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CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

MAR 08 2006

Project Name:	Freezeout Salvage	LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY OFFICE <i>Wildlife Management Division</i>
Proposed Implementation Date:	January 1, 2006	
Proponent:	Missoula Unit – MT DNRC	
Location:	Section 34 and 36, T15N R24W	
County:	Mineral	

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Salvage harvest approximately 3000 tons of fire killed, beetle infested and green timber from approximately 70 acres. The purpose of the harvest is to generate revenue for the trust, recover the value of dead and dying trees and improve the overall health of the stand by reducing competition.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

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

DNRC Wildlife biologist Mike McGrath, DNRC Soil Scientist Jeff Collins, DNRC Hydrologist Gary Frank, DNRC Archeologist Patrick Rennie, and Mr. Chuck Mead (President of the Mineral County Historical Society) were contacted to review possible wildlife, hydrologic, soil and historical resource issues. The Montana Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks was solicited for comments regarding fish, wildlife and recreational issues. Additional other individuals and interested parties were notified by request and a public notice was posted in *The Mineral Independent*.

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

An SPA 124 Permit application was submitted to the Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks for proposed work on the Dry Gulch temporary crossing.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A: No Harvest (no action)

Salvageable fire killed, insect killed and green timber would not be harvested. No revenue would be generated for the MSU 2nd Grant (A.C.B.) or Common Schools Trust (C.S.). However, ongoing DNRC permitted and approved activities would continue in the project area.

Alternative B: Harvest (action)

The proposed harvest would yield approximately 3000 tons of fire killed, beetle infested and green timber from approximately 70 acres with ground based equipment. Slash would be processed in the woods to retain nutrients on the site. Approximately .52 miles of existing substandard roads would be reconstructed or improved in conjunction with this project.

This alternative would provide approximately \$60,000 (estimated at \$20/ton) in revenue to the MSU 2nd Grant Trust (A.C.B.) and approximately \$1400 (estimated at \$20/ton) in revenue to the Common Schools Trust (C.S.).

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 Freezeout Salvage project area is located on complex terrain of moderate slopes and benches above the Clark Fork River. Slopes are stable. A unique feature is the narrow cliffside breaklands above the Clark Fork River, where no activity is planned. Soils located in the project area are a combination of Krause Gravelly Loams, on 8-15% slopes and Nemotte/Sharrott Rock complex on 20-45% slopes. Krause soils are formed in alluvium and gravel deposits and slightly more productive than Nemotte soils that are formed in weathered bedrock. These soils are very gravelly, excessively drained and are droughty, supporting Ponderosa Pine and Douglas-fir. Erosion risk on these soils is low but increases to moderate as slope increases and where surface duff is consumed by fire. The burn severity is a mosaic of moderate to severe. These are resilient soils, well suited to tractor operations on slopes up to 45%. Primary soil concern is minimizing displacement of shallow surface soils to retain soil moisture and nutrients. Existing road access has been recently maintained. A temporary crossing will be installed and reclaimed following use.

Harvest mitigation includes; limiting season of operation to dry, frozen or snow covered conditions, general skid trail planning, and installing drainage where needed and approved by the Forest Officer. Large woody debris would be retained on the site and trampled for nutrient cycling, to trap sediment and encourage reforestation.

The Moose Creek unit is a moderately sloping (20-35%) gravelly bench in a narrow dry draw bounded by steep rocky slopes. There is an old skid trail adjacent to the draw bottom that is rocky, stable and doesn't show signs of erosion. Locate main skid trail and leave slash well distributed as feasible.

If recommended mitigation measures and BMP's are implemented, the risk of direct, indirect and cumulative impacts to soils is expected to be minimal.

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.

The Freezeout Fire Salvage project is located on moderate slopes and benches situated above a segment of the Clark Fork River commonly referred to as the Alberton Gorge. The project area contains two drainage features that are tributary to the Clark Fork River.

Dry Gulch is a small intermittent tributary to the Clark Fork River with seasonal direct delivery to the Clark Fork during peak snowmelt or other high flow events. The stream segment is a Class II Stream under the Montana Streamside Management Zone law. The channel is scoured and well defined. The middle reaches of the stream channel are perennial during wet periods or years (as exhibited during field review during Fall 2005). Freezeout Gulch is an intermittent and ephemeral drainage with no direct delivery to the Clark Fork River.

This segment of the Clark Fork River basin, including the Dry Gulch, is classified B-1 in the Montana Water Quality Standards. The B-1 Classification is for multiple use waters suitable for domestic use after conventional treatment, growth and propagation of cold water fisheries, associated aquatic life, wildlife, agricultural and industrial uses. Among other criteria for B-1 waters, no increases are allowed above naturally occurring concentrations of sediment, which will harm or prove detrimental to other beneficial uses. Downstream beneficial uses in the Clark Fork River include cold-water fisheries, irrigation and livestock watering.

Naturally occurring includes conditions or materials present from runoff on developed land where all reasonable land, soil and water conservation practices have been applied. Reasonable practices include methods, measure or practices that protect present and reasonably anticipated beneficial uses. The State of Montana has adopted Forestry Best Management Practices (BMP'S) through its Non-point Source Management Plan as the principle means of controlling non-point source pollution from silvicultural activities.

This segment of the Clark Fork River has been identified as an impaired water body in the 303(d) list that appears in the 2004 Montana 305(b) Report. The 303(d) list was compiled by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality as required by Section 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act and the EPA Water Quality Planning and Management Regulations (40 CFR, Part 130). Under these laws, the State was required to identify water bodies that do not fully meet water quality standards or beneficial uses are threatened.

This segment of the Clark Fork is classified as impaired because the aquatic life support and cold-water fisheries beneficial uses are only partially supported; and the drinking water supply beneficial use is not supported. Probable causes of impairment have been identified as copper, lead, metals and nutrients. Probable sources of impairment include municipal point sources, resource extraction and mill tailings. Timber harvest and forest roads have not been identified as sources.

Effects of the Proposed Actions

The proposed salvage harvest units are located outside of the SMZ/RMZ for the Clark Fork River and Dry Gulch. Harvest units are located with adequate buffers and potential sediment delivery is not expected to occur as a result of salvage harvest operations. Several broad bench-like topographic features provide adequate buffering for sediment delivery to the Clark Fork River. SMZ/RMZ boundaries are in place with no harvest planned. Therefore, no impacts to water quality or downstream beneficial uses including cold-water fisheries are anticipated to result from the proposed harvest and skidding activities.

A temporary culvert or armored drive-through ford crossing of Dry Gulch will be utilized to access and haul logs from 26 acres of salvage harvest contained in Unit #2. Installation of a temporary culvert or use of an armored drive-through ford stream crossing may result in minor and short-term increases in sediment delivery to Dry Gulch. Minor increases in sediment delivery would likely occur during culvert installation and removal, or during actual use of a drive-through ford for access and hauling. Application of BMP's and site-specific designs and mitigation measures are expected to reduce potential for erosion, sediment delivery and subsequent impact to water quality to an acceptable level as defined in the water quality standards. Acceptable levels are defined under the Montana Water Quality Standards as those conditions occurring where all reasonable land, soil and water conservation practices have been applied. The level of risk and amount of actual sediment delivery is not expected to be substantive enough to appreciably impact water quality or to adversely effect downstream beneficial uses including cold-water fisheries.

There is no evidence of existing adverse cumulative watershed effects (CWE's) due to forest harvest in either the Dry Gulch or Freeze-out Gulch watersheds. However, potential adverse effects are anticipated in both watersheds in the near future (following peak snowmelt or other significant runoff events) due to the effects of the recent wildfires. Anticipated CWE due to the effects of wildfires include increase surface runoff, increased surface erosion, increased risk of mass erosion and subsequent increases in sediment delivery to the Clark Fork River. The proposed harvest of fire killed and dying trees, use of existing roads, and installation of temporary culvert or improved ford crossing are not expected to increase the risk or level of CWE associated with the wildfires.

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.

Minimal effects. Slash will be processed in the woods. Slash burning is not anticipated.

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.

A search of the Montana Natural Heritage database indicated the possible presence of Clustered Ladyslipper within the general area. This species is associated with the Douglas-fir/Ninebark habitat type. No specific plant populations are known to occur within the harvest area. Treatment is confined to burned areas with an objective to minimize soil disturbance. No other rare plants or cover types were identified on the site. Regeneration of Ponderosa Pine, as an objective of the treatment, may be encouraged through opening of the canopy, planting and retention of healthy dominant and codominant Ponderosa pine in the overstory.

Noxious weed control measures including washing equipment and herbicide application to landings and roadways are planned to be included in the timber sale contract.

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.

Fish - Cold-water fisheries supported in this segment of the Clark Fork River include native populations of bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) and westslope cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki lewisi*). Bull trout are federally listed as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act and The State of Montana Natural Heritage Program considers westslope cutthroat trout a "Class A Species of Special Concern." SMZ/RMZ boundaries are in place with no harvest planned. No impacts to water quality or downstream beneficial uses including cold-water fisheries are anticipated to result from the proposed harvest and skidding activities.

Big Game -The project area contains winter range habitat for white-tail deer and elk, which are naturally funneled onto the Freezeout parcel by the confluence of Freezeout and Dry Gulches. The fire reduced snow-intercept cover for the project area through the mosaic of low to moderate-intensity burns that covered the project area. As a result, many of the remaining live trees would likely serve as the only snow-intercept cover, north of the Clark Fork River, for big game for at least 3 miles in each direction. In subsequent years, through natural processes, the project area will likely provide ample forage through regenerating grasses, forbs, and shrubs, along with the adjacent regenerating Plum Creek ownership. The proposed action, through its proposal to harvest live and burned ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir, would further reduce snow-intercept cover during the winter. While white-tail deer are currently plentiful in the area, of elk, mule deer and white-tail deer, they are the most vulnerable to winter mortality. Also affected by the 2005 burn were the Five Valley's Land Trust (section 35 T15N R25W) and DNRC's Tarkio (section 36 T15N R25W) parcel. Five Valley's Land Trust will likely harvest approximately 170 acres in a manner similar to the DNRC action on the Tarkio parcel. DNRC has begun salvaging timber on 38 acres of the Tarkio parcel, in a mosaic of moderate- to high-severity burns. The Tarkio harvest would likely further reduce hiding cover for the aforementioned species. Given the lack of snow-intercept cover north of the Clark Fork River, and the three proposals for harvest in the area, there may be moderate risk of direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to local herds of white-tail deer and possibly elk.

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.

Bald Eagle - The nearest bald eagle nest is located approximately 0.14 miles east of the project area (section 6, T14N, R23W). Due to the distance, a portion of the proposed action (Moose Creek Permit) would be located within the territory's home range (Montana Bald Eagle Working Group 1994), and would be subject to home range-level mitigations (ARM 36.11.429 (1)(e)(i), (ii), and (iii)). The proposed action would implement the following mitigations:

1. Proposed harvest units and haul route would not be located near lakes, wetlands, or meadows.
2. As per ARM 36.11.411, an average of at least 1 snag and 1 snag recruit (dbh \geq 21 inches) per acre would be retained within the proposed harvest units, and would provide for large snags, potential perch trees, and emergent trees.
3. The proposed action at Moose Creek would be executed during the non-nesting season, and would be executed between August 16 and January 30 (Montana Bald Eagle Management Plan 1994).

Pending implementation of the mitigation recommended above, there would likely be low risk of direct, indirect, or cumulative effects to bald eagles as a result of the proposed action.

Grizzly Bear - Grizzly bears have been known to frequent the nearby Ninemile Valley in recent years (J. Jonkel, MT FWP, personal communication, 2003). The project area is located approximately 6 miles from the Ninemile Valley, and currently has approximately 1.2 miles of open road running through the Moose Creek parcel. The proposed harvest would reduce hiding cover within the project area. However, much of this reduction would be located behind locked gates. As a result, there would likely be low risk of direct, indirect, or cumulative effects to grizzly bears as a result of the proposed action.

Gray Wolf - Wolves are known to occupy the north end of the Ninemile Valley, and are considered part of the endangered population. The proposed action is located approximately 14 miles south of the pack, which is well within the weekly movement capabilities of wolves. With the project area's approximate 1.2 miles of open road, and the project area being on the edge of a wildlife linkage zone, there is potential for an occasional wolf to move through the project area. The proposed harvest would reduce hiding cover within the project area. However, much of this reduction would be located behind locked gates. As a result, there would likely be low risk of direct and indirect effects, and minimal to low risk of cumulative effects to wolves as a result of the proposed action.

Lynx - Prior to the 2005 fire, there was no lynx habitat present on the project area. Based on the habitat types present in the parcel, Douglas-fir/ninebark and Douglas-fir/snowberry, lynx would not likely have suitable habitat within the parcel. For these reasons, it is likely that there would be low risk of direct, indirect, or cumulative effects to lynx as a result of the proposed action.

Peregrine Falcon - The nearest known peregrine falcon eyrie is located approximately 10 miles east of the project area. Due to the distance involved, and lack of suitable nesting habitat within or adjacent to the project area, there would be minimal risk of direct, indirect, or cumulative effects as a result of the proposed action.

Pileated Woodpecker – Within the project area, there are approximately 550 acres of timber where the average stand dbh is ≥ 15 inches (DNRC Stand Level Inventory). Thus, prior to the fire, much of the project area, including the proposed harvest area, contained potential habitat for pileated woodpeckers. The 2005 fire burned approximately 475 acres of the project area, largely in a mosaic of low and moderate intensity burn (144 acres low intensity, 314 acres moderate intensity, 17 acres high intensity). Given the mosaic of low to moderate fire intensity within the project area, many pileated woodpecker habitat characteristics were retained post-fire, particularly on the Freezeout parcel. Additionally, the 2005 fire would likely improve habitat for pileated woodpeckers because the fire may have killed trees of sufficient diameter for nesting or roosting, and the likely subsequent infestation by Douglas-fir and pine beetles would likely target trees that could become potential nest or roost trees. The proposed action would harvest fire-killed and live intermediate and codominate Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine on approximately 70 acres, largely on the Freezeout parcel and secondarily on the Moose Creek parcel. Harvesting of live trees would further reduce canopy closure, an important habitat characteristic for pileated woodpeckers, within the project area. Under the ARM 36.11.411, an average of at least 1 snag and 1 snag recruit whose dbh ≥ 21 inches (if not available, then the largest size class) would be retained per acre, under the fire salvage and likely future insect salvage. Because the proposed action would further reduce the site's canopy cover, it is likely that the proposed action would further reduce the habitat suitability of the project area for pileated woodpeckers. As a result there would likely be low to moderate risk of direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to pileated woodpeckers as a result of the proposed action.

Black-backed woodpecker - Black-backed woodpecker – The project area is located approximately 2.5 miles northeast of the 2003 Fish Creek Fire, which burned approximately 41,000 acres. Within the Fish Creek burn, approximately 11,557 acres burned at stand replacement severity. However, the majority of those acres were salvage harvested by both Plum Creek Timber Company and DNRC (see Fish Creek Salvage EA). Within the 2005 Tarkio Fire, approximately 12,816 acres burned, with approximately 3,292 acres burning at stand-replacement intensity. On DNRC parcels affected by the Tarkio Fire, approximately 1,043 acres burned, with approximately 89 acres at stand-replacement intensity. On the project area, approximately 475 acres burned, with approximately 17 acres at stand-replacement intensity. Based upon field reconnaissance (M. McGrath, SWLO Wildlife Biologist, 13 October 2005), there are approximately 17 acres of black-backed woodpecker habitat within the Moose Creek parcel, broken into essentially 5 patches, each < 8 acres in area. The proposed action would salvage timber from five units totaling approximately 70 acres, and would retain an average of at least 1 snag and 1 snag recruit whose dbh ≥ 21 inches (if not available, then the largest size class) per acre, post-harvest (as mandated by ARM 36.11.411). Research by Woolf (2003) found black-backed woodpeckers to avoid salvage-logged stands. Thus, the proposed harvest units would likely have reduced value for this species post-harvest. The proposed action, in conjunction with the proposed Tarkio Salvage permit would meet the burned acreage retention guidelines for this species (i.e., approximately 10% of the burned acreage in an unharvested condition; ARM 36.11.438 (1)(b)) through inclusion of all 4 burned DNRC parcels as part of the project area for each project. Due to the project area's proximity to the 2003 Fish Creek Fire (i.e., potential source of black-backed woodpeckers), the location of the proposed harvest units, and potential for further disturbance during future nesting seasons, there would likely be low to moderate risk of direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to black-backed woodpeckers as a result of the proposed action.

Flammulated Owl - Flammulated owls typically prefer multi-storied stands, with large diameter (dbh > 21 inches) nest trees, and a mixture of poles, seedlings and saplings. The fire resulted in a mosaic of low and moderate intensity burn within the project area, retaining live overstory that is patchily distributed in the project area. As a result, there are currently many snags from which flammulated owls may nest, once the forest recovers sufficiently to provide the additional live forest structure that this species is associated with. The proposed action would reduce snag density within approximately 70 acres of the project area, while retaining an average of at least 1 snag and 1 snag recruit of the largest size class available per acre. As a result, there would likely be low risk of direct and indirect impacts to flammulated owls as a result of the proposed action, with low risk of cumulative effects

Fisher- The fire removed many of the desirable forest habitat conditions associated with fishers. As a result, what had been marginal fisher habitat (dry ponderosa pine sites) before the fire, is now gone. The proposed harvest would further reduce stem density on approximately 70 acres. As a result, recruitment of future large downed wood would be reduced. However, fisher would probably not utilize the project area until desirable forest conditions had been restored through natural processes (approximately 60 – 80 years). Due to the dry forest types and time needed for suitable fisher habitat to be restored through natural processes, there would likely be minimal risk of direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to fishers as a result of the proposed action.

Townsend's Big-eared Bat – This species requires caves, caverns, or old mines for hibernacula. These features are not known to occur within at least a 1-mile radius of the project area. Because the proposed action would not be located near potential roosting habitat, there would be low risk of direct, indirect, or cumulative effects to this species.

Coeur d'Alene Salamander - This species requires waterfall spray zones, talus, or cascading streams. There are no known areas of talus, waterfalls, or splash zones within the affected area. Thus, the proposed action would have low risk of direct, indirect, or cumulative effects to this species.

Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse - The nearest known population of Columbian Sharp-tailed grouse occurs near Ovando, MT. Thus, the proposed action would have low risk of direct, indirect, or cumulative effects to this species.

Common Loon - The common loon is a fish-eating bird that breeds and nests on lakes and ponds. Such features do not occur on or near the project area, or proposed haul route. Thus, low risk of direct, indirect, or cumulative effects would be expected to common loons as a result of the proposed.

Harlequin Duck - Harlequin ducks require white-water streams with boulder and cobble substrates for nesting and breeding. Harlequins usually nest under bushes along rocky shores that are adjacent to the rapids of mountain streams. The proposed action would likely have minimal risk of direct, indirect, or cumulative effects to Harlequin Ducks due to the lack of suitable habitat within the project area.

Northern Bog Lemming - The sphagnum meadows, bogs or fens with thick moss mats required by this species are not present within the harvest area. Thus, the proposed action would have minimal risk of direct, indirect, or cumulative effects to this species.

Mountain Plover - The short-grass prairie habitats required by this species are not present within the harvest area. Thus, the proposed action would have minimal risk of direct, indirect, or cumulative effects to this species.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

DNRC Archeologist Patrick Rennie, adjacent landowner Chuck Mead and Wayne Lyngholm inspected the site to identify and facilitate protection of the Mullen Road, a historic travel route. Due to past disturbance of the road (road grading, logging), it was determined that equipment operation on the road would not permanently alter the value of the site, providing that the appearance restored after harvest is complete. Equipment operation on the road will be avoided where feasible.

Restoration efforts will include removal of existing water bars and grader berms; installation of shallow out-sloped rolling dips to prevent sediment delivery to Dry Gulch, and application of native grass seed mix. An armored ford across Dry Gulch will temporarily alter the historic crossing. The rock armor will be removed and the crossing appearance restored after harvest. Where necessary, surface restoration of the road to remove machinery ruts or disturbance may occur after harvest is complete. Permanent identification of the site will occur through the installation of metal identification posters and GPS mapping of the location.

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 project may be visible from I-90. Dead, dying and clumped timber will be removed and the more vigorous trees left on the site. Visually the stand would appear substantially more open. Approximately 5 acres will be harvested adjacent to the Clark Fork River near the Alberton Gorge. A no-cut visual buffer will be retained between the required SMZ boundary and the harvest unit. The activity period occurs in winter and late summer/fall when seasonal recreational use is minimal. There would be a low risk of cumulative effects resulting from harvest.

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.

Forest management on state and private forestland has been affected by wildfire, with salvage of burned timber planned for adjacent ownerships as well as state land. Harvest of approximately 195 MBF of burned PP under the Tarkio Salvage project will occur on state section 34, approximately 3.5 miles west of the Freezeout Salvage Sale. The Tarkio and Freezeout EA's address the cumulative impacts associated with these projects. Due to the prior impacts of the wildfire, there is low risk of cumulative effects due to other current or future private, state, or federal actions in the analysis area.

<p style="text-align: center;">IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION</p>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.</i>• <i>Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.</i>• <i>Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.</i> |
|--|

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

Trucks will enter the frontage road from the permit area. Logging operations signs will be posted to alert traffic traveling in both directions along the frontage road. There will be some increased risk to safety when trucks enter the frontage road. Some short term effects, low risk of cumulative effects.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

None

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.

The harvesting would supply work for about 5 people for about 2 months and supply approximately 3000 tons of timber to a mill.

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.

The county would realize some tax revenue in the form of income tax. Low risk of cumulative effects

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.

No Impacts

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 flows through this parcel. This stretch of the river is used by for fishing and rafting. Access to the river is not publicly available through this parcel. A steep rocky slope restricts access to the parcel from the river. There is low risk of effects.

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?

The historic Mullan Road travel route location is a feature on these parcels. Potential impacts and mitigation associated with harvest activity are addressed in Section 10 of this document.

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.

This alternative would provide approximately \$60,000 (estimated at \$20/ton) in revenue to the MSU 2nd Grant Trust (A.C.B) and \$1400 in revenue to Common Schools Trust (C.S.).

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Wayne Lyngholm	Date: 11/17/05
	Title: Missoula Unit Management Forester	

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Based on the environmental assessment presented within this document, I select the action alternative (Alternative B). This alternative best meets the objectives of the DNRC while maintaining environmental impacts at an acceptable level.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

Potential impacts associated with the Freezeout Salvage project, through mitigation actions, are determined not to be significant. The proposed harvest may temporarily alter the quality of big game winter range, particularly for white-tailed deer, by reducing snow interception. Moderate impacts to Big game winter range were deemed acceptable given the stability of big game populations in the area, temporary nature of the impacts and the limited area of the project. Efforts to minimize other potential impacts include a limited operating period on the Moose Creek Permit for Bald Eagle nesting, restoration of the Mullan Road, noxious weed control, reforestation efforts and inclusion of visual buffers along the Alberton Gorge recreation corridor. Mitigation for Black Backed woodpecker habitat includes retention of snags and snag recruits as well as retention of at least 10% of the project area in an un-harvested condition.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

EIS More Detailed EA No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Jeff Rupkalvis
	Title: Management Forester Supervisor
Signature:	Date: