

WHATCOM COUNTY

Planning & Development Services
5280 Northwest Drive
Bellingham, WA 98226-9097
360-778-5900, TTY 800-833-6384
360-778-5901 Fax



Mark Personius, AICP
Director

SEPA Distribution List
SEP2020-00098

Date of Issuance: November 12, 2020

Please review this determination. If you have further comments or questions, phone the responsible official at (360) 778-5900. Please submit your response by the comment date noted on the attached notice of determination.

WA State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation via email
Stephanie Jolivette, stephanie.jolivette@dahp.wa.gov
SEPA@dahp.wa.gov

SEPA Unit, WA State Department of Ecology, Olympia via email
sepaunit@ecy.wa.gov

WA State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Wendy D. Cole via email wendy.cole@dfw.wa.gov

WA State Department of Natural Resources via email
Rochelle Goss, sepacenter@dnr.wa.gov
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Lummi Nation Natural Resources
Merle Jefferson, Sr. via email - merlej@lummi-nsn.gov
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Nooksack Indian Tribe
George Swanaset, JR via email - george.swanasetjr@nooksack-nsn.gov
Trevor Delgado via email - tdelgado@nooksack-nsn.gov

Whatcom County
Mark Personius via email - mpersoni@whatcomcounty.us
Ryan Ericson via email - rericson@whatcomcounty.us

Applicant
Shawn & Elisabeth Gehringer via email - sgehry87@gmail.com

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SEPA Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS)

File: SEP2020-00098

Project Description: To facilitate the construction of a single family home and necessary appurtenances, the applicant proposes to clear and convert approximately 0.4 acres of forestland to a cleared home site on a 20 acre parcel.

Proponent: Shawn & Elisabeth Gehringer

Address and Parcel #: 2890 Stein Hill Lane / 400102474101

Lead Agency: Whatcom County Planning & Development Services

Zoning: Rural **Comp Plan:** R10A **Shoreline Jurisdiction:** N/A

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.

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 4:00 p.m. on November 26, 2020 and should be sent to: Matt Mahaffie via email at MMahaffi@co.whatcom.wa.us

Responsible Official: Mark Personius, mpersoni@whatcomcounty.us

Title: Director

Telephone: 360-778-5900

Address: 5280 Northwest Drive
Bellingham, WA 98226

Date of Issuance: November 12, 2020 **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 December 7, 2020.

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



SEPA Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS)
Legal Notice

To be published one time only on: **November 12, 2020**

CHARGE TO: Whatcom County Planning & Development Services
5280 Northwest Drive
Bellingham, Washington 98226
Acct #451232

**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 NOVEMBER 26, 2020.**

File: SEP2020-00098

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

WHATCOM COUNTY
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Bellingham, WA 98226-9097
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Mark Personius, AICP
Director

SEP 2020 - 00098

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.

Use of Checklist for Non-Project Proposals:

For non-project proposals (such as ordinances, regulations, plans and programs), complete the applicable parts of sections A and B plus the Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions (Part C). 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:
Single Family Residence, w/ septic and well.

- 2 Name of applicant: Shawn Gehringer
Applicant phone number: 6097755659
Applicant address: 817 Blueberry Ln Apt 101
City, State, Zip or Postal Code: Bellingham Wa, 98229
Applicant Email address: sgehry87@gmail.com

- 3 Contact name: Shawn Gehringer
Contact phone number: 6097755659
Contact address: 817 Blueberry Ln Apt 101
City, State, Zip or Postal Code: Bellingham Wa, 92889
Contact Email address: sgehry87@gmail.com

- 4 Date checklist prepared: 10/9/2020

- 5 Agency requesting checklist: Northwest WA DNR
Whatcom County PDS - MMM

- 6 Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):
Construction planned to start Jan 2021

- 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:
Whatcom County Natural Resource Assessment CA2020-00301
Critical Areas Assessment Report, Northwest Wetlands
Consulting - MMM

- 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.

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

None

Building Permit/Land Disturbance Permit (Whatcom
County)
Forest Practice Permit - WA DNR
MMM

- 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 clearing boundary for the site is to encompass the home & septic location. The estimated area to be cleared is approximately 16,875 s.f. and the estimated MBFT to be cleared is approximately 19,977 s.f..

- 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.

Attached detailed site plan.

2890 Stein Hill Lane
Custer, WA 98240

APN# 400102 474101

MMM

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)?

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 agricultural land of long-term commercial significance and whether the proposal results in removing any of these soils.

Clay see CA2020-00301 for soil type.

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

If so, describe.

e. Describe the purpose, type, total area, approximate quantities and total affected area of any filling excavation or grading proposed.

Excavation to support installation of Septic and SFR.

Indicate source of fill.

Gravel to be used for drainage around home and on driveway

Indicate where excavation material is going.

Fill will be used for grading on site around SFR.

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

If so, generally describe.

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

Less than 3% of total site area will be impervious surface

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

See CA2020-00301

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 (i.e., dust, automobile, odors, or industrial wood smoke)?

N/A

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

- 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:

N/A

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.

Wetlands see attached site map

- (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.

Work will occur within 200ft of wetlands indicated on map.

- (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.

N/A

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

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

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 Water:

(1) Will ground water be withdrawn from a well for drinking water or other purposes? Yes No

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.

Well will be used to feed the single family residence

(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 houses to be served (if applicable), or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.

Site has WCHD Approved septic system for home (3 Bedroom system).

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).

standard methods for SFR will be used

Where will this water flow? remain on site

Will this water flow into other waters? Yes No

If so, describe.

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

Yes No

If so, generally describe.

(3) Does the proposal alter or otherwise affect drainage patterns in the vicinity of the site: Yes No

If so, describe.

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

Maintain Buffers around wetlands.

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
- Orchards, vineyards or other permanent crops
- 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?

Site Clearing will clear 0.38 acres for the construction of a single family Residence

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:

Site will require mitigation for wetland impacts.

*Wetland buffer impacts. - MMM

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

Himalayan Blackberries.

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:

- Hawk,
 Eagle,
 Other:

- Heron,
 Songbirds;

Mammals:

- Deer,
 Elk,
 Other:

- Bear,
 Beaver;

Fish:

- Bass,
 Trout,
 Shellfish;

- Salmon,
 Herring,
 Other:

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

None identified in CA2020-00301

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

If so, explain.

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

Vegetative enhancement and restoration
proposed with mitigation plan. - MMM

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

Himalayan blackberry - MMM

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.

Electric will be the main power source with wood stove/fireplace as alternate heat source.

- 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:

Home to comply with County and UBC building codes.

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 any known or possible contamination at the site from present or past uses.

Not Applicable

MMM

Reviewed by Initials _____
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January 2019

- (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.

Not Applicable

- (3) Describe any toxic or hazardous chemicals that might be stored, used, or produced during the projects development or construction, or at any time during the operating life of the project.

Not Applicable

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

Not Applicable

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

Not Applicable

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 Construction activities will occur.

No long term noise is expected to be created.

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

Not Applicable

8 Land and Shoreline Use

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

All adjacent properties are SFR and none are near shoreline.

Will the proposal affect current land uses on nearby or adjacent properties? Yes No

If so, describe.

b. Has the project site been used as working farmlands or working forest lands? Yes No

If so, describe.

Site had logging activities in the 70's but was not replanted. Site is not currently a working forest.

How much agriculture or forest land of long-term commercial significance will be converted to other uses as a result of the proposal, if any?

None. SFR will be constructed on 0.4 acre of 20 acre plot. Lot is currently zoned for Residential and not forestry.

If resource lands have not been designated, how many acres in farmland or forest land tax status will be converted to non-farm or non-forest use?

None parcel is zoned R10a and is a 20 Acre lot

(1) Will the proposal affect or be affected by surrounding working farm or forest land normal business operations, such as oversized equipment access, the application of pesticides, tilling and harvesting? Yes No

If so, how:

c. Describe any structures on the site.

Site has well installed.

- d. Will any structures be demolished? Yes No
If so, what?
- e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?
R10A
- f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?
Zoned Rural
- 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 a critical area by the city or county? Yes No
If so, specify.
See Site plan and CA2020-00301
- i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?
This site will only have one Single family residence.
- j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?
0
- k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:
N/A
- l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:
N/A
- m. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with nearby agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any?
N/A

9 Housing

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

High Number of Units 1
 Middle
 Low-income

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

High Number of Units 0
 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?
Will comply with Whatcom County Building Codes.

- b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?
none

- 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?
N/A

- b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?
None

- 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:

No

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 located on or near the site? Yes No
If so, specifically describe.

- b. Are there any landmarks, features, or other evidence of Indian, historic use or occupation, this may include human burials or old cemeteries?

Yes No

Are there any material evidence, artifacts, or areas of cultural importance on or near the site? Yes No

Please list any professional studies conducted at the site to identify such resources.

- c. Describe the methods used to assess the potential impacts to cultural and historic resources on or near the project site. Examples: Include consultation with tribes and the Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation, archaeological surveys, historic maps, GIS data, etc.

N/A

- d. Proposed measures to avoid, minimize, or compensate for loss, changes to, and disturbance to resources. Please include plans for the above and any permits that may be required.

N/A

14 Transportation

- 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 plan, if any.

N/A

- b. Is site or geographic area currently served by public transit?

Yes No

If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?

Not Applicable

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

N/

- d. Will the proposal require any new or improvements to existing roads, streets, pedestrian, bicycle or state transportation facilities, not including driveways? Yes No

If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).

Private lane to home to be maintained.

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 or proposal? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur and what percentage of the volume would be trucks (such as commercial and non-passenger vehicles). What data or transportation models were used to make these estimates?

2 Personal Vehicles to commute to work

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.

We already live in the county and will continue to use the same services.

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

None

16 Utilities

a. Check utilities currently available at the site:

- Electricity,
 Water,
 Telephone,
 Septic system,

- Natural gas,
 Refuse service,
 Sanitary sewer,
 Other

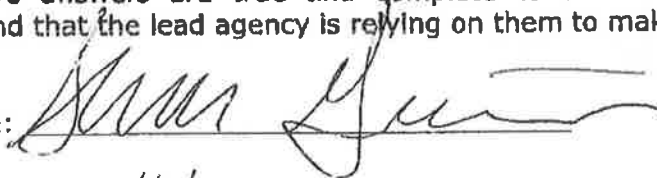
- b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed.

Pull power out to home and route water and septic line to SFR.

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:

10/19/2020

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Reviewed by Whatcom County Planning & Development Services Staff

Matt Mahaffie

11/5/2020

Staff Signature

Date



- Vicinity Map



Subject Area
APN#: 400102 474101

USE OF WHATCOM COUNTY'S GIS DATA IMPLIES THE USER'S AGREEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

Whatcom County disclaims any warranty of merchantability or warranty of fitness of this map for any particular purpose, either express or implied. No representation or warranty is made concerning the accuracy, currency, completeness or quality of data depicted on this map. Any user of this map assumes all responsibility for use thereof, and further agrees to hold Whatcom County harmless from and against any damage, loss, or liability arising from any use of this map.

November 2020

