

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:
Meridian Hill Compost Facility at Lewis County
2. Name of applicant:
Meridian Hill Compost, Inc.
3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:
3 Waterway Place, Suite 110, The Woodlands, Texas 77380-3488; Samantha Winkle contact person; cell phone number (360) 561-0100
4. Date checklist prepared:
July 2022
5. Agency requesting checklist:
Lewis County
6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):
As soon as permits can be obtained to construct the facility, work will begin. Permits will be submitted in the summer of 2022. It is anticipated that construction will begin in 2022 but will not be completed in 2022.

The project will be permitted as a whole and constructed in two phases. The first phase will include:

- **the first of two Stage 1 compost process facility buildings, with a 90,000 annual ton capacity, including a receiving and conditioning area**
- **the Stage 2 compost process windrow turning area. This area is an asphalt pad for compost windrow storage and turning**
- **an office**
- **a finished compost product screening and load-out area.**
- **remodeling of an existing 8,000 square foot shop.**
- **Construction of storm and process water management facilities.**

The second phase of construction will be the second Stage 1 compost process facility building, with an annual 90,000-ton capacity, and the completion of the Stage 2 compost process windrow turning area. The anticipated start date for construction of the second building and Stage 2 windrow pad is contingent upon capacity demands for the facility.

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.
Other than the project description above, there are no plans for future expansion or further activity at this site.
8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.
The following has been prepared in support of this project and is included as part of the SEPA Checklist submittal Package:
 - **Phase I and II Environmental Reports regarding site soil contamination and remediation.**
 - **Wetland Delineation Report**
 - **Wetland Mitigation Plans and/or Mitigation Bank Use Plan**

- Endangered Species Act No Effect Letter
- Critical Areas Report
- Geotechnical Engineers Report
- Traffic Impact Analysis

The facility will be constructed and operated in conformance with Washington State Department of Ecology Requirements and the Lewis County Public Health and Social Services (Health Department) Solid Waste Handling Permit.

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.

The property is currently administered under the Federal Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) Permit No. WA-0001E. The mine reclamation plan is an element of the OSMRE Permit. Once the property is conveyed to Meridian Hill Compost, LLC., it will no longer be covered under the OSMRE Permit Reclamation Plan and will be subject to development requirements of the underlying zoning district of Lewis County - Rural Area Industrial (RAI).

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

The following is a list of governmental approvals that are needed for the project:

- Property Segregation – Lewis County
- Pre-Application Meeting – Lewis County
- SEPA Checklist – Lewis County
- NPDES Construction General Permit – WA Dept. of Ecology
- Joint Aquatic Permit Application (JARPA) – Multiple Agencies for the following:
 - Lewis County: Critical Areas Review
 - Department of Ecology: Section 401 Water Quality Certification
 - US Army Corps of Engineers: Section 404 (discharges into waters of the US) and Nationwide Permit No. 39 for filling of wetlands or Shoreline Exemption – Lewis County
- Solid Waste Permit – WA Dept of Ecology and Lewis County Public Health and Social Services
- Building Permits – Lewis County
- Site Development Permit – Lewis County
- Clean Air Permit – Southwest Clean Air Agency - NOC
- Washington State Industrial Stormwater General Permit (ISGP) an NPDES Permit - WA Dept. of Ecology
- Sewer – will be contained on-site and periodically removed by a septic hauler.
- Process and Fire Water – Provided through access to the TransAlta Skookumchuck/Chehalis River Water Bank
- Use of Process Water and Stormwater in the production of finished compost material

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 project site contains 89.68 Acres that will be segregated from Lewis County Parcel Tax Number 023357000000 containing 314.9 acres.

There is a total of approximately 15.3 acres of hard surface on the site including the 8,000 SF shop building, gravel and hard-packed soil areas. After project completion there will be approximately 20 acres of hard surface on the site including buildings, asphalt, gravel, hard-packed soil and detention pond areas.

The project proposes to construct two Stage 1 Compost Buildings, with a receiving and conditioning area incorporated into the first compost structure. The size of the first compost structure will be approximately 70,000 SF. The second compost structure will be approximately 55,000 SF.

The following is a brief description of the composting process: Meridian Hill will receive compostable materials at the site. Approximately 95% of materials brought to the site for composting will be yard waste and less than 5% of material will be food waste. This material is preconditioned in the initial Stage I Compost building by being ground and moisturized to an optimum percentage. After preconditioning, the material is placed in the bunker areas under the building roofs for a specified period of time for primary composting. After primary composting is complete, the material is moved into windrows on the asphalt pad on the eastern side of the site where it is staged and turned during the Stage 2 composting period. After Stage 2 composting, the material is ready for load-out to the material purchasers. This material is trucked in bulk from the site.

The proposed office building will be approximately 2,000 SF.

The shop to remain and be remodeled is 8,000 SF.

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 project site lies in the northeast quarter of Section 31, Township 15 North, Range 1 West of the Willamette Meridian, approximately four miles east-northeast of Centralia. The site is accessed off of Big Hanaford Road which is a Lewis County road. The site is located on the south side of Big Hanaford Road. The driveway used to access the site is an existing TransAlta Centralia Mine Driveway. The site is located to the west of the TransAlta Centralia Mine Pond Number Three as indicated in the attached vicinity map for the Site.

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

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

a. General description of the site:

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

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

The steepest slope on the site is in excess of 2 horizontal to 1 vertical near the location of a past minor slide on the west side of the site adjacent to a road cut. The area where the compost facility is to be sited is relatively flat with slopes between 2 and 5 percent.

- 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.

Site soils where the compost facility is to be located are a combination of mining spoil fill and native material. The mining spoil fill soils are not mine tailings and do not contain hazardous material. Native soils are Buckpeat silt loam according to the NRCS Soil Survey. For more information on site soils please see the soil report included with this SEPA Checklist.

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

There are indications of minor slides adjacent to the road cut on the western side of the project site. These limited areas of instability will have no impact upon the proposed buildings or development.

- 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 total area of the site to be disturbed is approximately 20 Acres to allow for the construction of the compost facility. We anticipate that less than 35,000 CY of fill material will be required to construct the project and that less than 35,000 CY of cut could be associated with the project. With the exception of structural material to be use as base material for foundations, building slabs and proposed roadways, site soils will be used to make grades.

The structural material, gravels, will come from permitted off-site sources.

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

Erosion could always occur as a result of construction. Rain falling on disturbed soils can be a source of erosion as can wind blowing across dry disturbed soils. Construction vehicles can track soils and sediments onto neighboring road systems if preventative measures are not put into place.

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

The entire 20 Acres will be hard surfaces asphalt or concrete impervious surface, hard-packed gravel and soil surfaces or detention ponds with the exception of approximately 500 square feet of parking area landscape.

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

The construction of the site will be in conformance with the approved Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (Erosion Control Plan) and Report and the Washington State Department of Ecology NPDES Construction General Permit. Erosion control measures include but are not limited to a quarry spall rock construction entrance, silt fence, straw wattles, interceptor ditches and sediment ponds. The General Contractors Certified Erosion and Sedimentation Control Lead (CESCL) will be responsible for minimizing erosion during construction.

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.

Emissions during construction include exhaust from heavy equipment and dust. Emissions to the air from compost facilities are typically associated emissions from heavy equipment, dust and with odor.

Emissions are associated with the composting process which will be permitted and regulated by Southwest Clean Air Agency.

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

There are no off-site sources of emissions or odor that will affect the proposed compost facility.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:
During construction, equipment will be kept in good operating condition to minimize emissions to the air from these sources.

The compost feedstocks will be moisture conditioned and processed in an aerated static pile during the active composting process. Prior to leaving the aerated static pile the material will be re-moistened. After curing the compost will passed through a screening system that is equipped with dust suppression water misters at each discharge point. These combined practices are effective at controlling and minimizing dust emissions.

The compost process implemented at this facility are based on peer-reviewed science and decades of experience with the goal of minimizing air emissions and reliably producing a stable product. The key process conditions that will be maintained include starting with a well-conditioned feedstock mix and highly aerobic and temperature moderated pile conditions throughout the active composting phase. What little odor is produced, in these optimized conditions, will be further reduced through biofiltration of exhaust air. The material leaving the active composting phase will be substantially stabilized prior to starting the curing phase, and thus will have a very potential to emit odors. And finally, the siting of the facility high on a hillside away from other development well away from neighbors (approximately 1.3 miles from the nearest neighbor) and travelers on Big Hanaford Road is ideal for attenuating odors that may leave the site.

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.

TransAlta Pond Number 3A is located to the east and another large mine pond, 3B, is located to the south of the proposed project site. Pond Number 3A discharge is tributary to downstream ponds and ultimately to the Hanaford Creek drainage system.

The area to be developed is adjacent to and does contain some wetlands and ditches. Please refer to the Wetland Delineation Report for further information.

- 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 will require work in proximity to Pond Number 3A but will remain outside the 200 feet shoreline zone for the pond. Work will similarly be conducted to the south of the spillway from the Pond Number 3B and outside the shoreline zone for Pond 3B.

The project will be located adjacent to wetlands that will be preserved but will also require limited filling of onsite wetlands and the relocation of ditches. Please refer to the Critical Areas Report for further information.

- 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.

No fill or dredge material will be placed in or removed from either Pond 3A or 3B.

The amount of fill material that will be required to regrade the onsite ditches and wetlands will be less than 3,000 cubic yards. The onsite ditches to be relocated may involve up to 1,500 cubic yards of fill and 1,500 cubic yards of cut.

Please refer to the Critical Areas Report for more information regarding impact to onsite ditches and wetlands and proposed mitigation.

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

The proposal will not require surface water withdrawals from ponds 3A or 3B. Some of the site ditches will be relocated to accommodate construction of the compost facility.

The source of site water will be from the TransAlta Water Bank and the surge pond located on the north side of Big Hanaford Road. The water from the surge pond comes from the Skookumchuck/Chehalis River TransAlta Water Right. Meridian Hill Compost is requesting 20,000,000 gallons of water annually from the Water Bank to supply water for the compost facility for those seasons when precipitation is at its lowest and years when there is drought or extended dry periods.

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

The project does not lie within a 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 the discharge 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.

Groundwater will not be withdrawn from a well for drinking water or other purposes. Process water to the site will be provided by the TransAlta Skookumchuck/Chehalis River Water Bank, a surface water source. Meridian Hill Compost is requesting 20,000,000 gallons of water annually from the Water Bank to supply water for the compost facility for those seasons when precipitation is at its lowest and years when there is drought or extended dry periods.

Water will not be discharged to the ground from this project. The majority of stormwater generated on the project site is considered leachate per State of Washington regulations and will be collected in detention ponds for use in the compost facility processes.

- 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 to the ground. Site sewerage will be contained in a holding tank and periodically removed from the site by a waste hauler.

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.

The only source of runoff from the project site will be treated stormwater originating from either building roofs or paved areas that are not exposed to compost. Stormwater will be pre-treated via a method or device certified by the Washington State Technology Assessment Protocol – Ecology (TAPE) program prior to final polishing in a wet, vegetated detention pond and controlled discharge. All discharge will meet Washington Industrial Stormwater General Permit (ISGP) requirements. Water will be discharged to the TransAlta conveyance and pond system. The receiving water is a large stormwater conveyance ditch (Ditch 59B), which is tributary to one or more ditches prior to discharge to Pond Number 6A.

All stormwater contacting or potentially contacting uncured compost (e.g., within the Stage 2 Composting Area) is considered a leachate and will be collected, stored in detention ponds, and reused in compost facility processes (per WAC 173-350-225).

- 2) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe.
No waste material will be able to enter the ground or surface waters.

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

The proposed project will require the realignment of existing stormwater conveyance ditches that have some areas associated with wetlands. Please refer to the Wetland Delineation Report, Restoration Plan and Biological Assessment for a discussion of impacts and mitigation measures for the realignment drainages at the project site.

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

Please refer to the Wetland Delineation Report, Restoration Plan and Biological Assessment for a discussion of impacts and mitigation measures for the relocated drainages at the project site. All stormwater runoff will be managed in compliance with the Lewis County Stormwater regulations and A National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and State Waste Discharge General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Industrial Activities administered by the Washington State Department of Ecology.

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

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

Very little vegetation is present at the project location under current conditions, however, all vegetation within the project limits will be removed.

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

Please refer to the Endangered Species Act No Effect Letter for Threatened and Endangered plant species located on or near the project site.

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

Some restoration, through planting, of wetland buffers will be incorporated into the final site plans.

The only "landscaping" proposed for the project, outside of Mitigation Plan for buffer restoration, is associated with the parking area. Native trees will be planted in required parking area landscape islands.

- e. List all noxious weeds and invasive species known to be on or near the site.
Please refer to the Wetland Delineation Report for the project for noxious weeds and invasive species located on or near the project site. We are not aware of any noxious weeds or invasive species on or near the site with the exception of blackberries.

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 _____

- b. List any threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.
Please refer to the Endangered Species Act No Effect Letter for the site prepared by The Watershed Company submitted as an attachment to this SEPA Checklist for information on Threatened and Endangered species on or near the site.
- c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.
All of Western Washington is part of the Great Pacific Flyway for birds migrating back and forth from Mexico to Alaska. The trees located on the property allow for a rest stop along the migration route.
- d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:
A large portion of the site, approximately 70 acres, will remain in an undeveloped state.
- e. List any invasive animal species known to be on or near the site.
Please refer to the Endangered Species Act No Effect Letter for the site prepared by The Watershed Company submitted as an attachment to this SEPA Checklist for information on invasive animals that may be present 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.
The site will rely on electricity for energy needs.
- b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties?
If so, generally describe.
The project will have no impact on the potential use of solar energy by neighboring properties as no neighboring properties will be shaded by the proposed development.
- 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:
Structures will be designed in conformance with the Washington State Energy Code.

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.

As described more fully below, environmental investigations conducted at the property identified limited surface soil contamination that exceeded Model Toxic Control Act (MTCA) cleanup levels. The project will include a plan to remove this soil contamination in accordance with applicable environmental laws and regulations.

- 1) Describe any known or possible contamination at the site from present or past uses.
Please refer to the Phase I and II Environmental Reports prepared by SCS Engineers submitted as attachments to this SEPA Checklist for information on known or possible contamination at the site.

Investigation Results from SCS Engineers Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA): Sampling locations for the Supplemental Phase II ESA are illustrated on Figure 2 (Appendix A of the Phase II ESA) and summary tables of analytical results are provided in Appendix B. Sampling locations are designated as GP01 through GP09.

Soil Analytical Results: Soil results for GP01 through GP05 are summarized in Tabled 1 and 2, along with the previous (Dec 2020 ESA) soil sample results. The laboratory reporting limits were less than the MTCA cleanup levels for the various potential contaminants of concern (COC's).

Groundwater Analytical Results: Groundwater results are summarized in Table 3 Supplemental Phase II ESA. The laboratory reporting limits were less than the MTCA cleanup levels for the various potential contaminants of concern (COC's).

- 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.
Other than the limited surface soil contamination described above, no additional hazardous chemicals/conditions are known regarding the project site.

- 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.
The excavation and disposal of the contaminated soils is the only known hazardous substance that will be generated by the project. This soil will be segregated, handled and disposed in accordance with applicable environmental laws and regulations. No other toxic or hazardous chemicals are anticipated to be stored, used or produced during the project's development, construction or operation.

- 4) Describe special emergency services that might be required.
Development of the project will not require any special emergency services.

- 5) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:
The project will include development and implementation of an Environmental Media Management Plan that specifies the cleanup process for the limited soil contamination to comply with applicable environmental laws and regulations.

b. Noise

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

There are no off-site sources of noise that will affect the project.

- 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.

Heavy equipment and semi-trucks will be the primary sources of noise at the compost facility. The site will operate from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM seven days per week with the exception of holidays.

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

The nearest residence is approximately 1.3 miles from the Meridian Hill Compost Facility site. No noise impacts are predicted as a result of the proposed project. Therefore, no noise mitigation is proposed.

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 was formerly a TransAlta Centralia Mine maintenance area, but that use ended in December of 2006.

- 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?

Timber has been harvested from the site prior to the creation of the maintenance area and within the past few years. A small portion of the recent harvest area may be converted to conveyance ditch. The majority of the recent harvest area will be allowed to regenerate independent of the proposed project. The portion of the site where the facility is to be located has not been used for timber production for a long period of time.

The TransAlta Centralia mine has been in operation since 1971 and was purchased by TransAlta in 2000. The former TransAlta Centralia Mine Upper Laydown Area (LDA) (maintenance area) has been in industrial use since the early to mid-1970's.

- 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 compost facility will have no effect upon and will not be affected by working farm or forest land.

- c. Describe any structures on the site.
As depicted on the site survey, there were several unused structures on the project site that have been demolished and removed by TransAlta prior to the start of this project. The only building to be retained is an 8,000 SF shop.
- d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?
All site structures with the exception of the 8,000 square foot shop building have been demolished and removed from the site.
- e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?
The current site zoning classification is Rural Area Industrial (RAI).
- f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?
Limited Area of More Intensive Rural Development (LAMIRD) intended for Industrial/Employment Area.
- g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?
The only shoreline designation for the site is High Intensity along the shorelines of Pond Number 3A, 3B and 3C. Ponds 3A, 3B and 3C are collectively identified as Pond Three in the Lewis County SMP and are all designated High Intensity.
- h. Has any part of the site been classified as a critical area by the city or county? If so, specify.
As depicted in the site survey or existing conditions, there are critical areas for steep slopes, wetlands and streams on the property the project will be located on.

There are less than a half-acre of wetlands that will be filled to accommodate the proposed project. Please see the Critical Areas Report for further details.
- i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?
The completed project will have approximately 15 full-time employees.
- j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?
The project will not displace any people.
- k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:
The project will not displace any people. Therefore, there are no proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts.
- l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:
The proposed project is compatible with current and future land uses. It is an industrial use in an area that is designated, in the Lewis County Comprehensive Plan, as Industrial Park at TransAlta (IPAT), Lewis County Urban Growth Area intended for Major Industrial Development.
- m. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts to agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any:
The proposed compost facility is not predicted to have any impacts on agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance. Therefore, no mitigation is proposed.

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

- a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing. **This section is not applicable.**
- b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing. **This section is not applicable.**
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any: **This section is not applicable.**

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?
The tallest height of any proposed structure is less than 50 feet which is the tallest height of the Cat Shop structure to remain. Site structures will be pre-engineered metal buildings.
- b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?
No views in the vicinity of the project will be altered as the site cannot be viewed from the local roadway system.
- b. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:
Because no impacts to views are identified, no mitigation is proposed.

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

- a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?
The site will have yard lighting and building lights will be wall-packs. It is anticipated that site lighting will be on daily from dusk until dawn. Site and building lighting will be shielded to prevent light trespass.
- b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?
Site lighting will not impact any off-site properties because the site is located on a remote plateau in the middle of the TransAlta Centralia Mine site where public access is restricted.
- c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?
There are no off-site sources of light and glare that will impact the proposed compost facility.
- d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:
No impacts from light or glare are predicted as a result of the development of the project. Downward shielding of site lighting and building wall-packs will prevent light trespass, illumination of the night sky and control light and glare.

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

- a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?
There are no formal or informal recreational opportunities in the vicinity of the site. The site is located in the middle of the TransAlta Centralia Mine site.
- b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.
There are no recreational opportunities to displace.
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:
No formal or informal recreational opportunities exist in the vicinity of the site. Therefore, no mitigation is proposed to reduce or control impacts to recreational opportunities.

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.
There were buildings located on the project site over 45 years old. The older buildings on the site were common pre-engineered metal building and sheds that were not particularly remarkable for their architectural style or unique properties. Even as former mining related structures, they were very utilitarian.
- 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 are no landmarks, features or other evidence of Indian or historic use or occupation of the area of the site that is to be developed for the compost facility. It is our understanding, from the Phase I and II Environmental Studies, the area to be developed is underlaid by up to as much as 40 feet of mine spoils on the east side of the site.
- 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.
A web search of historic tribal lands indicated the area had once been part of the wider territory of the Chehalis, Klatsop, Chinook, Klickitat and other tribes. As part of the initial project scoping, representatives of the Quinault Tribe visited the site with the design team and project proponent. The Quinault tribal representatives were mostly concerned with the TransAlta Centralia Mine Reclamation and restoration activities. The tribal representatives did not express concerns regarding the compost facility use.

Due to the steep terrain and historical forested condition of the project area, it is unlikely that indigenous persons dwelt on the project site. Certainly, they may have hunted in the project area.

- 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.
Should Native American artifacts be found during the construction of the project, work will cease until the nature of the artifacts is determined. Should any remains be found, the Lewis County Sheriff and the Quinault Tribe will be notified. Work will not resume until the site is released.

We have prepared a document outlining the procedures that will be followed in the event Native American artifacts are discovered during construction. This document is attached to this SEPA Checklist.

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 site is accessed off of the County Road, Big Hanaford Road, through the existing TransAlta Mine Access Driveway. The site access and adjacent road system is shown on the vicinity map accompanying this SEPA Checklist.
- 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 is not currently served by public transit. The nearest transit stop is at Marion Street and Oxford Avenue in Centralia. The stop is approximately 4.6 miles southwest of the site as the crow flies.
- c. How many additional parking spaces would the completed project or non-project proposal have? How many would the project or proposal eliminate?
The proposed project will have 16 passenger vehicle parking spaces. No parking spaces will be eliminated.
- 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 proposed project will not require any new public roads or improvements to existing public roads. Please refer to the Trip Generation and Assessment – Level 1, prepared by Heath & Associates, Inc., dated March 14, 2022, for further information regarding traffic impacts and mitigation.
- e. Will the project or proposal use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.
The project does not occur in the immediate vicinity of water or air transportation. The TransAlta mine has a rail spur associated with it but it is not close to the proposed project site being over three thousand feet away.
- 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?
It is anticipated that there will be 46 passenger vehicle trips per day generated by the completed project. To begin with the project will have approximately 50 heavy vehicle trips per day associated with 90,000 tons per year of compost production. At full build-out of the facility 100 truck trips per day are anticipated. Please refer to the Trip

Generation and Assessment – Level 1 for more information regarding trip generation for the facility.

- 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.
The proposed project will not interfere with, affect or be affected by the movement of agricultural and forest products on roads or streets in the area.
- h. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:
No adverse transportation impacts are predicted as a result of the development of the Meridian Hill Compost facility. Therefore, no mitigating measures are proposed to control impacts.

Please refer to the Trip Generation and Assessment – Level 1 for the project for more specific information on traffic related issues.

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

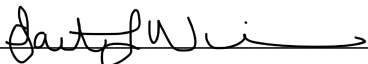
- a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, public transit, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.
The project will not result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, public transit, health care, schools).
- b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.
No impacts are anticipated so no mitigating 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 Septic Holding Tank for Periodic Haul Off.
- 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.
Telephone, Cable, Internet and Refuse will be required to serve the site. It is anticipated that Meridian Hill Compost will haul their own waste and recycle from the site for disposal at one of their affiliated facilities.

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 Samantha Winkle

Position and Agency/Organization Site Manager - Meridian Hill Compost

Date Submitted: 08/09/2022