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 ENVIRONMENTAL
 QUALITY COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION CHECKLIST

DS-252

PROPOSED ACTION EASEMENT FOR RIVERBANK STABILIZATION

COUNTY GALLATIN TOWNSHIP IN RANGE 4E SECTION 19

*(Yes) (No) (NA)

- 1. Significant use of area by important wildlife and fish species.
- 2. Important vegetation communities present which may influence or be influenced by proposed project.
- 3. Significant historical, archaeological, or paleontological resource present.
- 4. Significant topographic features, terrain or aesthetic values are present.
- 5. Reconstruction of existing roads or trails or new road are proposed.
- 6. Important surface or groundwater resources present.
- 7. Fragile, compactible, or unstable soils present.
- 8. Buildings, structures, pipelines, powerlines or other utilities located nearby.
- 9. Land has been included as a part of a baseline study or other type of report, for any purpose. (e.g Natural Area Program, Resource Development Bureau projects, rights-of-way, easements, or other leasing actions)
- 10. Previously permitted or leased activities on this tract resulted in special protective stipulations.
- 11. Present tract management is influenced significantly by adjacent state, federal or private land management practices.
- 12. Tract is near designated Class I air area, or non-attainment area.
- 13. Tract contains areas with unique or special reclamation considerations (past mining, erosion, saline seep, etc.)
- 14. Public Interest.

* Explain all "yes" answers in narrative form and attach to checklist.

✓
----- 15. Additional Comments: (If so, explain in attached narrative)

Prepared by:

Jim Kaltowski

Title

Unit Manager

Based on my review of the above action I have included that a EA is is not required
(circle appropriate response.)

because:

Analysis was completed by other Agencies.

Area Manager/Bureau Chief

Ray Stille

Date

2/4/92

Route copies to: File (016.3)

Comments to be Attached to Environmental Action Checklist for:
Sec. 19, T1N - R4E, Gallatin County
Montana Dept. of Transportation
January 23, 1992

The Montana Department of Transportation is applying for a Right-of-Way Easement for a portion of the West Gallatin riverbed for the purpose of constructing a bank stabilization project. An EA Checklist was done July 25, 1990, in response to a Corps of Engineers request for a similar project. This checklist will essentially be the same.

Item 1 - The West Gallatin River is a very important fishery. As such it is important to the economy of the Gallatin Valley.

Item 4 - The project will be visible from Interstate 90. The project area itself is used frequently for fishermen.

Item 6 - The West Gallatin River is important not only as a fishery but as a source of irrigation water. There is a ditch known as the Lower Creamery Ditch running parallel to the river in the project area. The river is within 50' of the ditch and could easily take out the ditch in one bad flood year.

Item 7 - The soils in the area consist of a layer of silty loam, varying in thickness from 1' to 2', overlaying gravel. This type of soil is easily eroded by water action. The main channel has shifted numerous times. Currently this is a side channel but something as simple as the falling of a tree could divert more water to this channel. Because the valley floor is tilting, there is an eastward migration of the river. Because of this the river will most likely continue shifting necessitating the need for further rip-rap projects. The effect of this structure on downstream areas should be carefully considered.

Item 8 - There is a gas line running under the river. A mobile home is situated on the west bank. Bridges on the Interstate, the railroad and the old highway could be impacted as well as the community of Central Park which is just across the highway. One year of extensive high water could impact the interstate.

Item 9 - There have been several studies done on the West Gallatin River.

Item 13 - There is an existing bank stabilization project in place from the Interstate bridge upstream. The river has cut new channels and is severely washing the bank from the end of the rip-rap several hundred feet upstream. Currently the washed out area ranges up to 10' tall and is undercut in places from 6" to 1 1/2'. This presents a safety hazard to anyone walking on the bank or at water's edge.

Item 14 - The public will most likely be interested in this project. Fishermen may view it as impacting the fishing during the construction phase. The local residents will view it as a necessary thing to halt the erosion of the highway and the ditch.

Although the project is necessary to save the Interstate Highway, the natural eastward migration of the river cannot be stopped and eventually a more extensive river control project will have to be considered. A scenario to consider is that this side channel will become the main channel. The westward flow of water will have to make a 90 degree bend to go under the bridges. Currently this flow is buffered by the main channel. Without this buffer the main channel will begin undermining the west footings of the bridge.