

Thurston County



HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT Environmental Impact Statement

Q1 What is SEPA?

The State Environmental Policy Act is a policy requiring state and local agencies to consider the likely environmental consequences of governmental decisions, including decisions on regulatory rule changes. SEPA is a process, not a permit or approval. SEPA implementing rules are codified in Washington State and Thurston County code and provide detail for the EIS process.

Q2 What is an EIS?

An environmental impact statement is a document that provides an impartial discussion of significant environmental impacts, reasonable alternatives, and mitigation measures that would avoid or minimize adverse impacts that could result from implementation of the County's HCP.

Q3 What's the difference between Draft and Final EIS?

Draft EIS provides public and agency decision-makers with information on likely significant adverse environmental impacts of a proposal and alternatives, and mitigation measures to reduce impacts. The public can review and provide comments on the draft EIS.

Final EIS includes all comments received on the Draft EIS and responses from the County and may include revisions to the Draft EIS based on comments received and new information learned. No further public comments are considered.

COMMENT NOW

Comments must be received by November 8, 2021:

Mail

Community Planning and Economic
Development Department
c/o Christina Chaput
2000 Lakeridge Dr. SW
Olympia, WA 98502

Online

ThurstonHCP.org

LOOK ONLINE

ThurstonHCP.org

ASK STAFF

Christina.Chaput@co.thurston.wa.us
360-786-5486

READ THE LAW

State Environmental Policy Act
ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance



THURSTON COUNTY

WASHINGTON

SINCE 1852



Q4 When will the Draft EIS be issued and where will it be available?

Scheduled release: Fall, 2021

Available online: ThurstonHCP.org

Available in print: Thurston County Building Development Center

Email updates: Sign up at ThurstonHCP.org

Q5 What are the environmental elements that are studied in an EIS?

Elements that may be considered:

Natural Environment

Earth
Air
Water
Plants & animals
Energy
Natural resources

Built Environment

Land use
Transportation
Aesthetics
Public services and utilities
Economics

Proposed elements for the HCP EIS:

- Earth resources • Air quality & climate • Water • Plants & animals
- Land use • Recreation • Transportation • Socioeconomics & environmental justice
- Public services • Utilities • Noise • Historic & cultural resources

Q6 What are the alternatives considered in this EIS?

EIS Alternatives to HCP

Alternative 1 - (No Action) Required by SEPA, a no-action alternative means review of the scenario where the HCP would not be implemented.

Alternative 2 - (County HCP) US Fish & Wildlife Service would authorize impacts to covered species that could result from activities conducted or approved by the County along with a mitigation plan to offset these impacts through a Conservation Program that would include acquisition of new habitat reserves, enhancement of existing reserves, and working-land easements. The location of the covered activities cannot be predicted but would occur in the 30-year permit term.

Alternative 3 - (Modified County HCP) The HCP would cover the same species and actions for unincorporated Thurston County as alternative 2. However, this alternative would implement new habitat reserves but would not implement working-land easements or existing reserve enhancement as part of the Conservation Program.



COMMENTING ON THE EIS

Q7 When can I provide comments?

The County will provide a 45-day comment period following release of the Draft EIS. During this period, written comment may be provided at any time. Additional information on dates and how to provide comment will be provided in the Draft EIS. There is no comment period following issuance of the Final EIS.

Q8 What will happen to my comments?

The County will consider all comments provided during Draft EIS 45-day comment period. Comments may result in corrections, additions, or clarifications of information in the Draft EIS. The Final EIS will include all revisions from the comments as well as responses to the comments.

Q9 How can I make my comments the most effective?

Follow these tips extracted from Washington State Department of Ecology's Citizen's Guide to SEPA Review and Commenting (tinyurl.com/SEPA-Comments):

Be clear, concise, and organized. Decide what you need to say before you begin. If you have a number of points, developing an outline is a good idea to help you group your comments in a logical order. Jumping back and forth between several topics reduces the impact of your argument.

Be specific. Saying that you are against a project will not have as much effect as saying why. It is always a good idea to give as much support as possible to your comments. Include as much factual information as possible. For instance, you can compare how things were, to how they are, to how you believe they will be in the future—and why.

Identify possible solutions. Suggestions on reasonable mitigation (conditions to avoid, minimize, or reduce adverse impacts) may help shape a questionable project into a welcome addition to a community. After identifying your concern, whenever possible, suggest possible solutions.