



Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

High-Voltage Transmission Facilities in Washington

Chapter 7 - Glossary

October 2025

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7.0 Chapter 7 – Glossary

7.1 A

adaptability	In biology, a species' ability to continue functioning after a disturbance.
accelerometer	A device that measures the acceleration of ground motion caused by seismic waves during events like earthquakes.
accretion	The process of growth or increase, typically by the gradual accumulation of additional layers of matter.
addendum	A SEPA term defined in WAC 197-11-706 as “an environmental document used to provide additional information or analysis that does not substantially change the analysis of significant impacts and alternatives in the existing environmental document. The term does not include supplemental EISs.”
adoption	A SEPA term defined in WAC 197-11-708 as “an agency’s use of all or part of an existing environmental document to meet all or part of the agency’s responsibilities under SEPA to prepare an EIS or other environmental document.”
advertisement call	A call used by male frogs to advertise to female frogs during the breeding season.
air basin	A geographic area characterized by similar meteorological and geographic conditions throughout. Air basins are often defined by natural boundaries such as mountains, which can trap air and pollutants within the basin, leading to unique air quality challenges.

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alternating current	An electric current that periodically reverses direction and changes its magnitude continuously with time.
alternative fuel	An energy source that can be used to generate electricity as a substitute for traditional fossil fuels like coal, oil, and natural gas. Alternative fuels are often more sustainable and considered more environmentally friendly.
ambient air quality	The quality of the air in the outdoor environment. Ambient air quality is determined by the concentration of pollutants in the atmosphere, which can affect human health and the environment.
ambient air quality standards	Regulatory limits set to protect public health and the environment from harmful levels of air pollutants. These standards define the maximum allowable concentrations of specific pollutants in the outdoor air over a given period.
ambient noise	Also known as background noise, refers to the surrounding sounds in an environment that are not the primary focus of attention.
ancillary equipment	Secondary systems and devices that support main transmission infrastructure.
anthropogenic	Caused or created by humans.
aquaculture	The practice of cultivating aquatic organisms (e.g., fish or shellfish) for food.
arboreal	An organism that is adapted to living in trees.

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arc-quenching	The process of extinguishing an electrical arc that forms when current-carrying contacts in a circuit breaker or switchgear separate. This arc is a highly ionized, conductive path that can cause significant damage if not properly managed. Effective arc-quenching is crucial for ensuring the safe and efficient interruption of electrical currents.
archaeological resources	Material remains of human activities that can provide information about the behavioral traits and environmental and cultural adaptations of a people.
attainment area	A geographic region that meets or exceeds the National Ambient Air Quality Standards set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
attainment plan	A detailed strategy developed to bring a specific geographic area into compliance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
audiometric testing	A method used to evaluate a person's hearing ability. It involves a series of tests that measure how well a person can hear sounds of varying frequencies and intensities.
automatic transfer equipment	Systems and devices that automatically switch a power supply from its primary source to a backup source when a failure or outage occurs.

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Avoidance Criteria	Within this Programmatic EIS, criteria that provide a consistent baseline for evaluating the potential adverse environmental impacts of project-specific applications for transmission facility development. This Programmatic EIS assumes that project-specific applications would meet the Avoidance Criteria during design and siting in order to be consistent with the analysis in this Programmatic EIS. When a project-specific application does not meet the Avoidance Criteria, additional environmental analyses would be expected, and project-specific mitigation may be required as appropriate to address adverse environmental impacts associated with the noncompliance.
A-weighted decibels (dBA)	A scale expressing relative loudness as perceived by the human ear. The A-weighting curve de-emphasizes low and very high frequencies, to which the human ear is less sensitive, and emphasizes frequencies in the mid-range, to which the human ear is most sensitive, making dBA a more accurate representation of perceived loudness.

7.2 B

backstop siting	The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's limited authority to approve the siting of certain electric transmission lines when state authorities fail to do so. This authority is granted under specific conditions outlined in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and further clarified by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021.
bauxite	Rock composed of aluminum oxides, along with other minerals. Bauxite is the world's primary source of aluminum. After mining, bauxite is refined into alumina, which is then converted into aluminum.
benthic	Occurring at the bottom of a body of water.
best management practice (BMP)	Activities, maintenance procedures, managerial practices, or structural features that prevent or reduce pollutants or other adverse environmental impacts.
bioengineering	The incorporation of biological materials and structures in engineering design.
biofuel	A type of fuel derived from biological materials, such as plants, algae, or animal waste. Unlike fossil fuels, which take millions of years to form, biofuels are produced over a much shorter time span and are considered renewable.
bioturbation	Reworking of soils and sediments by living organisms.
bivalve	An animal in the phylum Mollusca; a soft-bodied invertebrate that typically contain a calcium carbonate shell around its body.
blasting	Controlled use of explosives to break, excavate, or shape rock, concrete, or other materials.

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block group	Cluster of blocks within the same census tract. Each census tract contains at least one block group, and block groups are uniquely numbered within census tracts. A block group usually covers a contiguous area but never crosses county or census tract boundaries. Block groups may, however, cross the boundaries of other geographic entities like county subdivisions, places, urban areas, voting districts, congressional districts, and American Indian / Alaska Native / Native Hawaiian areas.
boreal	A type of climatic zone related to northern forests, which are dominated by conifers.
borrow pit	An excavated area where dirt has been dug to be used to fill another location.

7.3 C

cairn	A human-made pile or stack of stones, often constructed for various purposes such as marking a trail, serving as a memorial, or designating a burial site.
call assemblage	A collection of different calls from different animals at the same time.
candidate species	A species that is currently under review to determine if it should be listed under the Endangered Species Act. This category is also used by state agencies such as the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife.
carbon monoxide	A pollutant gas that is predominantly produced by incomplete combustion of carbon-containing materials.
carbon-neutral	A balance between emitting carbon and absorbing carbon from the atmosphere in carbon sinks. In a carbon-neutral state, any carbon dioxide (CO ₂) released into the atmosphere from activities such as burning fossil fuels is offset by an equivalent amount of CO ₂ being removed, resulting in no net increase in atmospheric CO ₂ .
Cascades Volcanic Arc	A major volcanic region in western North America, extending from southwestern British Columbia through Washington and Oregon to Northern California.
census tract	A small geographical unit used by the U.S. Census Bureau for collecting demographic data.
cirque	A bowl-shaped, amphitheater-like valley formed by glacial erosion.

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CO₂ equivalent per year	A metric used to compare the emissions of various greenhouse gases based on their global warming potential.
coastal zone	The area where coastal waters and adjacent shorelands interact closely, including various ecosystems such as islands, wetlands, salt marshes, and beaches. It extends to the international boundary in the Great Lakes and to the outer limits of state ownership in other areas. The zone encompasses land necessary to manage shorelands that significantly impact coastal waters and areas vulnerable to sea level rise and excludes lands under federal control.
collision response strategy	A strategy that a permittee will use to identify eagle collision occurrences, identify factors that could have led to the collision, and implement risk-reduction measures.
columnar basalt	A type of rock that has standing vertical columns.
conditional use permit	A permit that allows the use of land that does not conform to the standard zoning regulations for a given area.
Conservation Reserve Program	A program administered by the Farm Service Agency, in which farmers receive a yearly payment in exchange for removing environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production.
consumable	An item that is intended to be used up relatively quickly and needs to be replaced regularly.
control zone	A designated area where specific regulations and guidelines are applied to manage traffic and ensure safety.
corona discharge	A discharge of electricity at the surface of a conductor or between two conductors on the same transmission line.

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corona noise	Ionization of the air that occurs at the surface of electrical conductors and power lines under some conditions, leading to loss of energy, audible noise, and release of ozone gas.
cover crops	Plants grown primarily to cover and protect soil rather than for harvest.
cradle to grave	The entire lifecycle of a product or system, from its creation (cradle) to its disposal (grave).
crepuscular	Active primarily during dusk and dawn.
crustal fissures	Fractures or cracks in the Earth's crust that can vary in size from a few feet to several miles. Crustal fissures can form due to various geological processes, including tectonic activity, volcanic activity, and the cooling and contraction of lava.
cryptic	Designed for concealing or camouflage.
cumulative impact significance rating	An assessment of whether transmission facility development would result in a probable significant cumulative adverse impact. This determination is a qualitative assessment of potential compounding and incremental impacts from the development of transmission facilities when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions.

7.4 D

debris flow	Fast-moving landslide composed of a mixture of water, soil, rock, and organic material that travels down slopes under the influence of gravity.
debris jam	Build-up of woody material of variable sizes and quantities into a distinctive unit.
deciduous	A type of tree that sheds its leaves annually.
decommissioning	The steps taken to safely retire a facility from service. This process ensures that a site can be reused or returned to pre-project conditions.
design	Detailed planning of a development project, such as transmission infrastructure.
design choice	Engineering and structural options that may be considered to better suit or adapt to site-specific conditions. Design choices would be included in the description of a project-specific application and are required to comply with all applicable legal, environmental, and safety requirements, including public engagement. Additionally, design choices would align with the Mitigation Strategies outlined in this Programmatic EIS.
desiccation	The act of drying up.
design consideration	May include guidance documents, manuals, and/or best management practices. Design considerations are typically standardized practices designed to prevent environmental impacts and are often included in regulatory compliance programs or implemented as routine practices.

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dewatering	The process of removing groundwater or surface water from a construction site. Dewatering is typically done to create a dry and stable environment for excavation, foundation work, or other construction activities.
differential settlement	Uneven settling of a structure's foundation, in which different parts of the foundation settle at different rates.
direct current	An electric current that flows in one direction.
direct federal highway project	A highway construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, repair, or improvement project that is directly managed and funded by the federal government.
director	Per RCW 80.50.020, the director of the energy facility site evaluation council appointed by the chair of the council in accordance with RCW 80.50.360.
disadvantaged	A community is identified as disadvantaged (i.e., overburdened and underserved) on the Council on Environmental Quality's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJS) Tool map if it is in a census tract that is 1) at or above the threshold for one or more environmental, climate, or other burdens, and 2) at or above the threshold for an associated socioeconomic burden. In addition, a census tract that is completely surrounded by disadvantaged communities and is at or above the 50th percentile for low income is also considered disadvantaged.
dispersal of air pollutant	The process by which air pollutants spread from their source into the surrounding atmosphere. This process is crucial for understanding and predicting air quality impacts.

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dissected plateau	A type of landform that has been eroded by rivers and streams, resulting in a landscape with sharp relief and deep valleys.
district commission	A governing body or board responsible for overseeing various functions within a district.
disturbance	<p>Any temporary or permanent alteration of land, vegetation, water, or other natural features resulting from new construction, operation and maintenance, or modification activities associated with new or existing transmission facilities. Disturbance may include soil compaction, vegetation removal, grading, excavation, or hydrologic changes. It is categorized as:</p> <p>Temporary disturbance: Impacts that are fully restored to pre-project conditions following completion of the activity (e.g., temporary laydown yards or access routes).</p> <p>Permanent disturbance: Impacts that result in long-term or irreversible changes to land use or ecological function (e.g., installation of new towers or permanent access roads).</p>
diurnal	Active during the day.
draw	Also known as a reentrant, a draw is a terrain feature characterized by two parallel ridges with low ground in between them. The low ground area itself is the draw. Draws are similar to valleys but on a smaller scale. While valleys run parallel to a ridgeline, draws are perpendicular to the ridge and rise with the surrounding ground, often disappearing upslope.
dynamic line rating	A technology used in electric power transmission to optimize the capacity of transmission lines based on real-time conditions rather than static assumptions.

7.5 E

eagle take permit	A permit for proponents of projects that may result in the incidental injury or killing of bald and golden eagles. An eagle take permit is issued to proponents who prove they are using best practices for reducing eagle mortality, and who have created a Collision Response Strategy, a Proactive Retrofit Strategy, a Reactive Retrofit Strategy, and a Shooting Response Strategy.
early successional stage	First stages after disturbance of an ecosystem (e.g., clearing or fire) where plants and animals first start recolonizing an area.
easement	The permanent right authorizing the utility to use private land or property for another particular use. A utility can acquire certain rights to build and maintain a transmission facility.
ecotone	The zone between two different ecological communities.
edge effect	A phenomenon in which species composition changes near the boundary of a habitat. This term is typically used in the context of habitat degradation, where intact habitat contains less diversity near the point of contact with disturbed areas, such as clearcuts or agricultural land.
electrical arcing	A visible discharge of electricity created by an electric current that jumps across a gap between two conductive points. An electrical arc generates heat, which can cause burns or ignite flammable materials. Sparks may fly from the point of discharge.

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electromagnetic interference	A disturbance generated by an external source that affects an electrical circuit; when this disturbance occurs in the radio frequency spectrum, it is known as radio-frequency interference.
electrosensitive	Sensitive to electrical current.
emissions standards	Regulatory limits set by governments that specify the maximum allowable levels of pollutants that can be released into the atmosphere from various sources.
energy security	Reliable and affordable access to sufficient energy resources; often refers to a nation's ability to produce or obtain enough energy to support economic stability, national security, and the daily activities of citizens.
energy project	As defined in 10 U.S. Code 183a, a project that provides for the generation or transmission of electrical energy.
enhanced services facility	A specialized residential setting designed to provide care for individuals with complex personal care and behavioral challenges who do not require institutionalization.
Environmental Designation for Noise Abatement	A classification system used to establish maximum permissible noise levels within specific areas or zones. This system helps manage and control noise pollution by setting different noise limits based on the type of environment.

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environmental benefit	An activity that: (a) Prevents or reduces existing environmental harms or associated risks that contribute significantly to cumulative environmental health impacts; (b) Prevents or mitigates impacts to overburdened communities or vulnerable populations from, or support community response to, the impacts of environmental harm; or (c) meets a community need formally identified to a covered agency by an overburdened community or vulnerable population that is consistent with the intent of chapter 70A.02 RCW.
environmental harm	An individual or cumulative environmental health impact and risk to communities caused by historic, current, or projected: (a) Exposure to pollution, conventional or toxic pollutants, environmental hazards, or other contamination in the air, water, and land; (b) Adverse environmental effects, including exposure to contamination, hazardous substances, or pollution that increase the risk of adverse environmental health outcomes or create vulnerabilities to the impacts of climate change; (c) Loss or impairment of ecosystem functions or traditional food resources or loss of access to gather cultural resources or harvest traditional foods; or (d) Health and economic impacts from climate change.
environmental justice	The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. This definition emphasizes addressing disproportionate environmental and health impacts on vulnerable populations and overburdened communities.

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environmental review	The procedural framework established under SEPA to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of a proposed action. This process includes determining whether SEPA applies to a proposal and conducting a threshold determination to assess whether the proposal is likely to have significant adverse environmental impacts. Environmental review is the formal decision-making process that agencies must follow to ensure environmental considerations are integrated into project planning and permitting.
ephemeral aquatic habitat	A water-based habitat that exists only during certain times of the year when conditions are wet enough.
epoch	A specific period in time, often marked by notable events or developments.
equitable distribution	A fair and just, but not necessarily equal, allocation intended to mitigate disparities in benefits and burdens that are based on current conditions, including existing legacy and cumulative impacts, that are informed by cumulative environmental health impact analysis.
estuarine environment	Unique and dynamic ecosystem where rivers meet the sea, creating a mix of fresh and saltwater known as brackish water.
ethnohistoric	The study of cultures and indigenous peoples that involves examining historical records and other sources of information about their lives and history. This field combines methods from both anthropology and history to understand the customs, social structures, and experiences of various ethnic groups, often focusing on those that may no longer exist.
evapotranspiration	Combined process of water movement from the Earth's surface to the atmosphere through evaporation and transpiration.

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exogenous	Originating from outside an organism, system, or process.
extensional	Processes and structures associated with the stretching and thinning of the Earth's crust or lithosphere. Extensional processes typically occur in regions where tectonic forces pull the crust apart, leading to the formation of features such as normal faults, rift valleys, and mid-ocean ridges.
extirpation	The state of a species or population becoming locally extinct in a specific geographic area while still existing elsewhere.

7.6 F

faunal remains	The physical evidence of animals that have been left in the archaeological record. These remains can include bones, teeth, shells, hair, scales, hides, and even proteins like DNA. They help understand past human-animal interactions and environmental conditions.
federal discharge permit	A legal document issued by regulatory agencies that authorizes the release of pollutants into waterbodies under specific conditions. These permits are designed to ensure that the discharge meets environmental standards to protect water quality and public health.
fire-cracked rock	An archeological term that refers to rock that has been cracked or split as a result of deliberate heating.
fire district	A special-purpose governmental entity created to provide fire protection and emergency medical services to a specific geographic area.
fish weir	A fence, dam, or other enclosure set in a stream or river for capturing fish.
fish-bearing	Streams, rivers, or other bodies of water that support fish populations at any time of the year. Fish-bearing watercourses provide essential habitats for various fish species, including spawning, rearing, and feeding areas.
flashover spread	Occurs when high-voltage electricity jumps over an insulator or between conductors in an electrical discharge.
fledging	The process by which an immature bird develops flight feathers.

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floor elevation	In a military context, "floor" refers to a minimum safe altitude, or the lowest altitude an aircraft is permitted to fly under specific operational conditions.
flyway	A path that is annually flown by migratory birds.
footprint	The physical area occupied by a transmission facility or associated infrastructure, including its height and width. This includes the permanent space required for structures such as towers, substations, access roads, and ancillary facilities. The footprint encompasses both the area within the ROW and any additional land area required for permanent infrastructure. It does not include temporary workspaces unless they result in permanent land conversion or long-term environmental impact.
forb	A broad-leaved, non-woody flowering plant that is not a grass.
frac-out	An unintentional return of drilling fluids to the surface.
fragmentation	The process by which habitat is divided into smaller pieces by a disturbance—typically an anthropogenic disturbance. For example, the new construction of a road through a forest would lead to habitat fragmentation.
Free, Prior, and Informed Consent	The principle that the State must seek the affected Tribes' consent before making any decision or action on a proposed project or action that affects a Tribe. The consent must be given freely, and the affected Tribes should receive complete, accessible, and culturally appropriate information about the project's scope, impacts, and alternatives in order to make an informed decision.

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fugitive dust

Tiny particles of material that become airborne due to various activities, rather than being emitted through a confined flow stream like a chimney or exhaust pipe.

7.7 G

gastropod	An animal in the class Gastropoda, such as a snail or slug.
General Measure	As used in this Programmatic EIS, a measure that provides a consistent baseline for evaluating the potential impacts of project-specific applications for transmission facility development. This Programmatic EIS assumes that project-specific applications adhere to the General Measures specified in Section 3.1.
generalist	A species with a high level of tolerance for different environmental conditions.
generation curtailment	An event when utilities intentionally reduce electricity output even when they are capable of producing more.
geographically isolated	Describes a population that is geographically separated from other populations of the same species.
glaciation	The process associated with the period in the Earth's history when large ice sheets covered portions of the continents.
glare	Light reflected off of a stationary object.
glyptic	The art or process of carving or engraving, especially on gems or precious stones.
government-to-government consultation	The formal process of dialogue and negotiation between sovereign governments.
green electrolytic	The process of producing substances, particularly hydrogen, through electrolysis powered by renewable energy sources.

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green hydrogen	Hydrogen produced through the electrolysis of water using renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, or hydropower.
greenhouse gases	Gases in the Earth's atmosphere that trap heat, contributing to the rise of the Earth's average temperature over time.
Growth Management Act	A Washington State law that requires state and local governments to manage growth by identifying and protecting critical areas and natural resource lands, designating urban growth areas, and preparing and implementing comprehensive land use plans.

7.8 H

habitat concentration area	A model variable specific to the Washington Habitat Concentration Working Group's modeling of habitat connectivity. Habitat concentration areas are areas that are important or suspected to be important to a species of focus based on surveys or modeling data.
habitat conservation plan	A plan developed by applicants to conserve the habitat of a species at risk if their project is expected to cause incidental take of the species.
habitat fragmentation	The process by which habitat is divided into smaller pieces by a disturbance, typically an anthropogenic disturbance. For example, the new construction of a road through a forest would lead to habitat fragmentation.
habitat gap	A gap between two different habitats caused by human infrastructure, such as roads.
habitat matrix contrast	The contrast between different habitat types in matrix habitat.
habitat patch	Small areas of habitat. This term is typically used in the context of habitat loss, where only habitat patches remain.
habitat specialization	The act of an organism adapting to a specific habitat.
habituation	The process of becoming accustomed to something; often used in wildlife biology to refer to a species becoming accustomed to people.
hazardous area	An area susceptible to erosion, sliding, earthquakes, or other geological events or areas that could pose a threat to health and safety when incompatible commercial, residential, or industrial development is sited in areas of significant hazard (e.g., landfills, underground mines, or cutbanks).

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heavy-duty trucks and engines	Long-haul trucks, dump trucks, and other large commercial vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating over 26,000 pounds.
hemispherical propagation	A decrease in level that occurs when a sound wave propagates away from a source uniformly in all directions aboveground.
high-voltage transmission facilities	As defined in this Programmatic EIS, electrical transmission facilities with a nominal voltage of 230 kilovolts or greater.
historic period	The time in human history that begins with the advent of written records. This period follows prehistory, which is characterized by the absence of written documentation. The historic period varies by region, as different cultures developed writing systems at different times.
home range	The typical range that an animal will occupy throughout its life.
Horizon	A distinct layer of soil or sediment that has unique characteristics that distinguish the layers above and below it.
host plant	A plant that is required by a species, typically an arthropod, for feeding, egg laying, or some other part of its lifecycle.
hot-work activity	Work that generates heat, sparks, or open flames, which can pose safety risks.
housepit depression	An archaeological feature that represents the remains of ancient dwellings, typically semi-subterranean houses. These depressions are often circular or oval and are found in various regions around the world, including North America

7.9 I

ignition source operations	Activities or use of equipment that can produce sparks, flames, or heat, potentially igniting flammable materials. These activities may not necessarily be part of a hot-work process (i.e., electrical equipment).
illuminance	Measurement of the amount of light falling onto and spreading over a given surface area.
immunity testing	Evaluates how components (e.g., electronic devices, automotive components, or medical devices) and vehicles respond to electromagnetic fields from external sources.
Important Bird Area (IBA)	A site that provides an essential service for bird populations during a part of their annual movement cycle.
impulsive noise	Short bursts of sound that are significantly louder than the ambient noise level.
inadvertent discovery plan	A document that outlines the procedures to follow when unexpected archaeological materials or human remains are discovered during new construction or other ground-disturbing activities.
incidental take	An unintentional, but not unexpected, take of a protected species.
incidental take permit	A permit that allows the accidental mortality or injury of a protected animal species if the permittee is taking the required steps to mitigate risk of such an occurrence.
incidental trapping	Inadvertently catching an animal in a trap or a structure designed for another purpose (e.g., open construction trench).

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incorporate by reference	A SEPA term defined in WAC 197-11-754 as “the inclusion of all or part of any existing document in an agency’s environmental documentation by reference.”
Indian country	Defined in 18 U.S. Code Section 1151 as (a) all land within the limits of any Indian reservation under the jurisdiction of the United States Government, notwithstanding the issuance of any patent, and, including rights-of-way running through the reservation, (b) all dependent Indian communities within the borders of the United States whether within the original or subsequently acquired territory thereof, and whether within or without the limits of a state, and (c) all Indian allotments, the Indian titles to which have not been extinguished, including rights-of-way running through the same.
Industrial Revolution	A transformative period from the late 18th to the early 19th century, marked by a shift from agrarian and handicraft economies to industrial and machine manufacturing economies.
Instrument Flight Rules aircraft	Civilian aircraft equipped to fly in low visibility conditions, such as clouds or fog, using instruments and electronic signals instead of visual reference.
intermittent	Bodies of water that flow only during certain times of the year, typically after rainfall or snowmelt.

7.10 J

joint use agreement

A legally binding contract that allows multiple utility companies to share the same infrastructure or right-of-way.

7.11 K

key observation point

A typical or sensitive viewing location that represents a critical place from which the public would view a project; used to assess visual impacts.

7.12 L

lacustrine sediments	Deposits that form at the bottom of lakes. These sediments are typically composed of fine particles like silt, clay, and sometimes organic matter, which settle out of the water due to the low-energy environment of a lake.
land use plan	A document that guides the land use decisions of a local government.
landing	A designated area where logs are collected, processed, and loaded onto trucks for transportation to mills or other destinations.
landscape character	The overall visual appearance of a given landscape, including both natural features and human-created modifications.
lateral spreading	A type of ground deformation that occurs when saturated soil layers lose their strength and move laterally due to seismic activity, such as an earthquake.
Lead Agency	The agency with the main responsibility for complying with the procedural requirements of the Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).
leisure park	A designated outdoor area designed for various recreational activities and relaxation. Leisure parks typically offer a range of amenities and facilities to cater to different interests and age groups.
light trespass	Light falling where it is not intended or needed.

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like-for-like	In the context of a transmission facility, generally refers to replacing facility components with other components that are of the same type, capacity, and function. This means that the new parts should not significantly alter the original design, capacity, or operational characteristics of the facility.
limited access facility	A highway or street especially designed or designated for through traffic, and over, from, or to which owners or occupants of abutting land, or other persons, have no right or easement, or only a limited right or easement of access, light, air, or view by reason of the fact that their property abuts upon such limited access facility, or for any other reason to accomplish the purpose of a limited access facility.
linguistic isolation	Linguistic Isolation refers to households where no one over age 14 speaks English very well, based on data obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey.
lithic debitage	Waste material produced during the process of creating stone tools.
lithic scatter	An archaeological term for an area with a concentration of stone tools and debris from tool-making activities.
location quotient	An analytical statistic used to measure a region's industrial specialization relative to a larger geographic unit.
low plasticity silt	Fine-grained soil that exhibits low plasticity, meaning it has limited ability to deform without cracking or breaking when wet.
lux	A unit of measurement for illuminance, which indicates how much light is received on a surface. One lux is equal to one lumen per square meter.

7.13 M

major load center	An area with a high concentration of electricity demand.
mantle hotspot	A location in the Earth's mantle where hot, buoyant material rises toward the surface, creating volcanic activity.
mass wasting	Movement of soil, rock, and debris down a slope due to the force of gravity.
matrix habitat	Habitat that occurs between and connects habitat patches.
medium-duty trucks and engines	A category that typically includes delivery trucks, utility trucks, and some vocational trucks. These vehicles have a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,001 to 26,000 pounds.
memorandum of agreement	A formal document that outlines the specific responsibilities and actions each party will take to achieve a shared goal.
merchantable timber	Trees that have a commercial value and can be harvested or sold.
microclimate	A local climate on a small scale.
microgrid	A small, controllable electrical system that can generate its own power and operate independently from the main power grid.
microhabitat	Small habitat features that typically provide special functions to a plant or animal in a certain landscape.
micropascal	A unit of measurement that is a millionth of a pascal. A pascal is a unit of pressure.
micro-siting survey	The process of identifying the exact placement of a transmission facility structure.

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military installation	As defined in Title 10 U.S. Code, a base, camp, post, station, center, or homeport facility for any ship or other activity under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Defense, including any leased facility.
mitigation	WAC 197-11-768 outlines the concept of mitigation in the context of environmental impact. Mitigation includes 1. Avoiding the impact, 2. Minimizing impacts, 3. Rectifying the Impact, 4. Reducing or eliminating the impact, 5. Compensating for the impact, and 6. Monitoring the impact and taking the appropriate corrective measures.
Mitigation Measure	In the context of the Programmatic EIS, a Mitigation Measure is defined as a strategy or action designed to eliminate, reduce, or compensate for adverse environmental impacts associated with the new construction, operation and maintenance, upgrade, or modification of transmission facilities.
Mitigation Strategies	A comprehensive set of analysis, planning, and implementation tools specific to this Programmatic EIS designed to reduce or eliminate adverse environmental impacts associated with the new construction, operation and maintenance, upgrade, and modification of transmission facilities. These strategies are inclusive of three key components identified in Chapter 3 and detailed in Appendix 3.1-1: General Measures, Avoidance Criteria, and Mitigation Measures. Together, these elements form a hierarchical and integrated approach to environmental management, ensuring that transmission projects in Washington are planned and executed with a strong emphasis on sustainability, regulatory compliance, and ecological stewardship.
mobile source	Vehicles, engines, and equipment that emit air pollutants and can move from one location to another.

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montane	An area with lots of mountains, or on a mountain.
moraine valley	A type of valley formed by the accumulation of glacial debris, known as a moraine.
mudflat	A type of habitat consisting of a wet muddy area, typically near the ocean, that becomes muddy at low tide and is covered by water at high tide.

7.14 N

nameplate generating capacity	The maximum amount of electrical power that a generator or power plant can produce under specific conditions, as determined by the manufacturer. This capacity is typically measured in megawatts (MW) or kilowatts and represents the full-load sustained output of a facility. For example, a power plant with a nameplate capacity of 100 MW can theoretically produce 100 MW of electricity when operating at full capacity under ideal conditions. However, actual output can vary due to factors like maintenance, fuel availability, and operational efficiency. Also known as rated capacity or nominal capacity.
National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor	A geographic area designated by the U.S. Department of Energy where electricity transmission limitations are significantly affecting consumers. These corridors are identified based on findings from the National Transmission Needs Study and other relevant data.
natural break	A method used in data classification to divide data into distinct classes based on natural groupings inherent in the data. This technique, also known as the Jenks Natural Breaks method, identifies gaps or breaks in the data distribution to create class intervals. These breaks occur at points where there are relatively large differences in data values, effectively grouping similar values together and maximizing the differences between classes.
new disturbance	Any disturbance of areas that were not previously disturbed by this facility.
nitrogen oxides	A group of gases that includes nitric oxide (NO) and nitrogen dioxide (NO ₂), which are predominantly produced by combustion of fossil fuels.

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noise	A sound that is “unwanted”—i.e., this term is based on human perception.
noise abatement	A set of strategies or techniques aimed at reducing and controlling annoying or harmful noise in an environment.
noise propagation	The way sound waves travel through different environments.
nominal voltage	The standard voltage level assigned to a transmission facility. The voltage level is used as a reference point for the design, operation, and regulation of the facility.
nonattainment area	A region that does not meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for certain pollutants.
non-emitting	An energy source or technology that does not release greenhouse gases during its operation.
nonproject environmental review	Defined in WAC 197-11-70(b) as an environmental analysis of governmental actions that are not tied to a specific project. These actions typically involve decisions about policies, plans, or programs that set standards for controlling or modifying the environment, or that govern a series of connected actions.
non-specular conductors	A conductor that has been treated with an outer layer that reduces light reflection.
notice of construction	A formal document used to inform relevant parties and regulatory bodies about the commencement, progress, or completion of a construction project.
notice to air missions	A notice containing information that is essential to pilots and other air personnel.

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no-till farming	Also known as zero tillage or direct drilling, no-till farming is an agricultural technique in which crops are grown without disturbing the soil through tillage. Instead of plowing, farmers use specialized equipment to plant seeds directly in the soil, leaving crop residues on the surface.
novel pathogen	A pathogen that a population has never experienced before. A pathogen is a bacteria, fungus, parasite, or virus that can cause disease in its host.
nuisance wildlife	Wildlife that can cause a problem or danger for humans, such as bears that become accustomed to eating garbage.

7.15 O

obligate	A species that must live in a specific condition or environment to survive.
off-highway vehicle	Any type of vehicle capable of driving off roads or on non-paved surfaces like trails.
omnidirectional	The capability of receiving or transmitting signals in all directions.
overburdened community	Geographic areas where vulnerable populations face combined, multiple environmental harms and health impacts. This includes, but is not limited to, highly impacted communities as defined in RCW 19.405.020.
overgeneration event	An event within an operating period of a balancing authority when the electricity supply, including generation from intermittent renewable resources, exceeds the demand for electricity for that utility's energy delivery obligations and when there is a negatively priced regional market.

7.16 P

parent material	A distinct layer of soil or sediment that has unique characteristics compared to the layers above and below it.
patch isolation	The extent to which a habitat patch is disconnected from other similar habitats.
patch size	The size of a continuous or connected ecosystem type.
perennial	Bodies of water that maintain continuous flow or presence throughout the year under normal conditions.
permeability to movement	An area's ability to allow animals to move through it. An area with low permeability will allow less movement through it, and an area with high permeability will allow more movement.
petroglyph	An image created by removing part of a rock surface through methods such as incising, picking, carving, or abrading. Petroglyphs are a form of rock art and are found worldwide, often associated with prehistoric peoples. Petroglyphs can depict a wide range of subjects, including animals, human figures, symbols, and abstract patterns.
pH	A measurement of acidity and alkalinity; stands for "potential of hydrogen."
phased review	A SEPA term defined in WAC 197-11-776 as "the coverage of general matters in broader environmental documents, with subsequent narrower documents concentrating solely on the issues specific to the later analysis."

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physiographic	The study of physical features of the Earth's surface. Physiographic regions are defined by their distinct geology and topography, such as hills, valleys, and flat areas.
pictograph	A visual representation that uses images, symbols, or drawings to convey information or data.
pioneering trees	The first trees to colonize disturbed or damaged ecosystems.
Planning Area	For this Programmatic EIS, the entire State of Washington.
plutonic intrusion	A body of igneous rock that forms when magma cools and solidifies beneath the Earth's surface.
polygon	An identified area on a map that corresponds to an area of land.
population persistence	The ability of a population of organisms to continue living.
population sink	A type of habitat that can attract organisms but does not have enough resources to support them, resulting in their eventual extirpation from the sink, unless it is constantly supplied by another population.
porosity	The volume of pore spaces or voids within the soil.
post-construction reclamation	The process of restoring land to its original or agreed-upon condition after construction activities, such as building infrastructure.
predator sightline	The line of sight a predator has when hunting. Logging and other industrial practices can affect predator sightlines.

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prehistory	The period of human history before the invention of writing systems and recorded history. This era encompasses the time from the earliest known use of stone tools by hominids, around 3.3 million years ago, up to the advent of writing, which occurred at different times in different parts of the world.
prevention of significant deterioration	A key component of the Clean Air Act, designed to protect air quality in areas that meet or exceed the National Ambient Air Quality Standards.
principal aquifer	A regional, extensive aquifer system with the potential to be used as a source of drinking water.
primitive recreation	Outdoor activities that emphasize simplicity and a connection to nature, often involving non-motorized and non-mechanical means of travel. This type of recreation typically includes activities such as hiking, horseback riding, canoeing, and camping in wilderness areas.
priority habitat	Habitat that is given priority for conservation and management by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife may refer to a unique vegetation association (e.g., shrubsteppe) or a particular habitat feature (e.g., cliffs).
priority species	In Washington, species of concern for which special conservation actions may be required. These include, but are not limited to, species that are state-listed as endangered, threatened, sensitive, or candidate, or considered vulnerable.
proactive retrofit strategy	A plan developed by applicants that identifies infrastructure that is not avian safe and includes a timeline and strategy for how to retrofit it in an avian safe manner.

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programmatic agreement	A legal document that outlines how federal agencies will comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. This section requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their undertakings on historic properties and to consult with various stakeholders, including State Historic Preservation Officers, Tribal Historic Preservation Officers, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.
programmatic EIS	A type of EIS that evaluates the environmental impacts of broad policies, plans, or programs. This approach allows for a comprehensive analysis of potential impacts at a higher level, which can then be used to inform more specific, subsequent environmental analyses.
project-specific environmental analyses	The substantive evaluation of how a specific project may affect the environment.
project-specific environmental review	While the Programmatic EIS provides a broad framework for evaluating transmission-related actions, individual projects will still require separate, project-specific environmental review. Environmental review for project-specific applications may be phased under both the EFSEC certification and local government SEPA review processes. As defined in WAC 197.11.060(5), “phased review” may allow the use of broader environmental documents followed by narrower documents. A phased review can result in a more effective environmental analysis by incorporating prior general discussion by reference and concentrating solely on site-specific information and effects.
projectile point	An archaeological term to describe the pointed end of a weapon that was designed to be thrown or projected, such as a spear, dart, or arrow. These points are typically made from materials like stone, bone, metal, or even glass.

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protohistory	The period between prehistory and recorded history. During this time, a culture or civilization has not yet developed its own writing system, but other cultures with writing systems have documented their existence.
proxy noise source level	A noise source level used in acoustic modeling to estimate the sound levels produced by various activities or equipment when direct measurements are not available. These proxy levels are derived from similar activities or equipment in comparable environments.
public scoping	A process that gives the public an opportunity to provide input on issues.
public utility district	A community-owned, not-for-profit utility that provides essential services such as electricity, water, and, sometimes sewer, to residents within a specific geographic area.
pure tone	A sound that consists of a single frequency.

7.17 R

racial or ethnic minorities	<p>The CEQ's defines "minority populations" where either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) the minority population of the affected area exceeds 50 percent, orb) the minority population percentage of the affected area is meaningfully greater than the minority population percentage in the general population or other appropriate unit of geographical analysis.
radiator	<p>Device that generates and emits radio frequency by radiation or induction.</p>
rain shadow effect	<p>A phenomenon that occurs when a mountain range blocks the passage of rain-producing weather systems, casting a "shadow" of dryness behind it.</p>
reactive retrofit strategy	<p>A plan developed by proponents that identifies measures that they will take to identify and detect eagles that have been electrocuted. If a deceased eagle is found, the pole that caused its mortality must be retrofitted unless it is already avian safe. More information can be found here: https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-50/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-22/subpart-E/section-22.260</p>

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reasonably foreseeable action	Projects that are formally being proposed or planned, those about which a formal decision has been made, and developments currently under construction. RFAs that are formally being proposed or planned have readily available published planning documents or public notifications. RFAs for which a formal decision has been made include those that have undergone a federal, state, and/or local approval or application process(es), such as environmental clearance, application review, and/or permitting process(es).
recolonization	The reestablishment of a species into an area after it was extirpated.
reconductoring	The replacement of cable or wire on an electric circuit, typically a high-voltage transmission line, to afford a greater electric-current-carrying capability.
reduced right-of-way	Refers to a narrower-than-typical ROW or easements. Reduced ROWs or easements may be required when the ROW is restricted and the full width (e.g., 200 feet) is not feasible due to existing land use, environmental sensitivity, or infrastructure limitations.
reference threshold	A reference threshold can be used as a standard or benchmark for a comparative analysis. For example, an environmental justice assessment could find that nine of 12 census blocks in the affected area have more than 20 percent low-income residents (and some as many as 90 percent), while the reference county has 16 percent low-income residents county-wide. The difference indicates that a low-income population is present for purposes of conducting an environmental justice assessment.

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regional and interregional connectivity	The linking of multiple electrical grids to allow the exchange of electricity between them. This connection helps balance supply and demand across different regions, enhancing the reliability and stability of the power supply.
remanent habitat	An area of land that retains its original natural vegetation and ecological characteristics, having avoided significant disturbance from human activities such as agriculture, urban development, or logging.
reradiated	The process by which absorbed energy is emitted again, typically in the form of radiation.
restricted range	Species with ranges that are bounded by some factor, which could be biological, physical, or behavioral.
restricted right-of-way (ROW)	Refers to the ROW or easement width that is restricted from expansion beyond the original boundaries to accommodate larger structures, additional structures, or other actions that require additional space. A ROW could be restricted due to local zoning ordinances or land use plans that prohibit the expansion into areas such as communities or environmentally sensitive lands. Another reason a ROW could be restricted is due to adjacent properties being developed or other restrictions being present since the ROW was originally established.
retail electric load	The total amount of electricity consumed by end-use customers, such as residential, commercial, and industrial users, within a specific area or market.

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right-of-way	The corridor of land under a transmission line(s) needed to operate the line(s). The width of the corridor is established by engineering or construction standards as documented in either construction documents, pre-2007 vegetation maintenance records, or by the blowout standard in effect when the line was built. The right-of-way width in no case exceeds the applicable Transmission Owner's or applicable Generator Owner's legal rights but may be less based on the aforementioned criteria. A utility could either own the right-of-way in fee or have an easement on the property where the right-of-way is located.
right-size replacement	Under FERC Order No. 1920, right-size replacement refers to modifying or upgrading an existing transmission facility to increase its capacity, thereby extending a system's useful life and reducing the need for new transmission facilities.
riparian	Relating to a feature on the edge of a waterbody.
rural	Rural encompasses all population, housing, and territory not included within an urban area.

7.18 S

salmonid	Belonging to the family Salmonidae, such as salmon or trout.
scope	The range of proposed actions, alternatives, and impacts to be analyzed in an environmental document. For this Programmatic EIS, the scope is high-voltage transmission facilities within the defined Study Area.
scree	Loose, rocky debris on a hill or cliff.
sediment load	The amount of sediment in a waterbody.
sedimentation	The process by which particles of soil, sand, and other materials are dislodged and transported by natural forces such as water, wind, or human activities like construction and deforestation.
seismic line	A narrow corridor created by oil and gas exploration to try to locate oil and gas.
seismic wave	An energy wave generated by an earthquake, volcanic eruption, or explosion.
seismometer	An instrument that measures the motion of the ground, especially motions caused by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and explosions.

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sensitive receptor	<p>In relation to noise and vibration, sensitive receptors are located where people reside and sleep. These areas typically include residential properties; multiple-family living accommodations; recreational facilities with overnight accommodations such as camps, parks, camping facilities, and resorts; and community service facilities, including orphanages, homes for the aged, hospitals, and health and correctional facilities.</p> <p>In relation to air quality, sensitive receptors are people who are considered to be more sensitive than others to air pollutants.</p>
sensitivity level	<p>A categorical ranking system used to evaluate the potential for adverse environmental impacts across various geographic areas and resource types. This ranking is applied through environmental sensitivity maps and criteria cards, which are central tools in the Programmatic EIS.</p> <p>Each siting criterion is assigned one of three sensitivity levels:</p> <p>Level 1: Low sensitivity — areas with minimal potential for adverse environmental impacts</p> <p>Level 2: Moderate sensitivity — areas with some potential for impacts, requiring caution</p> <p>Level 3: Highest sensitivity — areas most vulnerable to environmental impacts and typically subject to the most stringent Avoidance Criteria or additional analysis</p>
shielding	<p>In relation to noise and vibration, the reduction in noise levels that occurs when buildings are positioned between the noise source and the receiver.</p>

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shooting response strategy	A plan developed by proponents to monitor eagle mortality and identify if shooting is the suspected cause, and if so, to identify reduction measures and inform law enforcement. More information can be found here: https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-50/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-22/subpart-E/section-22.260
shrubsteppe	An arid ecosystem that is dominated by grasses and shrubs in a landscape of rolling hills. In Washington, this is found in the southeast part of the state.
significant	A SEPA term defined in WAC 197-11-794 as “a reasonable likelihood of more than a moderate adverse impact on environmental quality.”
silvicultural	Describes the practice of managing the growth, composition, health, and quality of forests to meet diverse needs and values, such as timber production, wildlife habitat, water resources, and recreation.
siting	Identifying and evaluating potential routes for transmission facilities.
slumping	Vertical collapse of a bank caused by a slide or rotation away, leaving a concave scar or scarp and a clump of sediment at the base. Can occur when structures are built too close to the bank of a river, or when riparian vegetation is removed.
smart building	A structure that uses advanced technologies to enhance the efficiency, comfort, and safety of its operations.
Sno-Park	A parking lot that has been cleared of snow that is close to groomed or other backcountry snow trails.
social cohesion	The strength of relationships and the sense of solidarity among members of a community.

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soil order	The highest level of classification in the U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Taxonomy system. There are 12 soil orders, each defined by specific characteristics and processes that influence soil formation.
somatic hearing	Hearing by picking up sonic vibrations through the body.
soundscape	The acoustic environment as perceived by humans, encompassing all sounds within a particular area.
spark arrestor	A device designed to prevent the emission of flammable debris, such as sparks or hot particles, from combustion sources like internal combustion engines.
special status species	For this Programmatic EIS, special status fish and freshwater invertebrate species are defined as either listed under the federal Endangered Species Act or Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act or listed by Washington State as endangered, threatened, sensitive, or candidate.
State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)	A Washington law designed to ensure that environmental values are considered during decision-making by state and local agencies. SEPA requires these agencies to evaluate the environmental impacts of their actions, including issuing permits, adopting regulations and funding projects. The goal is to identify and mitigate potential environmental harm before decisions are made.
State Implementation Plan	A comprehensive plan developed by the Washington State Department of Ecology to ensure that the state meets the National Ambient Air Quality Standards set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

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stationary source	A fixed site that emits air pollutants. Stationary sources include buildings, structures, facilities, or installations that release pollutants into the atmosphere.
stopover	An important resting or feeding area for birds during migration.
stratigraphy	A branch of geology that classifies and interprets rock layers.
Study Area, or geographic scope	For this Programmatic EIS, the entire State of Washington, excluding the areas identified in Chapter 1.
subalpine	A region on a mountain just below the tree line. This is typically the transition zone between montane forest and treeline.
subduction	A geological process in which one tectonic plate moves under another and sinks into the Earth's mantle.
substrate	A layer of material or surface where an organism could live.
subwatershed	A smaller division within a larger watershed. It represents a specific area of land where all the water drains to a particular point within the larger watershed.
supplemental EIS	The supplemental EIS process is outlined in Chapter 197-11 WAC, which specifies that a supplemental EIS is required if changes to the proposed action would result in significant environmental impacts not previously evaluated or new information or circumstances relevant to environmental concerns arise, leading to significant impacts not covered in the original EIS.

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sulfur dioxide

A pollutant gas that is emitted when fuels that contain sulfur are combusted.

7.19 T

taiga	A climatic zone typically with sparse conifers mixed with rocks and shrubs. Generally, taigas are more northern than boreal areas and closer to the tree line and tundra.
take	Harassment, hunting, capturing, or killing of an animal.
talus	A deposition of rocks fallen from a slope or cliff and collected near the base.
temporal loss	The delay between the loss of a habitat or resource and the point when mitigation efforts fully compensate for that loss.
terrane boundaries	Typically marked by faults or complex fault zones, these boundaries form where a terrane, which is a fragment of crust with a distinct geological history, has been accreted or attached to a larger continental mass.
thermoregulatory	The process of maintaining a certain temperature regardless of external temperature pressure.
third octave spectra	The division of the audible frequency range into smaller bands, each spanning one-third of an octave.
threshold determination	A SEPA term defined in WAC 197-11-797 as “the decision by the responsible official of the lead agency whether or not an EIS is required for a proposal that is not categorically exempt.”
thrust fault	A type of reverse fault where the fault plane has a low dip angle, typically less than 45 degrees. In a thrust fault, the hanging wall (the block of rock above the fault plane) moves up and over the footwall (the block below the fault plane) due to compressional forces.

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time immemorial	A period so long ago that it extends beyond the reach of memory, record, or tradition.
transboundary movement	Movement across different boundaries; in the context of wildlife studies, transboundary movement refers to movement across ecoregion boundaries.
translocation experiment	An experiment that involves moving an organism from one place to another to see how it adapts and if it can colonize the new area.
transmission corridor	A designated pathway or right-of-way where high-voltage transmission lines are constructed and maintained.
turbidity plume	Fine sediments remain suspended in a surface freshwater layer and cause cloudiness or muddiness.

7.20 U

ungulate	A mammal with hooves, including deer, moose, elk, and caribou.
urban	The U.S. Census Bureau’s urban areas represent densely developed territory, and encompass residential, commercial, and other non-residential urban land uses. An urban area must comprise a densely settled core of census blocks that meet minimum housing unit density and/or population density requirements. This includes adjacent territory containing non-residential urban land uses. To qualify as an urban area, the territory identified according to criteria must encompass at least 2,000 housing units or have a population of at least 5,000.

7.21 V

velocity barrier	The flow velocity over a river structure (e.g., culverts or road crossings) exceeds the swimming capacity of the fish and hinders its movements.
vernal pool	Seasonal pool of water that provides habitat for plants and animals.
vibration	The oscillating movement of a particle or object around its stationary reference position. Vibration can be caused by mechanical processes such as machinery operation, construction activities, or transportation systems.
viewshed	The geographical area that is visible from a specific location.
Visual Flight Rules pilot	A pilot who operates an aircraft in clear weather conditions, using visual cues to navigate and avoid other aircraft.
volatile organic compounds	A variety of chemicals that are emitted as gases from certain solids or liquids, some of which may have short- and long-term adverse health effects.

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vulnerable populations

Population groups that are more likely to be at higher risk for poor health outcomes in response to environmental harm, due to:

- (i) Adverse socioeconomic factors, such as unemployment, high housing and transportation costs relative to income, limited access to nutritious food and adequate health care, linguistic isolation, and other factors that negatively affect health outcomes and increase vulnerability to the effects of environmental harms; and
- (ii) sensitivity factors, such as low birth weight and higher rates of hospitalization.

Vulnerable populations include, but are not limited to:

- (i) Racial or ethnic minorities;
- (ii) Low-income populations;
- (iii) Populations disproportionately impacted by environmental harms; and
- (iv) Populations of workers experiencing environmental harms.

7.22 W

water rights	A legal entitlement that allows a person or entity to use water from a specific source, such as a river, stream, lake, or groundwater, for a particular purpose like irrigation, industrial use, or domestic consumption.
Waters of the State	All salt and fresh waters that are waterward of the ordinary high water line and within the territorial boundaries of the state. This includes lakes, rivers, ponds, streams, inland waters, underground waters, salt waters, and all other surface waters and watercourses within the state's jurisdiction.
Waters of the United States (WOTUS)	Defines the scope of waters that fall under federal jurisdiction for regulatory purposes. The definition of WOTUS has been subject to changes and legal interpretations. The most recent update, following the Supreme Court’s decision in Sackett v. EPA, refined the criteria for what constitutes WOTUS, particularly focusing on wetlands directly connected to permanent waters.
watershed	An area of land that drains all streams and rainfall to a common outlet such as the outflow of a reservoir, mouth of a bay, or any point along a stream channel.
Western Interconnection	One of the five alternating current power grids or interconnections that make up the power grid in North America. The Western Interconnection is the geographic area containing the synchronously operated electric grid in the western part of North America, which includes parts of Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, South Dakota, Texas, Wyoming and Mexico and all of Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington and the Canadian provinces of British Columbia and Alberta.

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wetland mitigation banking	A system designed to compensate for unavoidable impacts on wetlands. A wetland mitigation bank is a site where wetlands are restored, created, enhanced, or, in exceptional cases, preserved.
wholesale electric power transaction	The buying and selling of large quantities of electricity between electricity producers (such as power plants) and electricity suppliers (such as utility companies). These transactions typically occur in wholesale electricity markets, which were established during the deregulation of the electricity markets in the 1990s.
wildlife guild	A group of species that is similar in a specific way, such as in acquiring nutrients, habitat requirements, or in movement mechanisms.
woody debris	Debris, which can consist of downed trees, branches, rotting logs, or other woody materials.

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