

# 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.

## ***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.

## ***A. Background*** [\[HELP\]](#)

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

Ryegrass Limited Purpose Landfill Expansion

2. Name of applicant:

Patti Stacey, Kittitas County Solid Waste/Facility Maintenance Director

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

Kittitas County Solid Waste/Facility Maintenance Director  
925 Industrial Way  
Ellensburg, WA 98926  
(509) 962-7542

**4. Date checklist prepared:**

November 22, 2022

**5. Agency requesting checklist:**

Kittitas County

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

A Kittitas County Conditional Use permit application and SEPA checklist for the proposed Ryegrass Limited Purpose Landfill (LPL) Expansion project was submitted to Kittitas County Development Services (CDS) in early 2021 for combined land use and environmental regulatory review. In June 2021, Kittitas CDS issued a final determination of non-significance (DNS). In July 2021, the SEPA decision was appealed and an open public hearing was held in October 2021. The decision was upheld; however a legal Appeal was made. The appeal process resulted in direction provided in November 2022 by the Superior Court of the State of Washington to develop a new SEPA checklist. A revised application will be prepared in 2022 with anticipated permit approvals in late 2022 or early 2023. LPL operation will continue in the currently permitted area until expansion permits are received.

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

At this time, Kittitas County (County) estimates the LPL expansion will provide for operational capacity into 2043. As the LPL approaches capacity in the future, and as part of the County's Solid Waste and Moderate Risk Waste Management Plan update process, the County will need to assess if additional capacity is desired. Beyond the currently proposed project, there are no plans for future additions, expansion, or activities related to or connected with this proposal.

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

The LPL has been environmentally regulated by Kittitas County Public Health (Public Health) and the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) since opening in 1996. The LPL has continued to meet the requirements of Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 173-350 Solid Waste Handling Requirements, and more specifically the WAC 173-350-400 Limited Purpose Landfill requirements. The property on which the LPL lies is further environmentally managed under the more stringent WAC 173-351 Criteria for Municipal Solid Waste Landfills requirements related to the closed MSW landfill, which began operation in 1980 and was closed in 1999 and continues to have environmental monitoring performed as part of the MSW Landfill's post-closure care requirements.

The 2021 LPL expansion permit application (Attachment 1) includes, but is not limited to, an engineering report, plan of operations, closure plan, post-closure plan, and environmental monitoring and reporting plans for groundwater, leachate, landfill gas, and surface water. LPL expansion permit application documents are reviewed and regulated by Public Health and Ecology. Public Health and Ecology also inspect the operation and review the environmental monitoring reports for compliance with local, state, and federal regulations. The LPL undergoes onsite inspections and subsequent reporting at a minimum quarterly by Public Health. The LPL is subject to quarterly groundwater monitoring and reporting, and the MSW Landfill continues to have semi-annual groundwater monitoring performed. Landfill gas (LFG) monitoring and reporting at the site is conducted in accordance with the

closed MSW Landfill post-closure care operation on an annual basis. Representative Public Health inspection and groundwater monitoring reports for 2021 have been included in **Attachments 2 and 3**, respectively. Prior inspection and monitoring reports can be made available if desired, although the latest reports contain summaries of all historical monitoring data.

In addition to the LPL expansion application documents and inspection and monitoring reports that demonstrate environmental compliance, some additional specific environmental information pertaining to the site are listed below. The list is not exhaustive.

- Geotechnical & Hydrogeologic Investigation Report – December 2004
- Fate and Transport Modeling – May 2005
- Limited Purpose Landfill Ground Water Monitoring Sampling and Analysis Plan – May 2005
- Limited Purpose Landfill Ground Water Monitoring Sampling and Analysis Plan (Update) – September 2020
- Ryegrass Balefill Post Closure Environmental Monitoring – October 2018

These documents have been included in **Attachment 4**.

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.

No other applications are pending at this time.

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

- Limited Purpose Landfill Approval [Kittitas County Public Health and Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology)]
- Kittitas County: Zoning Conditional Use Permit
- Kittitas County: Fire Marshal Review and Approval

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 County owns and operates the existing Ryegrass LPL located in Kittitas County, Washington. The LPL is currently permitted under WAC 173-350-400, Limited Purpose Landfills, and regulated by Public Health and Ecology. The current facility was reclassified as an LPL in 2004 with a planned capacity of approximately 550,000 cubic yards, including cover soil. The LPL had a projected closure in 2021, which has been extended through operational efficiencies and good practices. The County is planning to further expand the LPL to be able to provide continued disposal services to the region, as the current 2005 permitted volume is nearing capacity. The existing LPL has an approximate disposal footprint of 13.5 acres. The proposed expansion will provide capacity for filling to continue to the south and will increase the disposal footprint to approximately 30.1 acres. Site plans are included in **Attachment 5**. The proposed expansion remains within the existing County property and is estimated to provide available disposal capacity through 2043. The proposed expansion location is a previously active and disturbed operations area and does not require clearing of undisturbed natural environment.

The LPL, as it currently operates, accepts segregated industrial solid waste, construction, demolition, and land clearing (CDL) debris, wood waste, and other materials consistent with the approved Plan of Operations under WAC 173-350-400 and as regulated by Public Health and Ecology. As with the existing LPL, the proposed LPL expansion area will be unlined, and the County will continue to use disposed of crushed concrete and other appropriate material for operational cover material.

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 landfill is located approximately 18 miles east of Ellensburg, WA to the south of the Vantage Highway at 25900 Vantage Highway, Ellensburg, Washington 98926. It is in the Northwest ¼ of Section 16, Township 17 North, Range 21 East. A site plan and vicinity map including topographic information are shown in Attachment 5.

## **B. Environmental Elements** [\[HELP\]](#)

### **1. Earth** [\[help\]](#)

a. General description of the site:

(circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other \_\_\_\_\_

The LPL is at an elevation of approximately 2,600 feet above mean sea level. Relief of the site area adjacent to the LPL is on the order of 100 feet. Slope inclinations typically range from less than 5% to 10%. The LPL lies on a southwest to south-facing slope above southwest-trending valleys that connect to a tributary of the Yakima River. Surface water at the site generally drains to the south or southwest. Stormwater runoff may flow in the unnamed tributaries after heavy rainfalls or snowmelt.

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

The steepest natural slope on the site is about 20%. Areas of the site have previously been developed as part of the existing LPL operations. Slopes as a result of this existing development may be as steep as 3:1 (3 horizontal to 1 vertical).

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.

The United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey, accessed on November 15, 2022, identifies the following soils at the project location:

- Argabak very cobbly loam, 3 to 15 percent slopes, approximately 68 percent of the landfill expansion area.
- Vantage-Clerf complex, 15 to 30 percent slopes, approximately 1 percent of landfill expansion area.
- Palerf-Vantage complex 15 to 30 percent slopes, approximately 4 percent of the landfill expansion area.

The Soil Map Survey shows the remaining 27 percent of the landfill expansion area as “dumps, landfill.” This map has been included in **Attachment 6**.

As additionally described based on the geotechnical investigations at the site, the site is underlain by weak to moderately strong basalt bedrock that is locally overlain by a thin veneer-typically less than six inches thick- of gravelly sandy loam (USDA).

The rocky nature of the surface soils precludes it from efficient and economical agricultural uses. The proposed expansion area is also an active operations area and was cleared of native vegetation prior to 2000.

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

Review of Kittitas County's "compas" interactive map program, accessed on August 8, 2022, does not indicate hazardous slopes on the subject parcel. Review of the geologic map entitled Geologic Map of the east half of the Yakima 1:100,000 Quadrangle, Washington, compiled by Shuster (1994) indicates that no recent faults have been mapped within a mile of the site. The site is apparently situated along the eastern limb of a broad, northwest-southeast-oriented syncline whose axis is located about 2 miles to the southwest (Shuster, 1994). The site is in an area of low seismic activity (Seismic Zone 2B, UBC).

The site has been used for landfilling operations since 1980 without indications of unstable soils at the site.

e. 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 purpose of the LPL expansion is to provide a continued level of service to the community for disposal of regulatorily approved materials. Approved fill generally includes segregated industrial solid waste, CDL debris, wood waste, and other similar materials.

Figure 2-1 of the LPL Permit Application, included in Attachment 5, illustrates the final grading plan for the expanded LPL. The LPL development does not anticipate significant excavation in advance of filling activities. The fill expansion will be within an existing operations area of the site which has been previously disturbed by facility operations.

The final grading plan defines the shape, grades, and final boundaries of the landfill. The LPL will have a maximum side slope of 3:1 and a minimum top deck slope of 5%. The expansion will increase the current 13.5-acre disposal footprint to approximately 30.1 acres and provide a refuse fill capacity of approximately 1,300,000 cubic yards beyond the 2020 topography.

f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.

Erosion may occur to exposed soils as the landfill is filled. During site operations, the landfill will be regularly inspected for erosion and required slope maintenance. Erosion will also be managed through runoff control design, which is reviewed and approved by Public Health and Ecology as part of the WAC 173-350-400 compliance.

The final landfill configuration will include a network of surface water management features installed to reduce erosion of surfaces. Areas will also be vegetated as part of landfill closure. The surface water management design is reviewed and approved by Public Health and Ecology as part of the WAC 173-350-400 compliance.

There is still the potential that the closed LPL could be susceptible to erosion of the final cover soil materials and damage to the vegetative cover. The LPL permit requires a post-closure care and maintenance period to repair areas that experience erosion. Post-closure requirements are enforced by Public Health and Ecology as part of the WAC 173-350-400 compliance.

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

The project construction will not significantly impact the percentage of impervious surfaces at the site. Impervious surface impacts will generally be limited to improvements to the existing perimeter gravel service roads. The existing perimeter gravel road is approximately 5% of the total proposed LPL area.

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

The LPL is designed for surface water management, which is reviewed and approved by Public Health and Ecology as part of the WAC 173-350-400 compliance. The design includes operational and closure surface water management best practices, including but not limited to appropriately spaced and sized ditches, culverts, and a temporary detention pond. Areas will be vegetated at closure and ditches will be lined with matting or rock. The final condition will utilize natural, existing drainage from the site.

The site will be inspected and maintained regularly, including after closure, in compliance with WAC 173-350-400 and as enforced by Public Health and Ecology.

## **2. Air** [\[help\]](#)

- 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.

Consistent with the previous and current operations, the facility will receive limited purpose landfill material for disposal. Airborne dust will be created as the material is dumped, moved and compacted at the working face and when cover material is placed over the waste.

The disposal material may generate some landfill gas (LFG) and odors. The waste types accepted should not present an odor problem since materials are generally inert and typically do not generate significant LFG or odor. LFG odors have also not been detectable at the property boundary.

During closure construction (in the future) dust will result from construction traffic and earthwork operations associated with installation of the final cover.

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

No off-site sources of emissions or odors would affect this proposal.

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

As with current operations, dust will be controlled by maintaining site access roads and placement of cover soil during preferred weather conditions (i.e., during periods of low wind). To control fugitive dust, the site access roads are gravel or asphalt paved, and the active operation (i.e., landfilling) area is covered with gravel or crushed concrete. Dust control is an element of the Plan of Operations in accordance with WAC 173-350-400 as regulated by Public Health and Ecology.

During closure construction, dust suppression methods employed by the contractor such as sprinkling site roads and work areas will be a requirement of the closure construction and costs for dust control have been included in the Closure Plan in accordance with WAC 173-350-400 as regulated by Public Health and Ecology.

LFG and odors are generally controlled through the material types accepted for disposal at the LPL. Materials are generally inert and typically do not generate significant odor. Odors are also controlled through the regular and timely placement of waste into the landfill without prolonged exposure to the surrounding environment and the use of cover material. Additional cover material will be used to control odors as necessary.

The LPL is regulated by Public Health and Ecology under WAC 173-350-400 and is required to be designed to control methane and other explosive gases. LFG monitoring and reporting at the site is conducted in accordance with the closed MSW landfill post-closure care operation. The LFG monitoring currently conducted is representative of MSW landfill and LPL. The ongoing LFG monitoring for the MSW landfill indicates that LFG control for the site, including the LPL, remains in compliance with the regulations.

### 3. **Water** [\[help\]](#)

#### a. Surface Water: [\[help\]](#)

- 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.

The proposed project has two streams on the property, one being approximately 736 feet away to the southwest and the other approximately 1,633 feet away to the east and south. There are three other streams that are nearby that are not located on the property, with each being over 1,400 feet away from the expanded limited purpose landfill site. The proposed landfill is outside of all required buffers of the streams as defined in KCC 17A.07.010 and WAC 173-350-400(3)(c).

- 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.

The project does not involve work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) of surface water.

- 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.

Not applicable, the project includes no work in or near surface waters.

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

No surface water withdrawals or diversions will occur under this project.

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

The proposal does not lie within the 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 discharges of waste materials to surface waters.

#### b. Ground Water: [\[help\]](#)

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

No. The site will not include a supply well. Water will not be discharged to groundwater; however, water may infiltrate and become groundwater. Due to regionally low precipitation, around 8 inches a year, most of which falls as snow, only around half an inch of water per year actually makes it into the groundwater (called recharge), due to evaporation, uptake by plants, and surface runoff. This greatly reduces the potential for any contaminants to migrate downwards into aquifers.

The existing landfill is regulated through the WAC 173-350-400 among other regulations, which requires the protection of groundwater. Under the existing permit through Public Health and Ecology, the project has demonstrated protection of groundwater through a water balance, Hydrologic Evaluation of Landfill Performance (HELP) Model analysis, groundwater and contaminant fate and transport modeling, and groundwater monitoring. Monitoring reports and other groundwater analysis information has been provided in **Attachments 3 and 4**.

The Site will continue to be monitored for any groundwater issues in accordance with WAC 173-350-500, Groundwater Monitoring. The existing landfill is meeting all groundwater requirements in accordance with Public Health and Ecology reviews.

The landfill expansion is within the same area evaluated by previous Site reports, assessments, and monitoring; which are applicable to the immediately adjacent expansion footprint. The performance of the existing landfill has demonstrated no impacts to groundwater. The landfill expansion will also be regulated through the WAC 173-350-400, is expected to have similar performance (no impacts to groundwater) as the existing landfill, and will be subject to the same requirements from Public Health and Ecology.

- 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 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 material will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other related sources. The facility does not include a well, plumbing, water or sanitary sewer systems. Disposal of liquid waste or liquids at the LPL is prohibited.

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.

Stormwater runoff will be the result of precipitation. The Site is managed in accordance with WAC 173-350-400(4)(e) under the LPL permit through Public Health and Ecology.

Runoff from upstream of the landfill will be intercepted by diversion berms and routed around the landfill and reconnected to natural drainages to the south and west.

Runoff from the active portion of the LPL will be directed away from the active area using perimeter roadside ditches. Runoff will be allowed to infiltrate within the LPL footprint or be conveyed to a temporary evaporation/infiltration pond to the south. Collected runoff water will be allowed to evaporate/infiltrate and will not be discharged.

Once final cover is installed within the two drainage basins of the site, drainage will be captured and conveyed in side slope ditches and perimeter ditches to a 24-inch corrugated metal culvert and discharged to naturally occurring ravines west and south of the site.

The run-on/runoff control features have been conceptually sized and spaced to accommodate the flow from a 25-year storm event as required by Public Health and Ecology. Additional information is available in **Attachment 1**.

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

Infiltrating surface water may contact disposed of waste and become groundwater. The potential for waste materials entering groundwater or surface water is regulated by Public Health and Ecology in accordance with WAC 173-350-400. The LPL Permit Application (**Attachment 1**) includes a hydrogeologic demonstration that groundwater supply will be protected from waste material. Additionally, the site has a groundwater monitoring program in place to identify if waste materials enter groundwater. Groundwater monitoring at the LPL currently includes two groundwater monitoring wells, B-3 and B-7, and a nearby spring. The expansion area is located mostly downgradient of the existing LPL, therefore rationale for location of appropriate monitoring wells should be similar. B-3 was recently added because it is the closest downgradient existing well, which is already being monitored for the MSW landfill and has 28 years of prior data.



The landfill will have run-on controls (berms and ditches) in place to route surface water around waste materials to natural drainageways. Precipitation that falls on the waste will be captured through run-off controls (berms and ditches) and retained on site in an evaporation pond. Run-off from the closed landfill will be directed to natural drainageways.

In addition, in accordance with WAC 173-350-400, no landfill may be located closer than 1,000 feet to an existing water supply well. The nearest water wells are located approximately 3,000 feet north (upgradient) of the LPL (Campbell, and Wildhorse Energy Visitor Center). Three wells (Whitmire, Wyatt and McCroskey) are located approximately 4,000 feet east (side gradient) of the LPL. Two wells are located approximately 6,000 feet south (downgradient) of the LPL (WSDOT Ryegrass rest area on I-90, and SLC Ranch further south).

Finally, as describe previously, due to regionally low precipitation, around 8 inches a year, most of which falls as snow, only around half an inch of water per year actually makes it into the groundwater (called recharge), due to evaporation, uptake by plants, and surface runoff. This greatly reduces the potential for any contaminants to migrate downwards into aquifers.

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

The proposal would not alter or otherwise affect drainage patterns in the vicinity of the site.

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

The LPL operation is regulated through WAC 173-350-400 as overseen by Public Health and Ecology. As with the existing permitted facility, the expanded LPL will follow the same requirements to reduce and control environmental impacts. Measures are defined in the LPL permit application included as **Attachment 1**, and generally include responsible facility operation, run-on and runoff controls, natural climate and geology of the area, and inert nature of the waste material.

The effectiveness of these measures is represented in the ongoing inspections and environmental monitoring which is required at the site (**Attachments 2 and 3**).

#### 4. **Plants** [\[help\]](#)

- 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
- water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other
- other types of vegetation

In accordance with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), the site is within mapped priority shrubsteppe habitat area. WDFW reviewed the site on May 4, 2021 and in a follow up email

communication, confirmed that the LPL expansion area was not currently in sagebrush habitat, with only a few scattered sagebrush occurring in the area. WDFW agreed that clearing of this area would not reduce sagebrush habitat on the site. During the site visit, WDFW and Kittitas County CDS staff also discussed plans for revegetation of the site upon landfill closure. WDFW agreed that the site should be replanted with a native grass mix for restoration once the site is no longer being used. If not adding sagebrush to the native grass mix, WDFW would appreciate that the property at least allow sagebrush to natural recolonize the site.

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

The expansion area is in an existing operations area of the Site. Minimal native vegetation would be removed from the area to be developed as part of the landfill; most areas of the planned development have minimal (only grass) to no vegetation.

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

The Washington Department of Natural Resources Natural Heritage program identifies two rare plant occurrences (*Pediocactus nigrispinus* and *Lomatium lithosolamans*) approximately 2,000 feet to the northeast, east, and southeast of proposed activities.

In accordance with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), the site is within mapped priority shrubsteppe habitat area.

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

In consultation with WDFW in May of 2021, WDFW agreed that clearing of this area would not reduce sagebrush habitat on the site. As required by WDFW, prior to expanding the LPL, a revegetation plan would be prepared and submitted for WDFW's review and approval, which would include a monitoring component to ensure success. After any portion of the landfill is closed, the covering of the landfill would be replanted with native shrubsteppe vegetation. If not adding sagebrush to the native vegetation mix, sagebrush would be allowed to naturally recolonize the areas of closed landfill. No future clearing of shrubsteppe habitat would occur without a WDFW-approved habitat management plan.

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

The presence of noxious weeds are not known to be on or near the site. Review of the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) Noxious Weed Data Viewer does not indicate noxious weeds on or near the site.

## **5. Animals [\[help\]](#)**

**a. List any birds and other animals which 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 \_\_\_\_\_

Within five miles of the site, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife interactive mapping for Priority Habitat Species (PHS on the Web) indicates the presence of the following wildlife in the area:

- Ring-necked pheasant
- Sagebrush sparrow
- Townsend's ground squirrel-nancyae
- Black-tailed jackrabbit
- Rainbow trout

- Greater sage-grouse
- Burrowing owl
- Elk
- Mule deer

According to a WDFW area habitat biologist (direct communication with Kittitas County Development Services in a letter dated April 14, 2021), the site is within the current range of an elk herd and current range of multiple Washington State Candidate shrubsteppe species such as golden eagle, sagebrush sparrow, sage thrasher, loggerhead shrike, burrowing owl, Townsend's ground squirrel, and black-tailed jackrabbit some of which are listed above. The WDFW area habitat biologist also pointed out that though the populations are now reduced, the area historically would have supported greater sage-grouse (State Endangered) and ferruginous hawk (State Threatened, proposed for Endangered designation).

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

According to the WDFW interactive mapping for Priority Habitat Species (PHS on the Web), Township 17 is mapped for greater sage-grouse, a state endangered species. Occurrence on the site is unverified though unlikely given this is an active landfill. As described above, according to the WDFW area habitat biologist, the area historically would have supported greater sage-grouse and ferruginous hawk (State Threatened, proposed for Endangered designation).

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

The site is part of the greater Pacific Flyway migration route for birds, which includes all of Washington.

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

The landfill expansion area is within an existing, fenced, disturbed area of the site that experiences regular operations activity. The proposed location is not conducive to animals, and therefore further development of the area will have low impacts of animals.

As required by WDFW, prior to closing the LPL, a revegetation plan would be prepared and submitted for WDFW's review and approval, which would include a monitoring component to ensure success. After any portion of the landfill is closed, the covering of the landfill would be replanted with native shrubsteppe vegetation. If not adding sagebrush to the native vegetation mix, sagebrush would be allowed to naturally recolonize the areas of closed landfill. No future clearing of shrubsteppe habitat would occur without a WDFW-approved habitat management 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 site.

**6. Energy and Natural Resources [\[help\]](#)**

**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.**

Petroleum fuels will be used for operating equipment and vehicles. All fuels needed will be directly from fuel delivery vehicles brought to site for that purpose. There will be no on-site fuel storage and dispensing system to refuel operating equipment and vehicles.

Existing electricity service will be used for power at the existing office trailer and equipment building.

**b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties?**

**If so, generally describe.**

No, the project would not affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent property owners.

- 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:

No energy conservation measures are proposed.

## **7. Environmental Health** [\[help\]](#)

- 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?  
If so, describe.

The existing LPL is only allowed to accept wastes approved through the permit with Public Health and Ecology, under WAC 173-350-400, which prohibits hazardous waste. The existing LPL is able to accept segregated industrial solid waste, CDL debris, wood waste, ash (other than special incinerator ash), contaminated soil and contaminated dredged material in accordance with WAC 173-350-100.

Construction and demolition waste may contain various potentially hazardous or toxic substances including petroleum hydrocarbons, metals, solvents, fecal coliform bacteria, and inorganic constituents (nitrate, sulfate, and chloride). Operations staff visually inspect every load to confirm only the materials approved by the County for disposal at the site are accepted.

The LPL expansion will be operated similarly to the existing LPL and in accordance with the requirements of WAC 173-350-400.

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

The LPL expansion is on the same property as the existing LPL and formerly operated MSW Ryegrass Landfill. Both facilities were permitted and received solid waste for disposal.

The MSW landfill was identified as cleanup site #4061 according to Ecology due to surficial leakage of leachate. A sample of leachate emanating from the side of the Balefill in 1996 contained detectable concentrations of metals, organic carbon, and inorganic constituents. In 1998, the County began closure activities and completed the final cover in 1999, after which no further leachate releases were observed. In January 2012, Ecology issued a "Notice of Satisfaction" letter stating the County had met the substantive requirements of the cleanup order (#DE98-SW-C168), including installing final cover and leachate management systems, after which no surface flows of leachate have occurred.

Groundwater samples collected downgradient of the Balefill from 1994 to the present have contained some inorganic constituents, metals, and nitrate exceeding Washington State Department of Ecology Groundwater Quality Criteria. Evidence of a release to groundwater is evaluated via statistical trend analysis, which evaluates whether statistically significant increases are occurring short (last four years) term vs. long (prior ~15 years) term. Although there is no groundwater quality data preceding the landfill, and no available upgradient or background groundwater quality data, analyte concentration trends over the past 25 years, and concentrations relative to location, do not appear consistent with releases from the landfill, i.e., in any given reporting year, long and short term statistical trends show some constituents increasing and some decreasing. In some cases, the same analyte both increased and decreased in the same well during different time periods, or in different wells within the same time period. Overall, these trend results suggest that there is no clear pattern of overall increasing multiple related landfill indicator compound concentrations which may indicate impacts from either landfill. Observed increasing and decreasing analyte concentration trends are more likely related to precipitation trends, which are apparent for some analytes.

Groundwater reporting has been ongoing to Public Health and Ecology with no cause for corrective action beyond the initial closure of the MSW landfill

The Site will continue to be monitored for any groundwater issues in accordance with WAC 173-350-500,

Groundwater Monitoring. The existing landfill is meeting all groundwater requirements.

- 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.

No hazardous chemicals/conditions are expected to affect project development and design. Review of the National Pipeline Mapping System public viewer confirms there are no nearby gas transmission lines, hazardous liquid pipelines, liquefied natural gas plants, or breakout tanks in the project area or vicinity.

- 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.

During LPL operation, small amounts of materials may be stored onsite in equipment or for maintenance of equipment including gasoline and diesel fuels, oils, hydraulic fluids, and lubricants.

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

No special emergency services are required for this project.

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

The proposed LPL expansion would adhere to the Kittitas County Board of Health Solid Waste Regulations Ordinance 1999-1 (promulgated under the authority of RCW 70.05 and 70.95) to protect public peace, health, safety, and welfare of the citizens and environment of Kittitas County.

The site and operation are regulated by Public Health and Ecology through permits and monitoring in accordance with WAC 173-350-400.

Loads are screened for possible contaminants (e.g., hazardous waste materials such as paint cans or batteries), and if non-permitted waste is found to have been disposed onsite, the Kittitas County Public Health and Solid Waste Programs staff are notified immediately. Acceptable appliances are those with no hazardous substances and will only be accepted in accordance with Federal, State, and local regulations.

#### **b. Noise**

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

No new on-site noise sources will be created as a result of this proposal. There are no existing off-site sources that will affect this proposal.

- 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.

Noise associated with the expansion would be caused by heavy equipment (bulldozer) and vehicles operating on site associated with the landfill operation and material transport. On occasion they may be noise from materials process, such as concrete crushing. These noises are consistent with the current permitted operation.

Operation of the facility is from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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

No measures are proposed to reduce or control noise impacts, other than maintaining noise within approved hours of operation.

## 8. Land and Shoreline Use [\[help\]](#)

- 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 site is currently an operating LPL and other County operations. Adjacent land use is open range (cattle) and wind renewable energy operations. The proposal will not affect these uses. The proposed project will be compatible to the rural environment with no contradicting land uses near it.

- 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 as a result 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 expansion of the existing LPL will remain within the existing property boundary and operations area, which has not been used as a working farmland or forest land; therefore, there will be no conversion of farmland or forestland.

- 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 proposal would not affect or be affected by surrounding working farm or forest land operations.

- c. Describe any structures on the site.

Primary structures on the site consist of an existing office trailer and equipment building.

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

No structures would be demolished.

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

The current zoning classification is Forest and Range.

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

Rural Working land use designation.

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

Not applicable, the site is not in a designated shoreline management area.

- h. Has any part of the site been classified as a critical area by the city or county? If so, specify.

Kittitas County's "compass" interactive map program, accessed on February 12, 2015, shows Washington Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)-mapped streams on or near the subject parcel:

- Watercourse ID 1202291469751. Intermittent. Stream is north of the project parcel and landfill expansion area. It is typed by the WDNR as "non-fish bearing" (Type 9). It is greater than 1,400 feet from the northern extent of the LPL expansion area.
- Schnebly Coulee (Watercourse ID 1201974469683). Intermittent. Stream extends into the parcel boundary to the east of the proposed landfill expansion. It is typed by the WDNR as "unknown" (Type 4) for fish presence. Schnebly Coulee is mapped as greater than 1,600 feet from the eastern extent of the landfill expansion area.

- Watercourse ID 1202223469574. Intermittent. Stream is southeast of the landfill expansion area, within the project parcel. It is typed by the WDNR as "non-fish bearing" (Type 9). It is greater than 1,600 feet from the southeastern extent of the LPL expansion area.
- Watercourse ID 1202692469508. Intermittent. Stream is southwest of the landfill expansion area, just outside the project parcel. It is typed by the WDNR as "non-fish bearing" (Type 9). It is greater than 700 feet from the southwestern extent of the LPL expansion area.
- Watercourse ID 1202437469540. Intermittent. Stream is west of the landfill expansion area, just outside the project parcel. It is typed by the WDNR as "non-fish bearing" (Type 9). It is greater than 1,500 feet from the western extent of the LPL expansion area.

See **Attachment 5**, which shows WDNR-mapped watercourses relative to the landfill expansion area.

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

There are no residences associated with the completed project. There will be one person working on the site eight hours a day, during days of operation. To comply with WAC 173.350.400, if the landfill ever exceeds 50,000 cubic yards per year, two personnel will staff the site during hours of operation.

j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?

No people would be displaced upon project completion.

k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:

Because no displacements would occur, no measures are proposed to avoid or reduce displacements.

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

No measures are proposed to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans. There is no change in the land use of the site as part of this proposal.

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

Since the project would not impact agricultural or forest lands of long-term commercial significance, no measures are proposed.

## 9. Housing [\[help\]](#)

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

No housing units would be provided as part of this proposal.

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

No housing units would be eliminated under this proposal.

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

No measures are proposed to reduce or control housing impacts.

## 10. Aesthetics [\[help\]](#)

- a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?

No structures are a part of this proposal.

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

There will be no scenic views obstructed or altered.

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

No measures are proposed to reduce or control aesthetic impacts beyond revegetating the site upon closure.

### **11. Light and Glare** [\[help\]](#)

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

No light or glare would be produced under this proposal.

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

No light or glare would be produced; therefore, there would be no safety hazards or interference of views.

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

No off-site sources of light or glare would affect this proposal.

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

No measures are proposed to reduce or control light and glare.

### **12. Recreation** [\[help\]](#)

- a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?

No designated-recreational opportunities are in the immediate project vicinity.

- b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.

The proposal would not displace recreational uses.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:

No measures are proposed to reduce or control impacts on recreation.

### **13. Historic and cultural preservation** [\[help\]](#)

- 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.

Review of the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) online database (WISAARD) indicates that no buildings, structures, or sites are located on or near the proposal that are over 45 years old listed in or eligible for listing in national, state, or local preservation registers.

- 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.

There is no evidence of landmarks, features, or other evident of Indian or historic use or occupation.



The DAHP WISAARD predictive model for "environmental factors with Archaeological resources" show the site as being very high risk and an archaeological survey is very highly advised. However, the model is not site specific. As discussed in the Earth section of this narrative, the LPL expansion will be within an existing, and previously cleared, operations area of the site, which has been previously disturbed by facility operations and is currently an active operations area.

- 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.

The DAHP WISAARD online mapping database was consulted to understand the potential for cultural and historic resources in the area. The specific site is an existing disturbed site without potential impacts to cultural and historic resources.

- 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.

Kittitas County and its contractors will comply with laws and regulations protecting cultural resources should they be accidentally uncovered as a result of construction, site preparation, or other modifications associated with ground disturbance. If archaeological resources or human remains are encountered during construction, the County and its contractors will follow the appropriate procedures in accordance with county, state, and federal laws.

#### **14. Transportation** [\[help\]](#)

- 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.

The existing landfill is located off of State Route 10 - the Old Vantage Highway. An existing paved on-site road provides access from the landfill site to the Old Vantage Highway. No new access is proposed.

- 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 site or affected geographic area is not served by public transit.

- c. How many additional parking spaces would the completed project or non-project proposal have? How many would the project or proposal eliminate?

Parking is already provided for facility staff (associated with current operations). No new parking is proposed.

- d. 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 existing onsite gravel road will be re-graded as needed to maintain landfill operations and access. As part of landfill operation, the road must be maintained as needed to ensure safety and functionality. No new roads to the site are proposed.

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

The proposal would not occur in the immediate vicinity of water, rail, or air transportation.

- 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 nonpassenger vehicles). What data or transportation models were used to make these estimates?

The LPL expansion will provide for the continuation of an existing operation. In 2020, the LPL received approximately 1,200 customers, or approximately six trucks per day, based on site usage receipts. The landfill expansion will maintain the current level of service and not increase vehicle trips.

g. 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.

There should be no transportation impacts as a result of this project.

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

No measures are proposed to reduce or control transportation impacts.

**15. Public Services** [\[help\]](#)

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 increased need for public services is required since the expansion is maintaining an existing operation. Regarding fire risk, the Ryegrass site provides areas of refuse in the operational areas which are clear of vegetation, including but not limited to the attendant and maintenance area, concrete processing area, septage lagoons and ponds area, and limited purpose landfill cover area. All development, design, and construction will comply with International Fire Code requirements and KCC Title 20 Fire and Life Safety.

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

No measures are proposed to reduce or control direct impacts on public services.

**16. Utilities** [\[help\]](#)

a. Circle utilities currently available at the site:

electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other \_\_\_\_\_

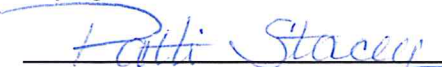
Existing utilities at the site include electricity and telephone.

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.

No new utilities are proposed.

**C. Signature** [\[HELP\]](#)

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: 

Name of signee Patti Stacey

Position and Agency/Organization Director, Kittitas County Solid Waste Programs

Date Submitted: 11/22/2022

## **D. Supplemental sheet for nonproject actions** [\[HELP\]](#)

**(IT IS NOT NECESSARY** to 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?

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?

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.