

## KITTITAS COUNTY

# Clean Energy Siting and Permitting Project

## Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Scoping Fact Sheet

### What is a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?

A Programmatic EIS under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) **evaluates the environmental effects of broad, planning-level proposals, rather than site-specific projects.**

The purpose is to provide detailed comparisons of planning alternatives, assess cumulative effects, and develop broad mitigation strategies in a clear and concise Final EIS. The process through which the EIS is developed will include time for the public and interested parties to comment on proposed policies, programs, and alternative scenarios.

Site-specific projects will be separately evaluated under SEPA and County code. Additional opportunities for public involvement will also be available at the project level.

For more information, see Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 197-11-400.

### Why is the County preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?

An EIS is used when decisions involve multiple projects, long-term implementation, or large geographic areas that potentially have significant adverse impacts on the environment.

**The County has determined that the energy uses under consideration have the potential for significant impacts on the environment.** As such, the County is preparing an EIS to assess alternative energy uses, suitable and appropriate locations for each use, potential impacts, and appropriate mitigation measures.

### What is the process for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?

This project will study the potential impacts of different energy uses and ways to mitigate potential impacts. **The EIS process includes the following steps:**



**Scoping** identifies the range of options and elements of environment to study\*



Analysis of current conditions and **potential impacts** from the range of options



**Draft EIS (DEIS)** issued shares study findings\*



**Final EIS (FEIS)** revised after public comment period

*\*Includes a public comment period.*

It is anticipated that after the DEIS is issued, a Preferred Alternative will be selected from the range provided in the alternatives for inclusion in the FEIS to aid in County decision making processes.



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## What is meant by “Scoping” and “Alternatives”?

“**Scoping**” is an opportunity for the public to provide early input on what environmental topics the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) should focus on. It is particularly important for the County to know what energy uses and impacts are of greatest interest to the community.

“**Alternatives**” are the approaches that the County is considering as it relates to the energy uses for siting and permitting energy in the County. Alternatives represent a range of options that can highlight the potential significant adverse impacts of different choices. The alternatives are broad enough so that the final preferred scenario included in the siting and permitting changes falls somewhere within the range of alternatives studied.

## What impacts, or “elements of the environment”, are being considered?

The natural, built, and social environment topics proposed for study in the EIS include those listed below.



Earth Resources



Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases



Water Resources



Biological Resources  
*(species and habitats, including shrub steppe habitat)*



Energy and Natural Resources



Environmental Health and Safety



Environmental Justice, Impacted Communities, and Overburdened Communities



Tribal Rights, Interests, and Resources



Noise and Vibration



Land Use, including agricultural and ranching uses and military installations and operations



Visual Quality



Recreation



Historic and Cultural Resources



Transportation



Public Services and Utilities

Each Alternative would be evaluated with these topics.  
A full list of potential SEPA topics can be found in WAC 197-11-444.



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# What Alternatives are being considered?

The County anticipates studying three Alternatives in the draft EIS as described below:

## Alternative #1



**No Action Alternative**, as required under SEPA, assumes that energy development for solar, wind, battery energy storage systems (BESS), geothermal, and small modular reactors (SMR) **would occur within Kittitas County based on the current development regulations with no changes**. The current Kittitas County Code (KCC) sections relating to energy development are KCC Chapter 17.61 Utilities, KCC Chapter 17.61A Wind Farm Resource Overlay Zone, KCC Chapter 17.61B Small Wind Energy Systems, and KCC Chapter 17.61C Solar Power Production Facilities. The processes and development code standards currently established in Kittitas County would be carried forward and any uses not permitted could be done through the permitting process established by the Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC).

## Alternative #2



**Re-evaluates locations suitable and appropriate for utility scale solar and wind along with current permitting procedures**. Current overlay locations ([KCC 17.61C.030 Solar Power Production Facilities Overlay Map](#) and [KCC 17.61A Wind Farm Overlay Zone](#)) may be modified based on findings. Additionally, significant environmental impacts associated with **battery energy storage systems (BESS) will be assessed** to determine suitable and appropriate locations in Kittitas County for BESS facilities. Where deemed appropriate, county permitting processes for utility scale solar, wind, and BESS may be modified to streamline the local permitting pathway and provide clear development standards with known mitigation measures.

## Alternative #3



**Evaluates significant environmental impacts for geothermal energy facilities and small modular reactor facilities**. The impacts associated with geothermal energy and small modular reactors will be assessed to determine suitable and appropriate locations in Kittitas County for geothermal energy facilities and small modular reactor facilities. Where deemed appropriate, county permitting processes may be modified to streamline the local permitting pathway and provide clear development standards with known mitigation measures.



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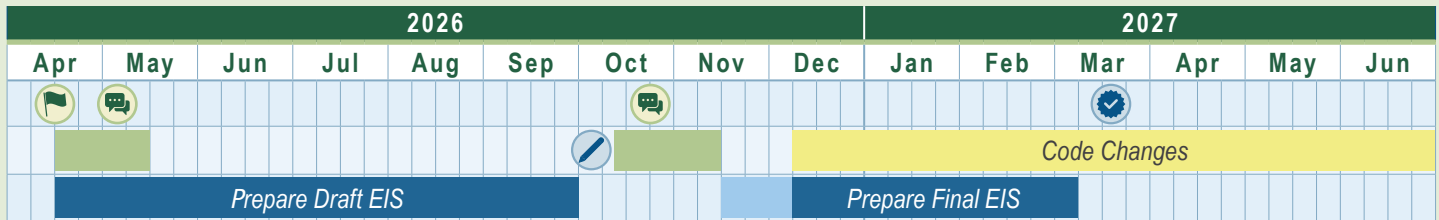
## What is the anticipated schedule?

The County is due to complete the final energy siting and permitting process changes by June 2027. The draft EIS assists the planning process and the decisions made to plan for energy siting. The schedule below shows the project schedule.

### PROJECT STEPS



### EIS & CODE DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE



Issue Scoping Notice

Open Houses

Issue Draft EIS

Issue Final EIS

30 Day Comment Periods

Select a Preferred Alternative

Code Development & Adoption

Last Updated April 7, 2026

This scoping period and the draft EIS comment period provide key public comment opportunities.

## How can I provide input during the scoping period?

The County will collect public input on what factors the EIS should consider from **April 16th to May 18th**.

After the end of the scoping comment period, the County will review and summarize the comments received, sharing what was heard. The comments provided will be considered as part of the scope of the EIS.

Please note that this comment period is to identify elements to study in the EIS.

A 30-day comment period will also be held when the draft EIS is published (anticipated for October 2026)



### Online Comments

may be emailed to [cleanenergy@co.kittitas.wa.us](mailto:cleanenergy@co.kittitas.wa.us) with "EIS Scoping Comment" in the subject line.



### Written Comments

may be submitted by mail to:

**Reference:** Clean Energy Siting and Permitting Scoping Comment

**To:** Kittitas County Community Development Services

**Address:** 411 N Ruby ST, Suite 2 Ellensburg WA 98926



## How can I learn more and receive updates?

To learn more about the Clean Energy Siting and Permitting Project and EIS, visit [co.kittitas.wa.us/cds/cesp.aspx](http://co.kittitas.wa.us/cds/cesp.aspx) for continued updates.



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