

## Purpose of checklist

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

## Instructions for applicants

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

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

## Instructions for lead agencies

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

## Use of checklist for nonproject proposals

For nonproject proposals (such as ordinances, regulations, plans and programs), complete the applicable parts of sections A and B, plus the Supplemental Sheet for Nonproject Actions (Part D). Please completely answer all questions that apply and note that the words "project," "applicant," and "property or site" should be read as "proposal," "proponent," and "affected geographic area," respectively. The lead agency may exclude (for non-projects) questions in “Part B: Environmental Elements” that do not contribute meaningfully to the analysis of the proposal.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/Checklist-guidance>

## A. Background

[Find help answering background questions](#)<sup>2</sup>

**1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:**

Gateway to the City of Ellensburg Stormwater LID Retrofit Project II

**2. Name of applicant:**

City of Ellensburg

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

501 N. Anderson Street, Ellensburg, WA 98926

**4. Date checklist prepared:**

1/27/2026

**5. Agency requesting checklist:**

Community Development

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

Planning and Design – 2021-2025; Construction - 2028

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

No

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

A design report, wetland delineation, and biological assessment have been completed as a part of the design. In addition, Cultural Resource Evaluations for both state and federal processes have been completed. The Section 106 application has not yet been submitted, but the overall process is underway.

**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.**

A JARPA is ready to submit, which will be used for USACE 404 permitting. A Section 106 application package has been prepared, and submittal of the application will also be forthcoming.

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

USACE, NHPA, DOE Adoption of Federal Section 106, WDFW Hydraulic Project Approval.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-A-Background>

**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 Gateway to the City of Ellensburg Stormwater LID (Low Impact Development) Retrofit Project II (Gateway II Project or Project), proposed by the City of Ellensburg (City), would construct drainage improvements along both sides of Vantage Highway from Vista Road to the eastern City limits (approximately one-mile in length). The collection and treatment of stormwater would reduce the amount of pollution that flows into Lyle Creek. The Project would also widen Vantage Highway between North Vista Road and the vicinity of Cowboy Lane and add pedestrian and bicycle pathways to enhance community accessibility. The Project scope includes offsite wetland mitigation at the nearby Paul Rogers Wildlife Park (PRWP), owned and managed by the City.

As a part of the Fiscal Year 2021 Water Quality Combined Funding Program, the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) has provided the City of Ellensburg (City), an NPDES Phase II community, with funds to conduct project-specific design and activities for stormwater green retrofit projects that address stormwater pollution runoff from existing development.

As described in the City's grant agreement with Ecology, stormwater retrofits will be designed for the eastern "Gateway" into the City of Ellensburg to provide treatment for total suspended solids (TSS), oil (total petroleum hydrocarbons), total and dissolved copper and zinc, and will also reduce stormwater runoff to Lyle Creek and East Branch Lyle Creek through increased infiltration. This project is similar to the Ecology-funded Gateway I project for the western entrance into the City, which has been fully designed and was constructed in 2023.

The goal of the Gateway II project is to improve water quality in local creeks by retrofitting in stormwater infiltration swales to provide treatment and flow control for existing and replaced pollutant-generating impervious surface (PGIS):

- Untreated stormwater currently discharges to Lyle Creek and East Branch Lyle Irrigation Ditch.
- The project will provide treatment and flow control through infiltration of stormwater along approximately a mile-long section of existing roadway.
- The project will improve water quality in the East Branch Lyle Irrigation Ditch and also improve water quality and habitat in Lyle Creek, which is a tributary to Wilson Creek, which in turn flows into the Yakima River.

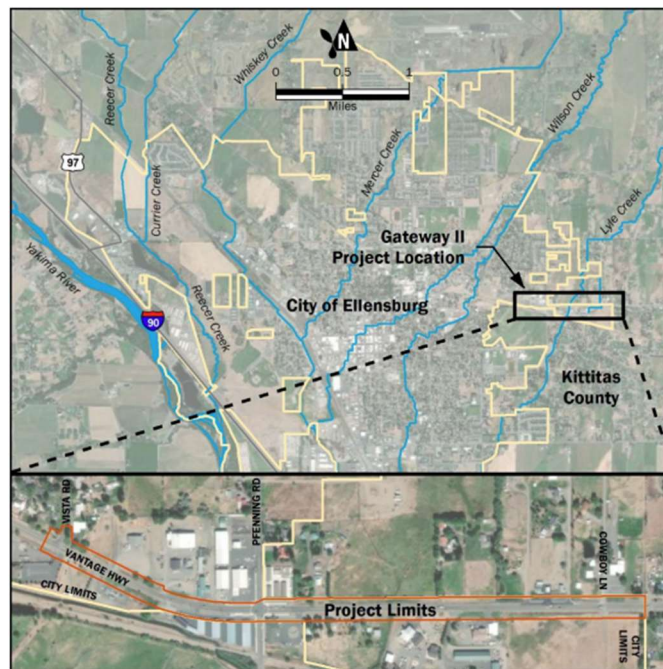
Additional benefits of the project include:

- Providing corridor beautification, pedestrian/bicycle access, and roadway improvements such as drainage and curb and gutter systems.

- Enhancing road functionality by upgrading compacted gravel shoulders to curb and gutter road surface (Urban Road ADT < 7500).

**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 Gateway to the City of Ellensburg Stormwater Low Impact Development Retrofit Project II (Gateway II) is located along Vantage Highway, extending from Vista Road to approximately 250 feet east of Cowboy Lane (edge of City Limits). A map of the Project Area is shown below.



*Gateway II Project Area Map – A zoomed-out map showing the Gateway II Project Location’s spatial relationship to the City of Ellensburg, Kittitas County, and associated waterways is shown in the upper portion of the map. Below, a zoomed-in map showing the Project limits along Vantage Highway between Vista Road and the eastern City Limits is displayed.*

The Project is located in Township 18 North - Range 18 East - Section 36, Township 18 North - Range 19 East - Section 31, Township 17 North - Range 18 East - Section 1, and Township 17 North - Range 19 East - Section 6. The approximate geospatial center of the Vantage Highway widening is latitude 46°59'58.55" North and longitude 120°30'57.02" West (WGS84), while offsite wetland mitigation would take place at approximate latitude 47° 0'22.48" North and longitude 120°30'27.61" West. Offsite wetland mitigation will occur at

the nearby Paul Rogers Wildlife Park, located 0.3 mi northeast of the intersection of Vantage Highway and Cowboy Lane.

## B.Environmental Elements

### 1. Earth

[Find help answering earth questions](#)<sup>3</sup>

#### a. General description of the site:

The Project Area primarily comprises developed public roadway, flanked by mixed (residential, commercial, and agricultural) land uses. Within the project area, development lacks effective stormwater management facilities. Except for conveyance elements such as ditches and road-crossing culverts, no stormwater structures are present in the project area, and untreated stormwater runoff ultimately discharges into surface water. In the western reach of the project (west of the Pfenning Road intersection), stormwater runoff from Vantage Highway generally sheet flows into roadside ditches and is conveyed to a topographic low spot on the south side of Vantage Highway that ultimately discharges into the Town Canal. In the eastern reach of the project (east of the Pfenning Road intersection), stormwater runoff from Vantage Highway generally either sheet flows into a roadside ditch system on the north side of the highway which discharges into Lyle Creek, or sheet flows into a combination of dispersion areas, roadside ditches, and East Branch Lyle Irrigation Ditch, which ultimately discharge into Lyle Creek.

Circle or highlight one: **Flat**, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other:

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

The site is predominantly flat. Overall regional topography generally slopes from north to south. Elevation along Vantage Highway ranges from approximately 1,600 – 1,620 feet (ft) while elevation at the wetland mitigation site is approximately 1,645 ft (Figure 2). The steepest slope on the site is less than 10%.

**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.**

Soils within the existing road shoulder generally consist of roadway fill underlain by alluvium. Depending on location, fill was observed to depths ranging from 0.5 feet to 3.0

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<sup>3</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/sepa/environmental-review/sepa-guidance/sepa-checklist-guidance/sepa-checklist-section-b-environmental-elements/environmental-elements-earth>

feet bgs. The fill generally consists of sandy silt, silty sand with gravel, or similar variations.

Soils off the road shoulder generally consist of alluvium beginning at the ground surface. The alluvium includes loose to medium-dense gravel and sand, with silt and cobbles. Soils were slightly moist to wet at the time of observation and brown in color, with some orange mottling/staining observed at depth.

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

None observed or documented.

- d. Describe the purpose, type, total area, and approximate quantities and total affected area of any filling, excavation, and grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.**

The total project area is roughly the City right-of-way (ROW) from Vista Road to approximately 250 feet east of Cowboy Lane, although (a) the Pfenning Road intersection will not be changed, and (b) a significant portion of the ROW area will not be disturbed. Therefore, the Project Footprint, which includes all area to be disturbed by the project, is less than the ROW area. Note that the existing roadway pavement that will remain as is (other than minor saw cut) is excluded from the Project Footprint area. As discussed above, there is approximately 5.82 acres of existing pollution-generating impervious surface (PGIS) within the project footprint. (paved road, compacted gravel shoulder, and driveway entrances). This includes Existing Paved Roadway, Existing Gravel Shoulder, and Existing Driveway Entrances. The project footprint also includes existing vegetated non-pollutant generating area that will be converted to infiltration swales and permeable pathways, along with associated pathway side slopes. In addition, East Branch Lyle Creek will be piped in its existing location along the south side of the road.

A maximum ground disturbance footprint of 5.82 acres is proposed, primarily within existing right-of-way. Native soils and Ecology-approved amended compost will be used for filling, as necessary.

Offsite wetland mitigation will occur at the nearby Paul Rogers Wildlife Park, located 0.3 mi northeast of the intersection of Vantage Highway and Cowboy Lane.

- e. Could erosion occur because of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.**

Minimal erosion may occur during construction, but the site will be permanently stabilized as a part of the project. Temporary erosion and sedimentation control measures (TESC) will be put in place prior to ground disturbance. A SWPPP will also be in place, and followed according to DOE regulations and Best Management Practices.

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

The site currently has 5.82 acres of impervious surfaces. The project will remove some of the impervious surface and will result in approximately 4.93 acres of impervious surface, which is a net decrease from existing conditions.

**g. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any.**

Minimal erosion may occur during construction, but the site will be permanently stabilized as a part of the project. Temporary erosion and sedimentation control measures (TESC) will be put in place prior to ground disturbance. A SWPPP will also be in place and followed in accordance with DOE regulations and Best Management Practices.

## **2. Air**

[Find help answering air questions](#)<sup>4</sup>

**a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal during construction, operation, and maintenance when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.**

Minimal GHG emissions from combustion engines and vehicle traffic (bulldozers, excavators, dump trucks, and utility crews) are expected to occur during construction activities, but will cease when the project is complete. These emissions will be negligible to minor, and well below the 25,000 metric tons annual CO<sub>2</sub>e GHG emission threshold that would require a quantitative and qualitative analysis. Operations and maintenance activities will involve semi-annual sweeping and maintenance of the permeable pavement, with negligible GHG emissions.

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

No.

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

General construction GHG emissions reduction strategies will be employed as practicable throughout the project. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Utilization of energy-efficient lighting, appliances, and equipment to minimize energy consumption and emissions.
- Use of electrically powered construction equipment where practicable
- Enhancing waste management practices to minimize waste and support sustainable construction.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-Air>



### 3. Water

[Find help answering water questions](#)<sup>5</sup>

#### a. Surface:

[Find help answering surface water questions](#)<sup>6</sup>

- 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.**

Lyle Creek, and East Branch Lyle Irrigation Ditch (irrigation flows only) are present in the project area. Lyle Creek flows through the Project and drains to Wilson Creek, a tributary to the Yakima River. These waterways are under two active Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) plans that address total suspended solids, fecal coliform, DDT, and Dieldrin. To address TMDL concerns and help improve water quality, the Project would retrofit in stormwater infiltration swales to provide treatment and flow control for existing and replaced pollutant-generating impervious surface (PGIS) along the one-mile segment of widened roadway. Stormwater retrofits would be designed to provide treatment for total suspended solids, oil, metals, and other pollutants, and to also reduce stormwater runoff to Lyle Creek through increased infiltration of runoff.

Two wetland units (WU-1, WU-2) were delineated within the ROW of Vantage Highway in association with Lyle Creek. A third wetland unit (MS-2) was identified within the PRWP as suitable for offsite wetland mitigation (Table 1). Project impacts to wetlands and Lyle Creek, including proposed mitigation, are documented in a separate Wetland and Stream Critical Areas Report, including Mitigation Plan, dated 11-6-2025 (GG 2025). A JARPA has been prepared for the proposed activities within these areas.

Although Lyle Creek has the potential to be fish-bearing during ideal conditions, the portion within the project area has no flow throughout much of the year. In-stream construction activities are proposed for the no-flow period.

No water-based invasive species are known to inhabit the project area.

- 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.**

Terrestrial disturbance to widen Vantage Highway, limited to the ROW, would include imported fill and wetland/riparian planting. Offsite wetland mitigation at the nearby Paul Rogers Wildlife Park, located 0.3 mi northeast of the intersection of Vantage Highway and Cowboy Lane, would include temporary vegetation

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<sup>5</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-3-Water>

<sup>6</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-3-Water/Environmental-elements-Surface-water>



disturbance for equipment access, excavation to enlarge existing mitigation wetland MS-2, and installation of plantings in MS-2.

Increased disturbance above baseline during construction may result in measurable sedimentation at first flush when irrigation flows resume the following spring. The channel disturbance footprint is small relative to overall creek disturbance and the poor water-quality baseline. Best Management Practices (BMPs), including soil stabilization, would be implemented during construction. Furthermore, natural precipitation following construction (likely including snowpack) would saturate and compact any loose soils, minimizing the potential for sediment mobilization at first flush. The creek channel is entirely vegetated with reed canarygrass and coyote willow immediately downstream of the culvert. This vegetation functions as a biofiltration swale that would filter out any minor sedimentation that might occur. The relocated channel substrate and water quality baseline would stabilize under irrigation flows before any fish could migrate upstream to the creek reach near Vantage Highway.

Ongoing communication with the Department of Fish and Wildlife has occurred during project design. A JARPA has been prepared for the proposed in-and-around surface water. This JARPA includes a Biological Assessment that resulted in a no-effect determination for potentially present species.

No water-based invasive species are known to inhabit the project area.

**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.**

Road widening is anticipated to result in both temporary and permanent impacts to the Lyle Creek channel and associated wetlands within the City's managed right-of-way along Vantage Highway. Temporary wetland impacts (0.066 ac, 2,888 ft<sup>2</sup>) would be minimized onsite through vegetation trimming (not grubbing) and restorative planting of native plant species. This action is also intended to concurrently compensate for impacts to the Lyle Creek channel, both temporary (0.010 ac, 417 ft<sup>2</sup>) and permanent (0.003 ac, 127 ft<sup>2</sup>). Permanent wetland impacts (0.015 ac, 674 ft<sup>2</sup>) would be mitigated offsite within the nearby Paul Rogers Wildlife Park (Park).

Offsite wetland mitigation at the Park and onsite vegetation restoration at the Lyle Creek crossing will be monitored and managed for 10 years and three (3) years, respectively, to ensure that mitigation objectives are met prior to permit closeout.

Although the Project will have unavoidable impacts, the overall Project design has evolved to minimize impacts to wetlands and their buffers. For example, the stormwater infiltration swales on the north and south side of Vantage Hwy have been eliminated and concrete headwalls/retaining walls will be constructed on both sides of Vantage Hwy, both of which will reduce overall embankment fill extents at the crossing. These proposed improvements also reduce the length of required culvert extensions, which further minimize impacts to Lyle Creek.

No invasive species are known to be present within the project area. However, applicable preventative protocols developed by the Washington Invasive Species Council to be used when working in or near water will be implemented when appropriate.

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

The project does not propose any surface water withdrawals or diversions.

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

The project does not lie within a 100-year floodplain.

**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.**

The project does not involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters.

**b. Ground:**

[Find help answering ground water questions](#)<sup>7</sup>

**1. Will groundwater be withdrawn from a well for drinking water or other purposes? If so, give a general description of the well, proposed uses and approximate quantities withdrawn from the well. Will water be discharged to groundwater? Give a general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.**

No new or increased groundwater extractions are proposed as a part of the project. By nature of the project, stormwater will be discharged to the ground through infiltration BMPs that comply with Ecology's most recent 2024 Stormwater Management Manual for Eastern WA. The project footprint does not fall within a drinking water wellhead protection area.

**2. Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (domestic sewage; industrial, containing the following chemicals...; agricultural; etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the number of such systems, the number of houses to be served (if applicable), or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.**

No waste discharges are proposed by the project. Infiltrated stormwater will receive treatment as a part of the project design. No injection wells are proposed. The project is not located in a sole source aquifer area.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-3-Water/Environmental-elements-Groundwater>

**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.**

By nature, the project is designed to improve the quality of stormwater runoff. Stormwater will be infiltrated via LID swales, and will receive treatment to remove hydrocarbons, metals, and nutrients prior to infiltration via an 18-inch layer of treatment soils (native and/or native soils amended with Ecology-approved 60/40 compost bioretention soil mix) prior to infiltration when needed to meet treatment standards. The first half inch of rainfall in a 24-hour period produced by the SCS Type II storm event will be treated by this project in accordance with the 2024 Stormwater Management Manual for Eastern Washington (SWMMEW) and the City of Ellensburg Stormwater Development Standards.

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

No waste discharges are proposed by the project. Stormwater runoff will receive treatment as a part of the project design. The project is not located within a wellhead protection area, and no injection wells are proposed.

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

The project, by design, improves drainage patterns and provides treatment prior to infiltration, thereby also protecting groundwater quality.

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

N/A. Please see above. Impacts are beneficial as proposed.

## **4. Plants**

[Find help answering plants questions](#)

- a. Check the types of vegetation found on the site:**

- ☐ deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other
- ☐ evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other
- ☐ shrubs
- ☒ grass
- ☐ pasture
- ☐ crop or grain
- ☐ orchards, vineyards, or other permanent crops.
- ☒ wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage, other (minimal)

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

☐ other types of vegetation

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

Minor disturbance of roadside grasses is expected. Riparian vegetation along Lyle Creek will be avoided to the greatest extent practicable. If avoidance is not possible, vegetation will be trimmed rather than grubbed. Any vegetation to be grubbed will be replaced at the end of the project via replacement plantings.

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

**Table 2.** ESA-listed Species and Designated Critical Habitats Query for the PAA

Common Name (Scientific Name) - Status	In PAA?
bull trout ( <i>Salvelinus confluentus</i> ) – Lower 48 states coterminus – Threatened	No. Bull trout are not documented in Lyle Creek nor does the creek offer suitable aquatic habitat (WDFW 2025a).
Steelhead ( <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i> ) – Mid-Columbia DPS <sup>7</sup> – Threatened	Unlikely, but juveniles can possibly utilize the creek for rearing (WDFW 2025a) under ideal aquatic conditions during the irrigation season.
gray wolf ( <i>Canis lupus</i> ) – Endangered	No. No packs, den sites, or rendezvous areas are documented in the PAA (WDFW 2025c).
yellow-billed cuckoo ( <i>Coccyzus americanus</i> ) – Western U.S. DPS - Threatened	No. Cuckoos are extremely rare in Washington State with only 20 sightings since the 1950s (Wiles and Kalasz 2017, WDFW 2025d). No suitable habitat (defined as large, continuous riparian zones with cottonwoods and willows) is present within the PAA.
<b>Designated Critical Habitat (DCH)</b>	
N/A	No. No DCH designated within the PAA.

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

Trees of various species from the City's approved street tree list are proposed to be planted within the infiltration swales to enhance the tree canopy for stormwater and aesthetic purposes. Native plantings will be incorporated in the Park and all disturbed areas that do not fall within existing public ROW.

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

No invasive species or noxious weeds requiring control by Kittitas County are known to inhabit the project area. Should the project encounter noxious weeds, the City will work with the Kittitas County Noxious Weed Board to ensure appropriate management. No invasive species are known to inhabit the project area.

## 5. Animals

[Find help answering animal questions](#)<sup>8</sup>

A Biological Assessment (BA) was conducted as a part of project planning activities. The answers below are based on that BA.

- a. List any birds and other animals that have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site.**

**Examples include:**

- **Birds:** hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other:
- **Mammals:** deer, bear, elk, beaver, other:
- **Fish:** bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other:

Most of the project will occur within existing road ROW, so it is not common for animals to be on the project site. Some songbirds, hawks, deer, beaver, and other small animals may be present nearby and in the Park. Care will be taken to prevent disturbance to nearby birds and animals. Construction activities will occur during daylight hours, and exclusion fencing will be present at the project boundary.

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

NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region:

- Middle Columbia River DPS Steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) – Threatened

Note: No designated critical habitat identified within the Project vicinity based on National NMFS ESA Critical Habitat Mapper available at National NMFS ESA Critical Habitat Mapper ([arcgis.com](https://arcgis.com)).

U.S. Fish and Wildlife (Official USFWS ESA list obtained online at <https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/>. PROJECT CODE: 2025-0074016 (11/12/2025 20:43:11 UTC):

- Bull Trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) – Threatened
- Yellow-Billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) – Threatened
- Gray Wolf (*Canis lupus*) – Endangered
- Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) – Proposed Threatened
- Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bee (*Bombus suckleyi*) – Proposed Endangered

Note: No designated critical habitat identified for listed species within the Project vicinity.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-5-Animals>

Although determined to be unlikely, juvenile steelhead could possibly utilize the creek for rearing (WDFW 2025a) under ideal aquatic conditions during the irrigation season. Since the Project is scheduled to work in the creek when dry, no steelhead would be present during construction. Furthermore, the Project would not result in any alteration of Lyle Creek that would measurably affect any steelhead that might migrate into the creek reach once irrigation flows begin post-construction. As a result, no impact to steelhead is anticipated. A fish screen was installed to de-regulate the East Branch Lyle Irrigation Ditch to mitigate this potential occurrence.

A 2025 Biological Assessment determined that the Project would result in no effect to steelhead because:

- WDFW (2025a) confirms that steelhead is unlikely to be present in the Lyle Creek reach near Vantage Highway;
- Lyle Creek would be dry during in-stream construction, precluding any possibility of affecting fish during construction; and
- The Project would not result in any alteration of Lyle Creek that would, during first flush, measurably affect any steelhead that might migrate into the creek after irrigation flows begin, post-construction.

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

Project work will occur within an existing road corridor, public ROW, and Park, which are not part of a known migration route.

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

Project work will occur within an existing road corridor, public ROW, and Park. Work near the Lyle Creek crossing will be completed when irrigation flows are shut off and no water is flowing within this conveyance. Work in the Park will be performed according to the wetland mitigation plan.

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

No invasive animal species are known to be on or near the project area.

## **6. Energy and natural resources**

[Find help answering energy and natural resource questions](https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-6-Energy-natural-resou)<sup>9</sup>

**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.**

The project will not require energy inputs.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-6-Energy-natural-resou>

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

The project will not affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties.

- 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

[Health Find help with answering environmental health questions](#)<sup>10</sup>

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

No environmental health hazards are anticipated as a part of this proposal. Fuel and oils associated with construction equipment will be utilized, but no machinery maintenance will take place on site. All appropriate SPCC and SWPPP practices will be strictly adhered to.

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

No known contamination is present on site. Typical stormwater runoff has been filtered through roadside ditches. Therefore, there is potential for typical road runoff stormwater pollutants to be encountered during excavation. If contamination is encountered in levels above applicable regulatory criteria, Best Management Practices will be followed, and materials will be disposed of in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations.

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.**

Hazardous chemicals/conditions are not anticipated to affect project development. Utility lines in the area have been identified through City infrastructure maps, and utility locates will be called in to identify any underground utilities in the field prior to construction.

3. **Describe any toxic or hazardous chemicals that might be stored, used, or produced during the project's development or construction, or at any time during the operating life of the project.**

No toxic or hazardous chemicals will be stored, used, or produced during the project's development or construction, or at any time during the operating life cycle of the project.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-7-Environmental-health>



**4. Describe special emergency services that might be required.**

Emergency services are not anticipated to be required. If an emergency occurs, emergency personnel from the City and/or County will be deployed, and previously established emergency procedures will be followed as applicable.

**5. Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any.**

All appropriate safety, SPCC, and SWPPP measures will be in place prior to construction. Locates will be called in to identify any underground utilities in the field prior to construction.

**b. Noise**

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

Minor to moderate traffic noise present in the area is not anticipated to affect the project. The project will temporarily increase ambient noise levels from the use of combustion engines. However, this temporary increase will cease following construction.

**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 from construction equipment are anticipated and will cease once construction is complete.

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

Equipment used for the project will be equipped with noise-reducing technologies to the extent practicable. Construction will occur during daylight hours, when ambient noise is typically at its greatest in order to reduce the impacts to the surrounding area.

## **8. Land and shoreline use**

[Find help answering land and shoreline use questions](https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-8-Land-shoreline-use)<sup>11</sup>

**a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties? Will the proposal affect current land uses on nearby or adjacent properties? If so, describe.**

The project area exists presently as road ROW and a Park (open space). Adjacent land uses include residential, commercial, and agricultural. No work will be completed outside of the road ROW or Park. Therefore, no affects to adjacent properties are expected from the project.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-8-Land-shoreline-use>

- b. Has the project site been used as working farmlands or working forest lands? If so, describe. How much agricultural or forest land of long-term commercial significance will be converted to other uses because of the proposal, if any? If resource lands have not been designated, how many acres in farmland or forest land tax status will be converted to nonfarm or nonforest use?**

The project will not convert any agricultural or forest land. The project will occur within existing road ROW and a Park.

- 1. Will the proposal affect or be affected by surrounding working farm or forest land normal business operations, such as oversize equipment access, the application of pesticides, tilling, and harvesting? If so, how?**

The project will not affect or be affected by surrounding working farm operations. No forest operations are present within the project vicinity. The project will occur within existing road ROW and Park.

- c. Describe any structures on the site.**

Man-made structures generally consist of: (a) asphalt paved roadway and parking lot with compacted gravel shoulders and fences; (b) paved and unpaved public and private roads and residential and business driveways; (c) utility poles with overhead power, utility lines, and related equipment (transformers, street lights, etc.); (d) subsurface utilities including water, sewer, gas, electrical, telecommunications, and related structure (utility vaults, manholes, etc.); (e) network of ditches and road crossing culverts that convey excess irrigation water and stormwater runoff to local creeks and irrigation canal; (f) road crossing culverts associated with Lyle Creek and E Branch Lyle Ditch; (i) improved Park gravel walking trails.

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

By nature of the project, the structures above will be replaced and realigned to meet current regulatory standards.

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

The project area is public ROW. Zoning adjacent to the area is a mix of residential, rural, and agricultural.

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

Public ROW and Public Reserve.

- 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? If so, specify.**

The project will occur in existing public ROW. As such, the project area is not classified as a critical area. Work that occurs at the Lyle Creek crossing may be classified as critical areas, in which case, all applicable regulatory measures will be followed. Work in the Park includes improvements to a designated wetland as detailed in the mitigation plan.

- 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.**

N/A

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

The project is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, as it is intended to retrofit the existing use to a higher degree of environmental protection.

- m. **Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts to agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any:**

N/A

## 9. Housing

[Find help answering housing questions](#)<sup>12</sup>

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

N/A

## 10. Aesthetics

[Find help answering aesthetics questions](#)<sup>13</sup>

- 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

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<sup>12</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-9-Housing>

<sup>13</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-10-Aesthetics>

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

The aesthetic quality of the area would be improved through tree planting. Trees will be appropriately sized to not interfere with roadway visibility. Park disturbance will be restored according to the mitigation plan.

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

N/A

## **11. Light and glare**

[Find help answering light and glare questions](#)<sup>14</sup>

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

Any new streetlights will be downward facing, in compliance with City code.

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

No.

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

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

Downward facing streetlights meeting City standards for glare and light impacts.

## **12. Recreation**

[Find help answering recreation questions](#)

**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. The project will install nearly two miles of sidewalks and multi use pathways for safe recreation.

**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

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<sup>14</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-11-Light-glare>

### 13. Historic and cultural preservation

[Find help answering historic and cultural preservation questions](#)<sup>15</sup>

- a. **Are there any buildings, structures, or sites, located on or near the site that are over 45 years old listed in or eligible for listing in national, state, or local preservation registers? If so, specifically describe.**

Nothing in the public ROW or Park, where the project will occur.

- b. **Are there any landmarks, features, or other evidence of Indian or historic use or occupation? This may include human burials or old cemeteries. Are there any material evidence, artifacts, or areas of cultural importance on or near the site? Please list any professional studies conducted at the site to identify such resources.**

The project has already gone through the 05/05 process. Following the comment period for the project, Ecology received concurrence from DAHP, (DAHP Project Number: 2021-12-08348) on their determination of *No Cultural Resources Impacts, with a stipulation for an Inadvertent Discovery Plan (IDP)*. No other comments were received. Ecology is in receipt of the IDP.

For the very small portion of the project with a federal nexus (the Lyle Creek crossing under Vantage Highway), a Section 106 Consultation is pending. All investigations have been completed, and the archaeologist has recommended a finding of *No Historic Properties Affected*. The Section 106 application will be submitted upon Ecology's 90% design acceptance.

**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 archaeology and historic preservation, archaeological surveys, historic maps, GIS data, etc.**

05/05 DAHP process, and Section 106 Consultation process

- c. **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.**

An IDP has been prepared for the project. The Section 106 Consultation process is underway and will be completed prior to construction. State and federal requirements, as noted in the DAHP and 106 processes, will be implemented.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-13-Historic-cultural-p>

## 14. Transportation

[Find help with answering transportation questions](#)<sup>16</sup>

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site or affected geographic area and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.**

There are three side streets that serve the project area (Vantage Highway), including Vista Road, Pfenning Road, and Cowboy Lane. None will be impacted. Vantage Highway will remain open during construction. Judge Ronald Rd accesses the Paul Rogers Wildlife Park wetland mitigation area, and will also remain open during construction.

- b. Is the site or affected geographic area currently served by public transit? If so, generally describe. If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?**

The project area is not currently served by Public Transit. The project will construct two new bus pullouts for public transit to accommodate future transit service expansion.

- c. Will the proposal require any new or improvements to existing roads, streets, pedestrian, bicycle, or state transportation facilities, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).**

The project will not make any changes to Vantage Highway, but will provide, behind the curb, a 12-foot multi-use pathway for bicycles and pedestrian traffic along the north side of Vantage Highway and a 7-foot sidewalk along the south side. Two new bus pullouts, one on the north side and one on the south, will be installed. Existing driveways will be upgraded to match sidewalk and trail components.

- d. Will the project or proposal use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.**

No.

- e. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project or proposal? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur and what percentage of the volume would be trucks (such as commercial and nonpassenger vehicles). What data or transportation models were used to make these estimates?**

No additional vehicle trips would be added as part of the project. In fact, trips may decrease with the availability of bus pullouts and improved access for active transportation travel modes.

- f. Will the proposal interfere with, affect, or be affected by the movement of agricultural and forest products on roads or streets in the area? If so, generally describe.**

No.

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

N/A

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<sup>16</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-14-Transportation>

## 15. Public services

[Find help answering public service questions<sup>17</sup>](#)

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

No.

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

N/A

## 16. Utilities

[Find help answering utilities questions<sup>18</sup>](#)

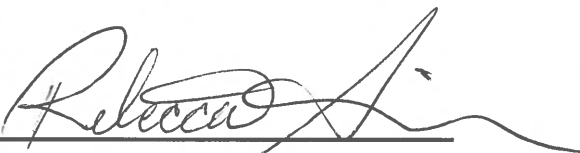
- a. Circle utilities currently available at the site: **electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other: stormwater, fiber.**
- b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed.

Some of the utilities mentioned above will need to be relocated to avoid conflict with the proposed improvements. This work is outside of the project scope.

## C. Signature

[Find help about who should sign<sup>19</sup>](#)

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.

X 

Type name of signee: Rebecca Springer

Position and agency/organization: City of Ellensburg – Water Resources Manager

Date submitted: 1/27/2026

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<sup>17</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/sepa/environmental-review/sepa-guidance/sepa-checklist-guidance/sepa-checklist-section-b-environmental-elements/environmental-elements-15-public-services>

<sup>18</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/sepa/environmental-review/sepa-guidance/sepa-checklist-guidance/sepa-checklist-section-b-environmental-elements/environmental-elements-16-utilities>

<sup>19</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-C-Signature>



## D. Supplemental sheet for nonproject actions

[Find help for the nonproject actions worksheet<sup>20</sup>](#)

**Do not** use this section 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?**

- **Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:**

2. **How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish, or marine life?**

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

3. **How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?**

- **Proposed measures to protect or conserve energy and natural resources are:**

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?**

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

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?**

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<sup>20</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/sepa/environmental-review/sepa-guidance/sepa-checklist-guidance/sepa-checklist-section-d-non-project-actions>

- **Proposed measures to avoid or reduce shoreline and land use impacts are:**

**6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities?**

- **Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demand(s) are:**

**7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.**