CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Bank Stabilization – Phosphate
Proposed Implementation Date:	Summer of 2004 The in-stream work window will be established with concurrence from USFWS.
Proponent:	Montana Department of Transportation
Location:	Phosphate Intersection I-90; milepost 171
County:	Powell

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The purpose of the project is to repair eroded riverbank and provide protection from erosion for the interstate right-of-way. This would be accomplished using a combination of riprap and bioengineering along with four in-stream rock weirs used to deflect flow away from the bank and back into the main channel of the Clark Fork.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:

Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

Tom Hughes, Hydrologist/Water Rights Specialist.
Renee Hanna, SWLO Hydrologist

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

SPA 124 Permit – Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Section 404 Permit, Section 10 Permit – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
318 Authorization – Montana Department of Environmental Quality

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Action/No Action

III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:

Consider the presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils. Identify unusual geologic features. Specify any special reclamation considerations. Identify any cumulative impacts to soils.

The immediate and cumulative impacts upon the project area have been addressed through the permitting processes cited in Item #2 of this checklist and through an Environmental Assessment prepared by the Montana MDT. The proponent of this action will be required to comply with all requirements and mitigation measures contained in all of the permits issued for this project.

5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:
Identify important surface or groundwater resources. Consider the potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality. Identify cumulative effects to water resources.

Much of this work will occur within and adjacent to the Clark Fork River. The immediate and cumulative impacts upon the project area have been addressed through the permitting processes cited in Item #2 of this checklist and through an Environmental Assessment prepared by the Montana MDT. The proponent of this action will be required to comply with all of the requirements and mitigation measures contained in all of the permits issued for this project

6. AIR QUALITY:
What pollutants or particulate would be produced? Identify air quality regulations or zones (e.g. Class I air shed) the project would influence. Identify cumulative effects to air quality.

None

7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:
What changes would the action cause to vegetative communities? Consider rare plants or cover types that would be affected. Identify cumulative effects to vegetation.

Due to the chronic erosion problem along bank, established vegetation is scarce. A few willow and poplars exist in clumps, but the majority of the bank in the project location is sparsely covered with grasses and noxious weeds (to include knapweed, hounds tongue, and tansy). The project was designed to avoid impacting the remaining shrub stands. Reclamation will consist of new vegetation planting, seeding and fabric encapsulated soil coirs above the Q2 (average 2 year flood level) elevation.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:
Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

Much of this work will occur within and adjacent to the Clark Fork River. The immediate and cumulative impacts upon the project area have been addressed through the permitting processes cited in Item #2 of this checklist and through an Environmental Assessment prepared by the Montana MDT. The proponent of this action will be required to comply with all of the requirements and mitigation measures contained in all of the permits issued for this project.

9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:
Consider any federally listed threatened or endangered species or habitat identified in the project area. Determine effects to wetlands. Consider Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Identify cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

Bull Trout are found in the Clark Fork River. The in-stream work window has been established between July 1,2004 and August 30, 2004 (per the 124 permit) as the most appropriate time to work in the Clark Fork in order to minimize impacts to bull trout and other fisheries.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:
Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

None identified by Patrick Rennie DNRC Archaeologist.

11. AESTHETICS:

Determine if the project is located on a prominent topographic feature, or may be visible from populated or scenic areas. What level of noise, light or visual change would be produced? Identify cumulative effects to aesthetics.

The proposed in-stream structures are required to be below the water line during all flows. The impact of theses structures in the river would be little to none.

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:

Determine the amount of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify cumulative effects to environmental resources.

None

13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA:

List other studies, plans or projects on this tract. Determine cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of current private, state or federal actions in the analysis area, and from future proposed state actions in the analysis area that are under MEPA review (scoped) or permitting review by any state agency.

DNRC is not aware of any project proposed within this analysis area.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

Adding weirs to the river could potentially impact river floaters. One of the conditions of the permit in item #2 is the in-stream weirs must be submerged under all flow conditions. This condition should reduce the risks hazard for floaters.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

Installation of these structures within the Clark Fork River should lessen the erosion threat to I-90. I-90 is major highway across Montana and the Northern US.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:

Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to the employment market.

This project should create a week or two of employment for 1-2 people.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:

Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

None.

18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:
Estimate increases in traffic and changes to traffic patterns. What changes would be needed to fire protection, police, schools, etc.? Identify cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services

None

19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:
List State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, and other zoning or management plans, and identify how they would affect this project.

Please see item #2 for the agencies involved in the permitting process for this project.

20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:
Identify any wilderness or recreational areas nearby or access routes through this tract. Determine the effects of the project on recreational potential within the tract. Identify cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

The Clark Fork River provides recreational opportunities to fishermen and river floaters. The upper section of the river, in which this project is located, has less river users then the sections closer to and below Missoula. This project would likely have little impact on the amount or distribution of river users due to the conditions.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:
Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify cumulative effects to population and housing.

None

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:
Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

None

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:
How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

None

24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:
Estimate the return to the trust. Include appropriate economic analysis. Identify potential future uses for the analysis area other than existing management. Identify cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.

None

EA Checklist Prepared By:	**Name:**	Will Wood	**Date:**	11/21/03
	Title:	Right of Way Specialist		

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

I select for the proposed (Action) alternative with the provision that MDT secure and comply with all provisions of permits listed in item 2 above.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

The proposal will not create significant adverse effects to navigability of the river. Floating use in this area is low. The engineering design should not result in obvious hazards to floaters.
The proposal is intended to reduce active bank erosion. The project is designed to enhance re-vegetation of the riparian area.
The proposal will not impair the long-term capability of the land.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

[ ]	EIS	[ ]	More Detailed EA	[X]	No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	**Name:**	Robert H Storer
	Title:	Trust Lands Program Manager
Signature:		**Date:** November 23, 2003