



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

Central Region Office

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August 20, 2024

Chace Pedersen
Kittitas County Community Development Services
411 N. Ruby St., Suite 2
Ellensburg, WA 98926

RE: 202403392; CU-24-00003

Chace Pedersen:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment during the Optional Determination of Nonsignificance process for the Schnebly Coulee Solar Farm. We have reviewed the application and have the following comments.

Water Resources Program

Surface and groundwater availability varies by watershed and the sub-basins within those watersheds. Water availability also depends on the water rights held by others in each area. Additionally, climate change is increasing the uncertainty of Washington's water supplies. Just this year on April 16, 2024, Ecology declared a drought emergency for most of Washington. It is important and vital to plan early for a project's water needs. In order for Department of Ecology's Water Resources Program to meaningfully evaluate this project, we will need additional information on water source and water use needs including quantity.

A water right permit is required for all surface water diversions and for any groundwater withdrawals that will exceed 5,000 gallons per day for domestic supply, exceed 5,000 gallons per day for industrial purpose, or for the irrigation of more than one-half acre of non-commercial lawn or garden (Chapter 90.03 RCW Surface Water Code and Chapter 90.44 RCW Regulation of Public Ground Waters). Groundwater withdrawals of up to 5,000 gallons per day used for single or group domestic supply, up to 5,000 gallons per day used for industrial purposes, stock watering, and for the irrigation of up to one-half acre of non-commercial lawn and garden are exempt from the permitting process. Water use under the RCW 90.44.050 exemption establishes a water right that is subject to the same privileges, restrictions, laws and regulations as a water right permit or certificate obtained directly from Ecology. Alternatively, a

temporary water right permit may be an option, or water may need to be obtained from a different area and hauled in from an existing water right holder.

For additional information and/or questions please contact Breean Zimmerman at breean.zimmerman@ecy.wa.gov or at (509) 406-5130

Water Quality Program

Project with Potential to Discharge Off-Site

If your project anticipates disturbing ground with the potential for stormwater discharge off-site, the NPDES Construction Stormwater General Permit is recommended. This permit requires that the SEPA checklist fully disclose anticipated activities including building, road construction and utility placements. Obtaining a permit may take 38-60 days.

The permit requires that a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (Erosion Sediment Control Plan) shall be prepared and implemented for all permitted construction sites. These control measures must be able to prevent soil from being carried into surface water and storm drains by stormwater runoff. Permit coverage and erosion control measures must be in place prior to any clearing, grading, or construction.

In the event that an unpermitted Stormwater discharge does occur off-site, it is a violation of Chapter 90.48 RCW, Water Pollution Control and is subject to enforcement action.

More information on the stormwater program may be found on Ecology's stormwater website at: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/stormwater/construction/>. Please submit an application or contact **Wendy Neet** at the Dept. of Ecology, (509) 571-6733. or wendy.neet@ecy.wa.gov with questions about this permit.

Sincerely,



Amber Johnson

SEPA Coordinator, Central Region Office

509-723-5677 | crosepacoordinator@ecy.wa.gov

