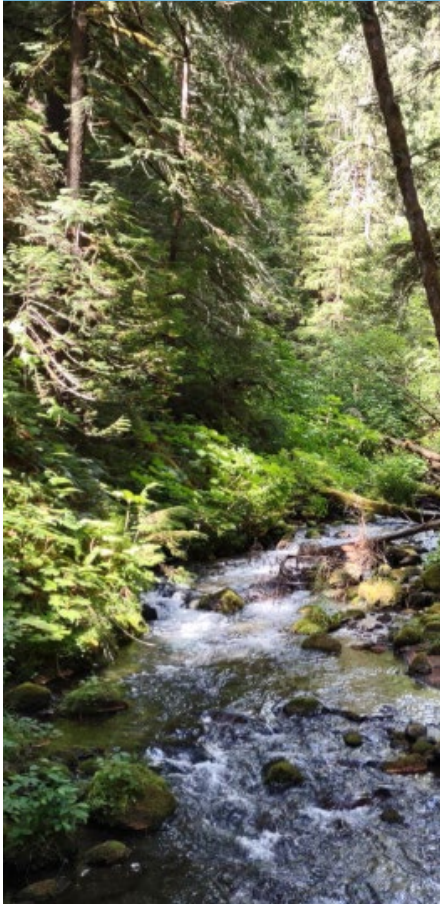




Community Development



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SEPA Review

What is SEPA?

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) provides a way to identify possible environmental impacts that may result from development or adopted regulations. The SEPA review process identifies mitigation for those impacts.

What is the SEPA review process?

SEPA environmental review usually starts when:

- Someone submits a development application
- An agency is considering construction of a public project
- An agency is developing a regulation, policy, or plan, such as a county or city comprehensive plan, a critical area ordinance, or a state water quality regulation

When is SEPA required?

Some minor projects do not require environmental review; the reviewing agency makes that determination. If SEPA is required, the applicant will be asked to fill out an "environmental checklist". This checklist asks questions about the proposal and its potential impacts on the environment.

The reviewing agency will review the checklist and other information about the proposal. Additional studies may be required such as a traffic study, or a study to determine if there are wetlands on the project site, etc. The reviewing agency and applicant may also work together to change the proposal to reduce likely impacts.

A SEPA Determination can include one of the following:

- SEPA exempt
- Determination of non-significance (DNS)
- Mitigated determination of non-significance (MDNS)
- Environmental impact statement (EIS)

Kitsap County Code mitigates the impacts created by the proposal. If the reviewing agency determines that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant adverse environmental impact that are mitigated by Kitsap County Code, the agency will issue a DNS. A MDNS is utilized in situations where Kitsap County Code mitigates the impacts with off-site improvements.

If the information indicates the proposal is likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact even with Kitsap County Code required mitigation, the reviewing agency will require an EIS. This will include an evaluation of alternatives to the proposal and measures that would eliminate or reduce the likely environmental impacts of the proposal.

How is SEPA used in decision making?

The SEPA determination is sent to all agencies potentially interested in the proposal. The environmental information will be considered along with technical, economic, and other information about the proposal. SEPA gives agencies authority to condition a proposal when specific adverse environmental impacts are identified in the SEPA determination.

Additional Information

Due to the administrative complexity of these regulations, it is best to visit with the county SEPA Official to answer any additional questions.