

WHATCOM COUNTY
Planning & Development Services
5280 Northwest Drive,
Bellingham, WA 98226-9097
360-676-6907, TTY 800-833-6384
360-738-2525 Fax



J.E. "Sam" Ryan
Director

Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS)

File: SEP2011-00001

Project Description: Offsite wetland mitigation for public school.

Proponent: Bellingham School District #501

Address and Parcel #: 0 Northwest Drive, 3802021681230000

Lead Agency: Whatcom County Planning & Development Services

Zoning: Light Impact Industrial **Comp Plan:** Urban Growth Area

The lead agency for this proposal has determined that with proper mitigation, no significant adverse environmental impacts are likely. Pursuant to RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c), an environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required. This decision was made following review of a completed SEPA environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public on request.

There is no comment period for this MDNS.

Pursuant to WAC 197-11-340(2), the lead agency will not act on this proposal for 14 days from the date of issuance indicated below. Comments must be received by March 11, 2011 and should be sent to: Lyn Morgan-Hill

Responsible Official: Tyler Schroeder

Title: Current Planning Supervisor

Telephone: 360.676.6907

Address: 5280 Northwest Drive
Bellingham, WA 98226

Date of Issuance: February 25, 2011 **Signature:** _____

An aggrieved agency or person may appeal this determination to the Whatcom County Hearing Examiner. Application for appeal must be filed on a form provided by and submitted to the Whatcom County Current Planning Division located at 5280 Northwest Drive, Bellingham, WA 98226, during the ten days following the comment period, concluding March 21, 2011.

You should be prepared to make a specific factual objection. Contact Whatcom County Current Planning Division for information about the procedures for SEPA appeals.

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Distribution List SEP2011-00001

Please review this determination. If you have further comments, questions or would like a copy of the SEPA checklist, phone the responsible official at (360) 676-6907. Please submit your response by the comment date noted on the attached notice of determination.

SEPA Unit, WA State Department of Ecology, Olympia

SEPA Review, WA State Department of Ecology, Bellingham

WA State Department of Fish and Wildlife

WA State Department of Archaeological and Historic Preservation

WA State Department of Natural Resources

Lummi Nation

Attn: Natural Resources Department

Attn: Cultural Resources Department

Nooksack Indian Tribe

Attn: Natural Resources Department

Attn: Cultural Resources Department

City of Bellingham

Kurt Nabbefeld

WHATCOM COUNTY

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8370
SEP2011-00001

David Stalheim
Director

J.E. "Sam" Ryan
Assistant Director

SEPA 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.

Instructions for Applicants:

This environmental checklist asks you to describe some basic information about your proposal. Governmental agencies use this checklist to determine whether the environmental impacts of your proposal are significant, requiring preparation of an EIS. Answer the questions briefly, with the most precise information known, or give the best description you can.

You must answer each question accurately and carefully, to the best of your knowledge. In most cases, you should be able to answer the questions from your own observations or project plans without the need to hire experts. If you really do not know the answer, or if a question does not apply to your proposal, write "do not know" or "does not apply." Complete answers to the questions now may avoid unnecessary delays later.

Some questions ask about governmental regulations, such as zoning, shoreline, and landmark designations. Answer these questions if you can. If you have problems, the governmental agencies can assist you.

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.

Use of Checklist for Non-Project Proposals:

Complete this checklist for non-project proposals, even though questions may be answered "does not apply." in addition, complete the supplemental sheet for non-project actions (part C).

For non-project actions, the references in the checklist to the words "project," "applicant," and "property or site" should be read as "proposal," "proposer," and "affected geographic area," respectively.

A Background

- 1 Name of proposed project, if applicable:
Cordata Elementary School- Off-site Mitigation Site
- 2 Name of applicant: Bellingham School District #501 Attn: Ron Cowan
Applicant phone number: 360.676.6500
Applicant address: 1306 Dupont Street, Bellingham, WA 98225
- 3 Contact name: Same as applicant
Contact phone number:
Contact address:
- 4 Date checklist prepared: 06/30/10
- 5 Agency requesting checklist: Whatcom County
- 6 Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):
July 15th to October 1st for site prep, Jan 1st to April 1st for planting (2011 or 12)
- 7 Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? Yes No
If yes, explain:
- 8 List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal:
Wetland Delineation by Northwest Ecological Services, LLC (included)
Wetland Mitigation Plan by Northwest Ecological Services, LLC (included).
- 9 Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal?
Yes No
If yes, explain.
Whatcom County Land disturbance permit pending. Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) with WDFW pending.
- 10 List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.
Department of Ecology 401 Water Certification obtained; US Army Corps of Engineers 404 Permit obtained, Critical Areas approval from Whatcom County Obtained.

- 11 Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site. There are several questions later in this checklist that ask you to describe certain aspects of your proposal. You do not need to repeat those answers on this page. (Lead agencies may modify this form to include additional specific information on project description.)

The proposed project includes installation of mitigation associated with off-site wetland impacts. The on-site project includes wetland creation, wetland and buffer enhancements.

- 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 4.96 acre site (parcel 380202 168123) is located off of Northwest Drive (no address). The parcel is located approximately opposite of the residence at 4614 Northwest.

B Environmental Elements

1 Earth

- a. General description of the site:

- Flat
 Rolling
 Hilly
 Steep Slopes
 Mountainous
 Other

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

10%, most areas less than 5%.

- 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.

Silt loam (Whatcom- Labounty)

- d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? Yes No

If so, describe.

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

No fill is proposed. Grading and removal of soil are proposed for wetland creation areas.

Indicate source of fill.

n/a

- f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? Yes No

If so, generally describe.

The project will follow standard BMP's.

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

None

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

Silt fences, mulch, oat mats (or similar) to limit soil compaction over wetlands.

2. Air

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

Automobile during construction, none on completion.

If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.

Unknown

- b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? Yes No

If so, generally describe.

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

None appear necessary.

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)? Yes No

If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.

Bear Creek is located on-site, and associated wetlands.

- (2) Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? Yes No

If yes, please describe and attach available plans.

Please see mitigation plan.

- (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. No fill is proposed.

- (4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions?
Yes No

Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

n/a

Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain?

Yes No

If so, note location on the site plan.

(5) Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters?

Yes No

If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge

b. Ground

Will ground water be withdrawn, or will water be discharged to ground water? Yes No

Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

(1) 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.

None

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).

None

Where will this water flow? N/A

Will this water flow into other waters? Yes No

If so, describe.

Tributary serving Bear Creek.

(2) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters?

Yes No

If so, generally describe.

No waste material shall enter ground or surface waters. The form automatically filled both boxes above.

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

Silt fences will be installed and maintained during construction. No permanent features are proposed. Exposed soils will be seeded or mulched to prevent erosion and sedimentation.

4 Plants

a. Check 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, bullrush, skunk cabbage, other
- Water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other
- Other types of vegetation

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

Pasture grasses will be disturbed. The majority of the site will be planted with native trees and shrubs.

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

None.

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

The majority of the site will be planted with native trees and shrubs, and habitat features will be installed. See mitigation plan.

5. Animals

- a. Check any birds and animals, which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site:

Birds:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hawk, | <input type="checkbox"/> Heron, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eagle, | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Songbirds; |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | |

Mammals:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deer, | <input type="checkbox"/> Bear, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elk, | <input type="checkbox"/> Beaver; |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: coyote | |

Fish:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bass, | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Salmon, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trout, | <input type="checkbox"/> Herring, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shellfish; | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

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

None

- c. Is the site part of a migration route? Yes No

If so, explain.

All of Whatcom County is part of the Pacific Flyway.

- d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:
Installation of native plants and habitat features (snags, downed woody debris, brushpiles).

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.

None, no energy needs.

- b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? Yes No

If so, generally describe.

- 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

- 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? Yes No

If so, describe.

- (1) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

None

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

n/a

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.

Short term noise impacts during construction, 7am to 7pm, during site preparation phase only. No long term noise will be generated.

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

Construction shall take place between 7am and 7pm.

8 Land and Shoreline Use

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

Fallow agriculture, forested, rural residential.

- b. Has the site been used for agriculture? Yes No

If so, describe.

Unknown.

- c. Describe any structures on the site.

No structures are present on-site.

- d. Will any structures be demolished? Yes No

If so, what?

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

Light industrial

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

Unknown

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

n/a

- h. Has any part of the site been classified as an "environmentally sensitive" area? Yes No

If so, specify.

Wetlands and Bear Creek are present on-site.

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

None

- 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:

None.

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

- High
 Middle
 Low-income

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

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?
n/a
- b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?
n/a
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:
n/a

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?
n/a
- 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:
n/a

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:

n/a

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.

None known

- b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site.

None known

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

n/a

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. Northwest Drive. Temporary access will be provided during construction. No long term access is proposed.

- b. Is site currently served by public transit? Yes No
If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?

- c. How many parking spaces would the completed project have? How many would the project eliminate?

None, none.

- d. Will the proposal require any new roads or streets, or improvements to existing roads or streets, not including driveways? Yes No
If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).

- e. Will the project use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of)

- Water,
 Rail, or
 Air transportation?

If so, generally describe.

n/a

- f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur.

None

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

n/a

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)?

Yes No

If so, generally describe.

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

n/a

16 Utilities

- a. Check utilities currently available at the site:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electricity, | <input type="checkbox"/> Natural gas, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water, | <input type="checkbox"/> Refuse service, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone, | <input type="checkbox"/> Sanitary sewer, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Septic system, | <input type="checkbox"/> Other. |

- 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

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: 

Date Submitted: _____

C 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?

The project is not likely to increase any of these.

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?

The proposed mitigation is intended to improve wildlife habitat on-site.

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

See mitigation plan. The project site will be placed into a permanent conservation easement as open space.

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 project has been designed to enhance and increase functions of on-site wetlands, and wetland and stream buffers.

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

See mitigation plan.

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 conflict known.

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J.E. "Sam" Ryan
Director

Legal Notice

To be published one time only on: **February 25, 2011**

CHARGE TO: Whatcom County Planning & Development Services
5280 Northwest Drive
Bellingham, Washington 98226
Acct #048867

**WHATCOM COUNTY GIVES PUBLIC NOTICE THAT THE FOLLOWING SEPA
THRESHOLD DETERMINATION OF NON-SIGNIFICANCE (DNS) HAS BEEN
ISSUED TODAY SUBJECT TO THE 14 DAY COMMENT PERIOD
CONCLUDING ON March 11, 2011.**

File: SEP2011-00001

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Proponent: Bellingham School District #501

Address and Parcel #: 0 Northwest Drive, 3802021681230000

Lead Agency: Whatcom County Planning & Development Services

Zoning: Light Impact Industrial **Comp Plan:** Urban Growth Area

**ANY PERSON OR AGENCY MAY APPEAL THE COUNTY'S COMPLIANCE WITH WAC
197-11 BY FILING AN APPEAL WITH THE WHATCOM COUNTY CURRENT PLANNING
DIVISION LOCATED AT 5280 NORTHWEST DRIVE, BELLINGHAM, WA 98226.
APPEALS MUST BE MADE WITHIN 10 DAYS AFTER THE END OF THE COMMENT
PERIOD.**



SEPA Determination, Legal Notice and Distribution Checklist

SEPA DETERMINATION INFORMATION FROM PLANNER

1. Is the determination a
 DNS
 MDNS (*If applicable attach separate document*)
 DS
2. Case file number or file: SEP2011-00001
3. Project description: Offsite wetland mitigation for public school
4. Proponent: Bellingham School District #501
5. Location Northwest Drive, Bellingham
6. Lead Agency: Whatcom County Planning & Development Services
7. Zoning: Light Impact Industrial
8. Comp Plan Urban Growth Area

SEPA LEGAL NOTICE INFORMATION FROM PLANNER

1. Same as the SEPA Determination

SEPA DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION FROM PLANNER

- SEPA Unit, WA State Department of Ecology (Olympia)
- WA State Department of Ecology (Bellingham)
- Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
- Washington State Department of Natural Resources
- Lummi Nation
Attn: Natural Resources Department
Attn: Cultural Resources Department
- Nooksack Indian Tribe
Attn: Natural Resources Department
Attn: Cultural Resources Department
- Other

- SEPA Checklist

WHATCOM COUNTY

Planning & Development Services
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CUSTOMER RECEIPT

Receipt: 520100000000000407
Payor: PACIFIC SURVEYING & ENGINEERING
Date: February 1, 2011

Description	Amount
LDP2011-00005	
Grading permit app	525.00
SEP2011-00001	
SEPA checklist review (B)	370.00
Total:	\$ 895.00
Check # 31972	Paid \$ 895.00
PACIFIC SURVEYING & ENGINEERING	

Thank you!