

SKAGIT COUNTY
Clean Energy Siting and Permitting Project
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Scoping Fact Sheet

What is a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?

A Programmatic EIS under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) evaluates the environmental effects of broad, planning-level proposals, rather than site-specific projects. It provides enough detail to compare planning alternatives, assess effects, and develop broad mitigation strategies while also being clear, concise document that provides time and process for communities to comment on proposed policies, programs, and alternative scenarios.

Site-specific projects will then be separately evaluated under SEPA and County code. Separate opportunities for public involvement are also provided at the project level.

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

Why is the County preparing an EIS?

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

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

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

The EIS process includes the following steps:



Scoping – identifies the range of options and elements of environment to study



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



Draft EIS (DEIS) issued – shares study findings
Includes a public comment period



Final EIS (FEIS) - revised after public comment period

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



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

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

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

What Alternatives are being considered?

Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative.

Evaluates how energy development for solar energy facilities, battery energy storage facilities, small nuclear reactors, and renewable fuel facilities would occur within Skagit County based on the current development regulations with no changes. The development code standards and permitting processes currently established in Skagit County would be carried forward.

Alternative 2 – Action Alternative.

Evaluates potentially significant environmental impacts for solar energy facilities, battery energy storage facilities, small nuclear reactors, and renewable fuel facilities. The impacts associated with these uses will be assessed to determine appropriate locations, zones, significant adverse impacts, and mitigation and minimization measures. Where deemed appropriate, county permitting processes may be modified to streamline the local permitting pathway and provide clear development standards with known mitigation measures.



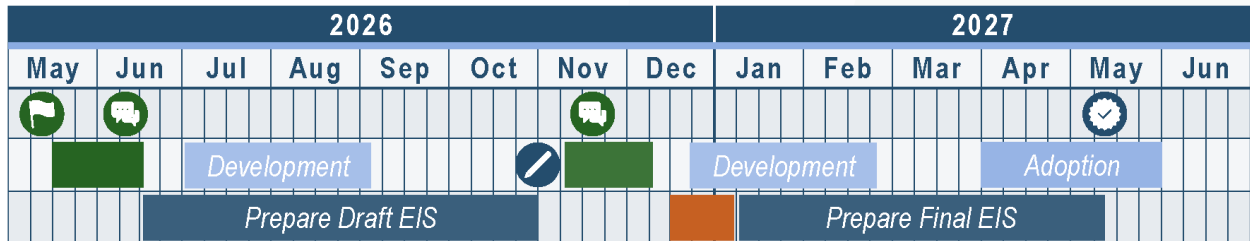
What is the anticipated schedule?

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

PROJECT STEPS



EIS & CODE DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE



- Issue Scoping Notice
 - Issue Final EIS
 - Open Houses
 - 30-45 Day Comment Periods
 - Issue Draft EIS
 - Select a Preferred Alternative
 - Code Development & Adoption
- Last Updated April 23, 2026

How can I provide input during the scoping period?

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

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

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

Online Comments

may be emailed to pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us with "EIS Scoping Comment" in the subject line.

Written Comments

may be submitted by mail to:

Reference: Clean Energy Siting and Permitting EIS Scoping Comment

To: Planning and Development Services
Address:, 1800 Continental Place Mount Vernon WA 98273



How can I learn more and receive updates?

To learn more about the Clean Energy Siting and Permitting Project and EIS, visit [Skagit County Clean Energy Siting and Permitting](#) for continued updates.



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

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



Earth Resources



Environmental Health and Safety



Visual Quality



Historic and Cultural Resources



Water Resources



Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases



Impacts to Overburdened Communities



Recreation



Transportation



Public Services and Utilities



Tribal Rights, Interests, and Resources



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



Energy and Natural Resources



Noise and Vibration



Biological Resources (*species and habitats*)

Each Alternative would be evaluated with these topics.

A full list of potential SEPA topics can be found in [WAC 197-11-444](#).

