

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT
FINAL DETERMINATION OF NON-SIGNIFICANCE (NON-PROJECT ACTION)
FOR THE
NORTHWEST PORTS CLEAN AIR STRATEGY 2020 UPDATE

Date Issued: March 5, 2021

SEPA Lead Agency: Port of Seattle

Agency File Number: 2021-02

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Previous SEPA Decisions for the *Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy*: The Port of Seattle issued a *Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy* non-project proposal SEPA Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) on December 17, 2007 following the provisions of the Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) under Chapter 43.21C, Revised Code of Washington (RCW), Chapter 197-11, Washington Administrative Code (WAC), and the then-applicable Resolution 3028, 3211, and 3539, Port of Seattle SEPA Policies & Procedures. An addendum to the Port of Seattle DNS was issued in 2013 for the *Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy Update*. The original DNS and addendum are available upon request (POS SEPA File No. 07-11 and 13-07).

Name of New Proposal: *Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy (Strategy) 2020 Update (2020 Strategy Update)*

Background: The *2020 Strategy Update* is a collaborative effort between the Port of Seattle, Port of Tacoma, the Northwest Seaport Alliance, and the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority in British Columbia (the Ports) to reduce seaport-related impacts to air quality and emissions contributing to climate change within the shared Georgia Basin-Puget Sound airshed. The Ports worked together with regulatory agencies responsible for protecting air quality within the airshed, including Environment Canada, the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) to formulate strategies to meet or exceed regulatory air quality objectives.

Description of Proposal: The purpose of the *Strategy*, including the *2013 Strategy Update* and the *2020 Strategy Update*, is to reduce diesel particulate matter and greenhouse gas emissions in the region by achieving early reductions in advance of, beyond, and/or complementary to applicable regulations. The original *Strategy* identified three primary objectives:

- Reduce maritime and port-related air quality impacts from diesel particulate matter;
- Reduce contributions to climate change; and
- Help the Georgia Basin-Puget Sound airshed meet air quality objectives.

The *2020 Strategy Update* sets a new vision and objectives that build on the targets achieved in previous strategies and seek to go further to phase out air and greenhouse gas emissions and transition to zero emission technology across maritime sectors. The vision is:

- Phase out emissions from seaport-related activities by 2050, supporting cleaner air for our local communities and fulfilling our shared responsibility to help limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C.

Similar to previous versions of the *Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy*, the *2020 Strategy Update* is structured around six sectors of port activity – oceangoing vessels, cargo-handling equipment, trucks, harbor vessels, rail, and port administration and tenant facilities. The *Strategy* sets sector-specific joint objectives to transition to zero-emission operations by 2050. While specific to each sector, the objectives follow three themes:

- Continually improve efficiency and reduce emissions
- Install sufficient infrastructure to support zero-emissions equipment by 2030
- Demonstrate and adopt zero-emission equipment by 2050

The *2020 Strategy Update* outlines a set of shared actions that the Ports commit to implementing to advance the vision and objectives, and each of the Ports will also develop a port-specific implementation plan. Progress toward Port-specific implementation actions and shared actions across the Ports will be tracked annually. Every five years, the Ports will update their air emissions inventories and analyze progress toward Port-specific greenhouse gas reduction targets and the *Strategy* vision. Copies of the *Strategy*, including the *2013 Strategy Update* and *2020 Strategy Update*, are available online at <https://www.portseattle.org/page/northwest-ports-clean-air-strategy>.

Location of Proposal: The geographic area covered by the *2020 Strategy Update* includes shoreline, marine, and upland areas within the Georgia Basin-Puget Sound Air-shed. In general, the marine areas include the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the greater Puget Sound area, the Strait of Georgia, Haro Strait, Boundary Pass, Rosario Strait, and other relevant regional waterways. The uplands include rail yards, railways, and freight corridors within the Georgia Basin-Puget Sound Airshed that are used for the transportation of port-related cargo.

Determination: The Port has determined the proposed *2020 Strategy Update* will not have probable significant adverse impacts on the environment. As such, an environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under the provisions of the Washington State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21, WAC 197-11) and Port of Seattle SEPA Policies and Procedures (Port Commission Resolution 3650). This decision was made after review of a completed Environmental Checklist and the *2020 Strategy Update*, which is available online at <https://www.portseattle.org/environment/sepa-nepa>.

This determination is based on the following findings and conclusions:

- As a program action, adoption of the *2020 Strategy Update* would not directly result in adverse effect on environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated for governmental protection.
- The *2020 Strategy Update* is intended to result in cleaner air in the region, including environmentally sensitive areas and areas designated for governmental protection.
- More specific information on approvals or permits for projects anticipated under the *2020 Strategy Update* will become available during project-level design, environmental review, and permitting. For projects triggering additional SEPA, the site-specific environmental impacts will be evaluated in future SEPA checklists for those specific projects.

Supporting Information: Information used to reach this determination is available upon request. The 2021 Determination of Non-significance (POS SEPA File No. 21-02), Environmental Checklist, and the *2020 Strategy Update* are available online at <https://www.portseattle.org/environment/sepa-nepa>. The *Strategy*, including the *2013 Strategy Update* and *2020 Strategy Update*, are available online at <https://www.portseattle.org/page/northwest-ports-clean-air-strategy>.

Public and Agency Comment: The DNS and Environmental Checklist for this project circulated on February 12, 2021 and the comment period ended on February 26, 2021. No comments, written, online, or via voice communication were received by the Port during the comment period. The Port has concluded that no significant negative environmental effects will result due to the proposed *2020 Strategy Update*. The Port's Final DNS is being issued, as of March 5, based on the final determination of no significant environmental impacts.

Appeals: The Port's decision on the proposal described above and the Port's issuance of a Final DNS on this proposal constitute the Port's Final SEPA decision. This SEPA DNS determination may be appealed by filing a writ of review in King County Superior Court within twenty-one (21) days of the date below pursuant to Port of Seattle Resolution No. 3650 and RCW 43.21C.080.

SEPA Responsible Official: Sandra Kilroy, Director Maritime Environment and Sustainability

Signature:  _____ Date: 3/5/2021

Sandra Kilroy (Mar 1, 2021 09:59 PST)