Skagit County

State Environmental Policy Act

Notice of Availability of Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for Clean Energy Siting and Permitting (CESP)

Date of Issuance: November 19th, 2026

Lead Agency: Skagit County, Planning and Development Services

Agency Contact: Leah Forbes, AICP, Senior Planner, Planning and Development Services, (360) 416-1320, leahf@skagitcountywa.gov

Description of Proposal:

Skagit County is completing a programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate the environmental impacts and appropriate mitigation for siting and regulating clean energy uses. The energy uses being studied include solar energy facilities, battery energy storage facilities, fusion small modular reactors, and renewable fuel facilities.

Skagit County currently regulates energy facilities as Utility Developments in Skagit County Code (SCC) 14.18.870. This project may result in updating Skagit County Code and/or the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan, to identify locations in which these facilities may be permitted, along with permit application requirements, permit process, criteria for application approval, required studies, and mitigation or performance standards for energy types.

Location of Proposal: Skagit County, including all unincorporated urban and rural areas and natural resource lands.

Notice is hereby given that Skagit County has issued a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the consideration of clean energy alternatives and the associated updated permitting requirements in the County pursuant to WAC 197-11-455 and RCW 43.21C.030 (2)(c). The DEIS evaluates alternatives for siting and permitting solar energy facilities, battery energy storage facilities, small modular nuclear fusion facilities, and renewable fuel facilities for potential environmental impacts and mitigation measures.

- **Alternative 1** is the No Action Alternative, required under SEPA. It evaluates how energy development for solar energy facilities, battery energy storage facilities (BESS), fusion small modular 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** evaluates potentially significant environmental impacts for solar energy facilities, battery energy storage facilities, fusion small modular 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.

It is intended that after studying the selected alternatives in the DEIS, a Preferred Alternative will be selected which will inform the Final EIS (FEIS) and direction for the preparation of new development regulations. The Preferred Alternative may be an alternative as written or a combination of the alternatives analyzed in the DEIS. Based upon the Preferred Alternative, the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan and/or Skagit County Code may be amended to reflect the Preferred Alternative.

The DEIS is available for review at https://www.skagitcountywa.gov/services/planning-and-building/community-planning/cesp/ and at Skagit County Planning and Development Services, located at 1800 Continental Pl, Mount Vernon, WA 98273.

Comments: The 30-day comment period is from November 19th, 2026, through December 21st, 2026. Written comments on the DEIS can be submitted any time prior to 4:30pm on December 21st, 2026.

Comments may be submitted by the following means:

Online Comments may be submitted via email to pdscomments@skagitcountywa.gov with the subject line: "Energy Siting and Permitting DEIS Comment"

Written Comments may be submitted via mail to the following address:

Reference:	Energy Siting and Permitting DEIS Comment
To:	Skagit County Planning and Development Services
Address:	1800 Continental Place Mount Vernon WA 98273

The Draft EIS is available for review at the Skagit County Planning and Development Services office located at 1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, WA 98273.

DEIS Open Houses: Three opportunities are available for members of the public to learn more and ask questions about the DEIS.

December 8th, 2026, 1:00PM to 3:00PM.

Anacortes Depot Arts & Community Center, 611 R Avenue, Anacortes, WA 98221

December 8th, 2026, 5:30PM – 7:30PM,

Mount Vernon Skagit Couty Administration Building, 1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, WA 98273

December 10th, 2026, 5:00PM – 7:00pm,

Concrete Community Center, 45821 Railroad Avenue, Concrete, WA 98237

SEPA Responsible Official:

Jack Moore, Director
Skagit County Planning and Development Services
1800 Continental Place
Mount Vernon WA 98273

Signature _____

Date 11-16-26

Appeal Process: Pursuant to SCC 16.12.210, no administrative appeal process is available for this DS on this non-project action. Appeals may be filed with the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board, following final Board of County Commissioner action on the proposal.

The Clean Energy Siting and Permitting CESP-CLEANENERGY25 RFA is supported with funding from Washington's Climate Commitment Act. The CCA supports Washington's climate action efforts by putting cap-and-invest dollars to work reducing climate pollution, creating jobs, and improving public health. Information about the CCA is available at www.climate.wa.gov.

Transmitted to Skagit Herald: November 17, 2026
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