



## Community Development Department

Director: Lauren Prentice

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[https://www.co.walla-walla.wa.us/residents/community\\_development/index.php](https://www.co.walla-walla.wa.us/residents/community_development/index.php)

### FINAL DETERMINATION OF NON-SIGNIFICANCE (DNS)

<b>File(s):</b>	<b>CAP22-020 SEPA22-022</b>
<b>Description of Proposal:</b>	The applicant is proposing to place a bridge over Coppei Creek to access property east of the waterway. The proposed bridge will be placed in the following critical areas: 100-year floodplain (Approximate A zone), wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat conservation area (100' wide riparian habitat buffer), and geologically hazardous areas (seismic hazard area of moderate to high liquefaction susceptibility). Development within these critical areas is subject to the standards of Walla Walla County Code (WWCC) Chapter 18.08, Critical Areas and Chapter 18.12, Flood Damage Prevention.
<b>Proponent:</b>	BEECHINOR FARMS 5238 COTTONWOOD RD WALLA WALLA WA, 99362
<b>Owner:</b>	BARNES FAMILY FARMLAND LLC, C/O JAY GIROTTO 18 CRESCENT KEY BELLEVUE WA, 98006
<b>Location of Proposal:</b>	The site is located generally at an unaddressed parcel adjacent to 18392 E HWY 12 (APN 370923110005).

The lead agency for this proposal has determined that it does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030 (2) (c). This decision was made after review of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public on request.

The Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) is based on the project as proposed and reflected in the following:

- SEPA Checklist, dated 7/8/2022
- Staff Evaluation Report dated 3/3/2023
- Critical Areas Permit application, dated 7/27/2022
- Joint Aquatic Resources Permit Application (JARPA) Form, signed 2/11/2022 and 2/20/2022
- JARPA for Fish Habitat Enhancement Projects
- Cover Letter prepared by Walla Walla County Conservation District, dated 10/28/2022
- Geotechnical Report prepared by Lawrence Alan Johnson, State Conservation Engineer,

- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), dated 1/20/2023
- Trip Report – Beechnor Instream Ford, prepared by Rachel Maggi, USDA biologist, 1/19/2021, updated with information on post-construction revegetation and experience of Maggi, 1/6/2023
  - USDA NRCS Bridge Design Report, prepared by Joe Lange, PE, March 2022
  - Coppei Creek Soils Map dated 7/17/2021
  - USDA Soils Trip Report dated 6/11/2021
  - Appendix A – Technical Document – Snake River Salmon Recovery Plan for SE Washington, Prepared by Snake River Salmon Recovery Board, Prepared for Washington Governor’s Salmon Recovery Office – 2011 Version
  - Appendix B – Points Quality Report. dated 11/30/2021
  - Appendix C – Hydrology Computations, including USGS Streamstats report, dated 12/17/2021
  - Appendix D – Fluvial Geomorphology prepared by US Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, dated 9/26/2022
  - Appendix E – Hydraulics Computations
  - Appendix F – Soil Mechanics
  - Appendix G – Bridge building plans
  - Appendix H – Engineer’s Cost Estimate
  - Appendix I – Construction Drawings
  - Appendix J – Construction and Material Specifications
  - Appendix K – Construction Inspection Plan
  - Appendix L – Operation and Maintenance Plan
  - USACE 404 Exemption documentation, dated 5/10/2022

This DNS is issued after using the optional DNS process in WAC 197-11-355. **There is no further comment period on this DNS.**

The lead agency has determined that the requirements for environmental analysis, protection, and mitigation measures have been adequately addressed in the development regulations and comprehensive plan adopted under chapter 36.70A RCW, and in other applicable local, state or federal laws or rules, as provided by RCW 43.21C.240 and WAC 197-11-158. Our agency will not require any additional mitigation measures under SEPA.

This DNS may be withdrawn at any time if the proposal is modified so that it is likely to have significant adverse environmental impacts (unless a non-exempt license has been issued if the proposal is a private project); if there is significant new information indicating, or on, a proposal’s probable significant adverse environmental impacts; or if the DNS was procured by misrepresentation or lack of material disclosure.

**Lead Agency:** Walla Walla County

**Responsible official:** Lauren Prentice, Community Development Director

**Address:** 310 W Poplar Street, Suite 200  
 Walla Walla, WA 99362  
 Phone: 509-524-2610  
 Email: [planning@co.walla-walla.wa.us](mailto:planning@co.walla-walla.wa.us)

**Issue Date:** 4/10/2023

**Signature:** 

**Date:** 4/10/2023

**Staff Contact: Don Sims, Associate Planner, 509-524-2618**

You may appeal this determination, in writing, to the CDD no later than fourteen days from the date of issue. You should be prepared to make specific factual objections. Contact the CDD to read or ask about the procedures for SEPA appeals and obtain details regarding submittals for appeals (including application forms and fees). Walla Walla County Code (WWCC) Chapter 14.11 outlines the County's appeal procedure.

# Walla Walla County Community Development Department

310 W. Poplar Street, Suite 200, Walla Walla, WA 99362 / 509-524-2610 Main

File No. SEPA22-022  
CAP22-020

## STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (SEPA)

### Final Staff Evaluation Report for Environmental Checklist

*This document is intended to supplement information in the applicant's submitted environmental checklist and also document some staff evaluation of the proposal. It is meant to serve as a supplement to the primary documents required by SEPA.*

**Date:** 3/3/2023

**Project Name:** Coppei Creek crossing to access adjacent farmland

**Proponent/Applicant:** BEECHINOR FARMS  
5238 COTTONWOOD RD  
WALLA WALLA WA, 99362

**Owner:** BARNES FAMILY FARMLAND LLC, C/O JAY GIOTTO  
18 CRESCENT KEY  
BELLEVUE WA, 98006

**Agent:** WALLA WALLA COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
C/O Annie Byerley  
325 N 13TH AVE  
WALLA WALLA, WA 99362

**Description of Proposal:** The applicant is proposing to place a bridge over Coppei Creek to access property east of the waterway. The proposed bridge will be placed in the following critical areas: 100-year floodplain (Approximate A zone), wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat conservation area (100' wide riparian habitat buffer), a critical aquifer recharge area, and geologically hazardous areas (seismic hazard area of moderate to high liquefaction susceptibility). Development within these critical areas is subject to the standards of Walla Walla County Code (WWCC) Chapter 18.08, Critical Areas, and Chapter 18.12, Flood Damage Prevention.

**Location of Proposal:** The bridge is proposed east of 18392 E HWY 12. The crossing will allow the owner and lessee to access additional lots to the east.

**Zoning:** Primary Agriculture 40 (PA-40)

**Comprehensive Plan Map Designation:** Primary Agriculture

**Conclusions:** Based on the analysis herein, the proposal can be found to not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. Application materials, including the SEPA checklist, were distributed to state and local agencies for review and comment during the 14-day Determination of Non-Significance comment period using the Notice of Application Optional Determination of Non-significant process.

The County reserves the right to review any future revisions or alterations to the site or to the proposal in order to determine the environmental significance or non-significance of the project at that point in time.

**Prepared by:** Don Sims, Associate Planner, 509-524-2610

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#### Reviewed project and environmental documents relating to applications SEPA22-022 & CAP22-020:

- SEPA Checklist, dated 7/8/2022
- Critical Areas Permit application, dated 7/27/2022
- Joint Aquatic Resources Permit Application (JARPA) Form, signed 2/11/2022 and 2/20/2022

- JARPA for Fish Habitat Enhancement Projects
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- Trip Report – Beechnor Instream Ford, prepared by Rachel Maggi, USDA biologist, 1/19/2021, updated with information on post-construction revegetation and experience of Maggi, 1/6/2023
- USDA NRCS Bridge Design Report, prepared by Joe Lange, PE, March 2022
- Coppei Creek Soils Map dated 7/17/2021
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- Appendix A – Technical Document – Snake River Salmon Recovery Plan for SE Washington, Prepared by Snake River Salmon Recovery Board, Prepared for Washington Governor’s Salmon Recovery Office – 2011 Version
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- Appendix H – Engineer’s Cost Estimate
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- Appendix K – Construction Inspection Plan
- Appendix L – Operation and Maintenance Plan
- USACE 404 Exemption documentation, dated 05/10/2022

**Agencies and organizations Notice of Application ODNs sent to**

- Washington State Department of Ecology, Cindy Anderson, SEPA Planner, Eastern Regional Office, dated 11/16/2022
- Washington State Department of Transportation, Paul Gonseth, P.E., Planning Engineer, dated 11/2/2022

**A. Background**

The SEPA checklist for project SEPA22-022 was prepared by Annie Byerley of the Walla Walla County Conservation District and dated 7/8/2022. SEPA documents were submitted with a Critical Areas Permit (CAP22-020) and building permit (B22-0566) applications which are under consolidated review.

Preapplication meeting PRE22-028 for this proposal occurred on 5/11/2022 and was attended by Renee Hadley of Walla Walla County Conservation District, Bryce Krueger of USDA, Lynn Schmidt of Washington State Department of Ecology, and staff from Walla Walla County Community Development.

Under Background (A)(11) describes the intent of the bridge, to allow a farmer access to adjacent fields without using the historic ford crossing.

**B. Environmental Elements**

**1. Earth**

Generally concur with checklist.

**2. Air**

Generally concur with checklist.

**3. Water**

Generally concur with checklist. As stated by a cover letter prepared by Renee Hadley and Annie Byerley of the Conservation District, WWCC Section 18.08.620.B.2 states that bridges are a preferred method to cross streams in the county. The checklist notes that Best Management Practices will be followed to prevent stormwater running into the creek during construction. The report prepared by Rachel Maggi explains advantages of utilizing a bridge rather than fording the stream.

The Coppei Creek is a designated approximate A floodplain. The cover letter summarizes the hydrological assessment completed by Joe Lange, an engineer with Natural Resources

Conservation Service (NRCS) in the Document labeled as “Design Report; Beechinor Farms Stream Crossing.” The report estimates 100-year frequency peak discharge for the stream and bankfull discharge at the 1.5-year frequency, WWCC Section 18.12.230.A states that when floodplain elevation data is not available through the Flood Study, use of alternative data sets such as what is provided by Lange can be used to determine appropriate elevations for building permits.

#### **4. Plants**

Generally concur with checklist. The above-referenced cover letter prepared by the Conservation District states that following the installation, the Conservation District will follow the suggested practice to replant any disturbed areas in the riparian buffer at a density of 300 stems (trees and shrubs) per acre to the 100-foot required buffer width. Will elaborate on this in the critical areas/land use section.

#### **5. Animals**

Generally concur with checklist. The Coppei Creek is identified as habitat for Steelhead; the material submitted in support of the Checklist and referenced by the submitted cover letter explains the project goal is to improve habitat for the site by utilizing a bridge to cross the Coppei instead of the present creek ford.

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

Generally concur with checklist.

#### **7. Environmental Health**

Generally concur with checklist.

#### **8. Land and Shoreline Use**

a. The property will continue to be used for agricultural purposes.

f. The SEPA checklist mistakenly states a Land use code of 83; this is from the tax assessor’s website. The Comprehensive Plan land use designation is Primary Agriculture.

h. The proposed bridge will be placed in the following critical areas: 100-year floodplain (Approximate A zone), wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat conservation area (100’ wide riparian habitat buffer), critical aquifer recharge area, and geologically hazardous areas (seismic hazard area of moderate to high liquefaction susceptibility).

The applicant provides studies provided by the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Services of Washington State. The reports are intended to address critical areas present and reviewed below:

- A USDA “Trip Report,” prepared by Larry Johnson, State Conservation Engineer, USDA, NRCS, and signed by Joseph Gasperi, Geologist, for geological and other hazardous areas drilled exploratory holes to either side of the Coppei Creek and concluded the site has “...a low to moderate potential for failure due to liquefaction given the soft to medium consistency, saturated silts in the upper 5.0 to 10.0 feet of the soil profile.” Staff finds this analysis to be sufficient for consideration of the liquefaction potential of the site.
- The above-referenced report references the FEMA 100-year FIRM Panel’s 100-year floodplain and states under heading 6, Scour Potential, “...The bank full top width of the channel at the 100-year flood surface likely exceeds 100 feet based on field observations which suggests a need for either a very long single span bridge or a shorter bridge with abutments placed within the 100-year flood plain. If abutments are placed within the 100-year flood plain and earthfill is placed for bridge approaches, the structure will likely impound flood flows to some degree and the bridge approaches and abutments will be subject to scour erosion. Upstream and downstream protection of the structure against scour erosion should be considered in the final design.” Staff note that the bridge review is a single span bridge that will be 70-feet long.
- A site report on aquatic habitat was prepared by Rachel Maggi, Biologist, USDA, dated October 2, 2022, the report concludes that using the instream ford causes water quality and aquatic habitat resource concerns.
- A USDA NRCS “Design Report” describes the project location, general overview, design methodology, aquatic organism design, information related to hydrology, the HEC-RAZ analysis completed to assess the Coppei Creek Hydraulics, potential scour effects, soil mechanics, certain information on bridge design, and references to the above-referenced appendixes.

#### **9. Housing**

Proposal is not related to housing.

**10. Aesthetics**

Generally concur with checklist.

**11. Light and Glare**

Generally concur with checklist.

**12. Recreation**

Generally concur with checklist.

**13. Historic and Cultural Preservation**

An Inadvertent Discovery Plan (IDP) to be on-site during construction activities has been submitted.

**14. Transportation**

Generally concur with checklist.

**15. Public Services**

The project is intended as a private creek crossing used by private parties or leasing farmers, no expansion of public services would result from this project.

**16. Utilities**

Generally concur with checklist.