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?

**See Page 4-62 of the EA; See Page 13 of the Energy Discipline Report (DR)**

b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties?

**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:

**See Pages 4-62 and 4-63 of the EA; See Pages 14-18 of the Energy DR**

## 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.

**See Pages 4-28 through 4-31 of the EA; See Pages 37-42 of the Hazardous Materials DR**

1) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

**See Page 4-31 of the EA**

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

**See Page 4-31 of the EA; See Pages 55-63 of the Hazardous Materials DR**

### b. Noise

1) What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project?

**See Page 4-6 and 4-7 of the EA; See Page 31 of the Noise & Vibration DR**

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

**See Pages 4-8 and 4-10 of the EA; See Noise & Vibration DR**

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

**See Page 4-11 of the EA; See Pages 55-57 of the Noise & Vibration Discipline Report**

## 8. Land and shoreline use

a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties?

**See Page 4-47 of the EA; See Pages 17-33 of the Land Use DR**

b. Has the site been used for agriculture? If so, describe.

**See Page 4-47 of the EA**

c. Describe any structures on the site.

**See Pages 3-2 to 3-4 and 4-35 of the EA**

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

**See Page 4-47 of the EA**

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

**See Page 4-47 of the EA; See Pages 43-55 of the Land Use DR**

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

**See Page 4-47 of the EA; See Pages 43-55 of the Land Use DR**

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

**See Pages 34-36 of the Land Use DR**

h. Has any part of the site been classified as an "environmentally sensitive" area? If so, specify.

**See Pages 34-38 of the Land Use DR**

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

**See Page 4-44 to 4-46 of the EA;**

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

**See Page 4-44 and 4-48 of the EA (no displacements are anticipated); See Pages 38-39 of the SocioEconomic/Environmental Justice DR**

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

**See Page 4-44 and 4-48 of the EA**

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

**See Page 4-48 of the EA; See Pages 54-62 of the Land Use DR**

## 9. Housing

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

***Does not apply, housing is not part of this project***

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

**See Page 4-44 and 4-45 of the EA; See Pages 38-39 of the SocioEconomic/Environmental Justice DR**

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

***Does not apply, no adverse impacts are anticipated***

## 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?

**See Pages 4-32 and 4-33 of the EA**

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

**See Page 4-32 of the EA; See Pages 41-51 of the Visual Quality DR**

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

**See Pages 53-54 of the Visual Quality DR**

**See Page 4-33 of the EA**

## 11. Light and glare

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

**Sources of light produced by the project could include: headlights from the trains' engines; streetlights (luminaires) and/or security lights from a new parking facility near Freighthouse Square; headlights from vehicles using the new parking facility; luminaires and/or security lights from a loading /unloading platform for the Amtrak Cascades passenger trains; and new luminaires and flashing red warning lights at the following at-grade intersections: Clover Creek Drive Southwest; North Thorne Lane Southwest; Berkeley Street Southwest; 41st Division Drive; and Barksdale Avenue. Amtrak hours of operation will be after 7 a.m. and until 10 p.m.**

b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?

**The light produced by the new luminaires, security lights, train headlights, and flashing red warning lights are all safety features that must be seen in order to be effective. Glare that may be produced by passing trains is temporary in nature since the trains would be present for only a short amount of time.**

c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?

**No existing off-site sources of light or glare should affect the project.**

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:

Since a train engine's headlights and the flashing red warning lights at at-grade intersections are safety features that must be seen in order to be effective, and since the hours of operation will limit the amount of light produced by train headlights during hours of darkness, no measures to reduce or control these sources of light are proposed. Freighthouse Square and the new loading/unloading platform for the Amtrak Coast Starlight passenger trains would be located within the Tacoma Dome Area, which the City of Tacoma has zoned as UCX-TD (Urban Center Mixed-Use District). The new parking facility and new loading/unloading platform would be designed to conform with the City of Tacoma's Municipal Code for this district. Because of this, light and/or glare from the project should not be significant safety hazards, nor would views be significantly affected.

## 12. Recreation

- a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?  
**Pages 4-49 through 4-59 of the EA See the Public Services & Utilities DR**
- b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.  
**See Pages 4-47 and 4-48 of the EA; See Page 38 of the Public Services & Utilities DR**
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:  
***Does not apply, no adverse impacts are anticipated***

## 13. Historic and cultural preservation

- a. Are there any places or objects listed on, or proposed for, national, state, or local preservation registers known to be on or next to the site? If so, generally describe.  
**Washington State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurrence is contained in Appendix A of the FONSI. Additional information is on Pages 4-35 and 4-36 of the EA**
- b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site.  
**See Page 4-35 of the EA**
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts, if any:  
**See Page 4-36 of the EA**

## 14. Transportation

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site, and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.  
**See Page 3-3 of the EA; See Traffic & Transportation DR**
- b. Is site currently served by public transit? If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?  
**See Page 4-13 of the EA; See Pages 29-32 of the Traffic & Transportation DR**
- c. How many parking spaces would the completed project have? How many would the project eliminate?  
**See Page 4-14 through 4-18; Page 4-44; and Page 4-48 of the EA; See Transportation DR**
- d. Will the proposal require any new roads or streets, or improvements to existing roads or streets, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).  
**See Pages 3-3 and 3-4 of the EA**
- e. Will the project use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.  
**See Page 1-1 to 1-3 of the EA**
- f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur.  
**See Page 4-16 of the EA; See Pages 88-89 of the Traffic & Transportation DR**
- g. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:  
**See Page 4-18 of the EA; See Pages 167-168 of the Traffic & Transportation DR**

## 15. Public services

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

**See Pages 4-60 to 4-61 of the EA**

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

**See Page 4-61 of the EA**

**16. Utilities**

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

**See Page 4-49 of the EA; See Pages 33-35 of the Public Services & Utilities DR**

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.

**See Page 4-60 of the EA; See Pages 37-42 of the Public Services & Utilities DR**

**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: Megann White

Date Submitted: 3/13/2013