

EA 2021-003
ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

A. BACKGROUND

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

- a. 2021 Periodic Update to the Benton County Shoreline Master Program
- b. Amendment to the Benton County Code - Title 15 - Environment .

2. Name of applicant:

Benton County, WA

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

Greg Wendt, Director of Community Development
Planning Division
P.O. Box 910
Prosser WA 99350



4. Date checklist prepared:

January 19, 2021

5. Agency requesting checklist:

Benton County, WA

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

Benton County proposes to locally adopt the 2021 Periodic update to the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) in May/June 2021 after which the SMP and supporting documentation will be delivered to the Washington State Dept. of Ecology for its formal review and approval. The County is also proposing an amendment to Benton County Code Title 15 - Environment (critical areas regulations), which will adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in May/June 2021.

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

None at this time.

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

The County used best available science in the updating of the development regulations, including a science report developed by Anchor QEA on riparian conditions in Benton County streams and guidance documents from the Washington State Department of Ecology and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

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.

Current development applications are being processed under the current development regulations until the updated ordinances are in effect.

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

Board of County Commissioners are the final decision-making body for a text amendment to the Benton County Code Title 15-Environment (critical areas regulations), and the Board of County Commissioners and Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) are both decision-makers for the SMP amendments.

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.)

a. 2021 Periodic Update to the Benton County Shoreline Master Program (SMP), as approved on Feb 16, 2015 by Ecology to ensure consistency with the State SMP Checklist and associated laws and regulations established since 2015 pursuant to SMP Grant Agreement SEASMP-1921-BeCOPD-00012.

b. Amendment to the Benton County Code, BCC Title 15- Environment (critical areas regulations): Revise Title 15, Chapters 15.02 and 15.14 to address consistency with the SMP, apply additional science for Benton County stream buffers and address minor clarifications.

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 2021 Periodic Update to the SMP will apply to shoreline jurisdiction within Benton County's unincorporated areas. The amendment to Benton County Code Title 15, Chapters 15.02 and 15.14 applies to those areas within the unincorporated portions of Benton County.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

1. Earth

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

General topographic characteristics vary greatly within Benton County and environmental evaluations for future site-specific projects will need to be conducted if a site-specific project is proposed.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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 prime farmland.

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if know.

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project

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.

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

- 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.

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

- 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 ill material.

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

- 6) Does the proposal involve any discharge of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

b. Ground:

- 1) Will ground water be withdrawn, or will water be discharged to ground water? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if know.

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project

- 2) Describe waster 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.

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

c. Water Runoff (including storm water):

- 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.

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

4. **Plants**

- a. Circle 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; wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bulrush, skunk cabbage, other; water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other; other types of vegetation.

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

5. **Animals**

a. Circle any birds and animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site: Birds: hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other:

Mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, other:

Fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other:

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

If any threatened or endangered species are found for site-specific projects, compliance with Benton County Code Title 15 - Environment (critical areas regulations) and the Benton County SMP will be required.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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.

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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:

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

7. **Environmental Health**

a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste, which could occur as a result of this proposal? If so, describe.

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

- 1) Describe special emergency services that might be required.
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- 2) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

b. Noise

- 1) What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)?
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- 2) What types and levels of noise would be created by or associate 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.
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- 3) Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

8. Land and Shoreline Use

- a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties?
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- b. Has the site been used for agriculture? If so, describe.
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- c. Describe any structures on the site.
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation for the site?
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- h. Has any part of the site been classified as an "environmentally sensitive" area? If so, specify.
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

- k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

- l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:
The regulations are consistent with the Benton County Comprehensive Plan policies and guidelines.

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:
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

10. **Aesthetics**

- a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structures(s) not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

11. **Lights and Glare**

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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

Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

12. **Recreation**

- a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts or recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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.
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site.
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts, if any:
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

14. Transportation

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plan, if any.
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- b. Is the site currently served by public transit? If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- c. How many parking spaces would the completed project have? How many would the project eliminate?
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- 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).
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- e. Will the project use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project? If know, indicate when peak volumes would occur.
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

- g. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

15. **Public Services**

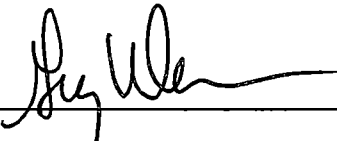
- a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example, fire protection, police protection, health care, schools, etc.)? If so, generally describe.
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.
- b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

16. **Utilities**

- a. Circle utilities currently available at the site: electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other.
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific 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.
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project.

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:  _____

Print Name: Greg Wendt, Director of Community Development
Benton County Community Development Department

Date Submitted: February 4, 2021

D. SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NON-PROJECT ACTIONS
(do not 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?
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project. However, environmental evaluations for future site-specific projects will need to be conducted at the time a site-specific project is proposed.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:
None.

2. How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish or marine life?
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project. However, environmental evaluations for future site-specific projects will need to be conducted at the time a site-specific project is proposed. The intent of BCC Title 15 is to protect environmentally sensitive areas and the SMP does so as well, to achieve no-net-loss of ecological functions.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve plants, animals, fish or marine life are:
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project. However, environmental evaluations for future site-specific projects will need to be conducted at the time a site-specific project is proposed. The development regulations follow state regulations and guidelines as it relates to protecting vegetation, fish, and wildlife, and protecting shorelines.

3. How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project. However, environmental evaluations for future site-specific projects will need to be conducted at the time a site-specific project is proposed.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve energy and natural resources are:
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project. However, environmental evaluations for future site-specific projects will need to be conducted at the time a site-specific project is proposed. The development regulations protect natural resources from incompatible development and land uses.

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, flood plains, or prime farmlands?
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project. However, environmental evaluations for future site-specific projects will need to be conducted at the time a site-specific project is proposed. Benton County Code Title 15-Environment is a regulatory document designed to protect environmentally sensitive areas. The SMP also protects

environmentally sensitive areas, wetlands and other natural features.

Proposed measures to protect such resources or to avoid or reduce impacts are:
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project. However, mitigation measures may be required as a condition of approval for future site-specific projects through the SEPA review process if determined necessary. The development regulations protect the natural resources by requiring buffers and disallowing incompatible development or land uses.

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?
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project. However, environmental evaluations for future site-specific projects will need to be conducted at the time a site-specific project is proposed. The development regulations protect streams and shorelines by requiring buffers and disallowing incompatible development or land uses.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce shoreline and land use impacts are:
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project. However, mitigation measures may be required as a condition of approval for future site-specific projects through the SEPA review process if determined necessary.

6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities?
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project. However, environmental evaluations for future site-specific projects will need to be conducted at the time a site-specific project is proposed.

Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demands(s) are:
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project. However, mitigation measures may be required as a condition of approval for future site-specific projects through the SEPA review process if determined necessary.

7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.
Not applicable, this is not a site-specific project. However, if any threatened or endangered species are found during the review of a site-specific project, compliance with Benton County Code, Title 15 - Environment (critical areas regulations) and the Benton County SMP is required. The site-specific project would be required to be developed in accordance with all local, state and federal laws. Additionally, the development regulations rely on best available science from state agencies and qualified experts/professionals. None of the proposed regulations conflict with local, state, or federal laws.