



Planning and Community Development Department

210 Lottie Street, Bellingham, WA 98225

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Determination of Non-Significance (DNS)

CAP2025-0006 and SEP2025-0001

Date of Issuance of Threshold Determination: 3/13/2025

Project Name: Middle Fork Spring Creek Open Space Trail

Project Description: Proposed City of Bellingham Parks Department project to construct an approximately 1,286-linear-foot public multi-use trail that will connect West Stuart Road to Cordata Park. Proposed trail connections include an 8-foot-wide crushed limestone trail with 1-foot-wide shoulders and 10-foot-wide boardwalk segments. A small segment of concrete will be added to extend the existing sidewalk on the north side of West Stuart Road to the trailhead. Rock retaining walls are proposed for trail segments with steeper slopes and multiple benches are proposed along the trail.

The trail work is proposed through an approximately sized 9.72-acre property owned by the City of Bellingham. A future phase (not contemplated by this determination) proposes to construct a boardwalk through the undeveloped West Stuart Road right-of-way abutting the property.

The subject property and undeveloped right-of-way contain critical area wetlands, buffers, a segment of the fish bearing Middle Fork Spring Creek, erosion hazards, and frequently flooded areas. The project has been designed to avoid impacts to critical areas through the trail design and construction. Approximately 358 sf of indirect wetland impacts are anticipated due to shading from the boardwalks and about 22,164 sf of temporary and permanent buffer impacts are anticipated related to the trail and construction activity. On-site mitigation is proposed and includes buffer enhancement and restoration to offset these unavoidable impacts. Some tree removal is proposed and will be mitigated with replanting on-site.

A critical area permit is required per BMC 16.55.040. SEPA environmental review is required per WAC 197-11-800 because the project is proposed over lands covered by water.

Project Location: 200 W Stuart Road, Parcel No. 380212443440. Meridian Neighborhood, Area 31, zoned Industrial with a use qualifier of planned light.

Proponent: Paul Knippel, Greenways Project Manager Parks & Recreation Department, 210 Lottie ST, Bellingham WA 98225

Lead Agency: City of Bellingham, Planning and Community Development Department (PCDD)

Environmental Information Considered:

- SEPA checklist prepared by Paul Knippel, City of Bellingham, dated December 17, 2024.
- Critical Area Report and Mitigation Plan, prepared by Herrera Environmental Consultants, Inc., dated December 2024.
- Subsurface Exploration, Geologic Hazard, and Geotechnical Engineering Report, prepared by Associated Earth Sciences Inc., dated August 24, 2023.

- Stormwater Management Report prepared by Herrera Environmental Consultants Inc., dated January 2, 2025.
- 60% Civil Plan Set prepared by Wilson Engineering, dated December 6, 2024.
- Public and Agency Comments; WDFW, LNTHPO, Machiniak

The lead agency has determined that the requirements for environmental analysis, protection, and mitigation measures have been adequately addressed in the development regulations and comprehensive plan adopted under chapter [36.70A](#) RCW, and in other applicable local, state, or federal laws or rules, as provided by RCW [43.21C.240](#) and WAC 197-11-158. Our agency will not require any additional mitigation measures under SEPA. This decision was made after review of the environmental information considered on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public at <http://www.cob.org/notices> or upon request.

- This DNS is issued after using the optional DNS process in WAC 197-11-355. A notice of Application and Optional DNS was issued on **2/25/2025**, there is no further comment period on the DNS.

Appeal Rights: Pursuant to BMC 16.20.210(D), there is no administrative appeal of this environmental determination.

Staff Contact:

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Responsible Official:

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Signature – Steve Sundin for K. Nabbefeld