



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

PART I. Purpose of and Need for Action

1. Project Title: Valley County Rifle & Pistol Club

2. Type of Proposed Action:

Build a new Rifle and pistol Range.

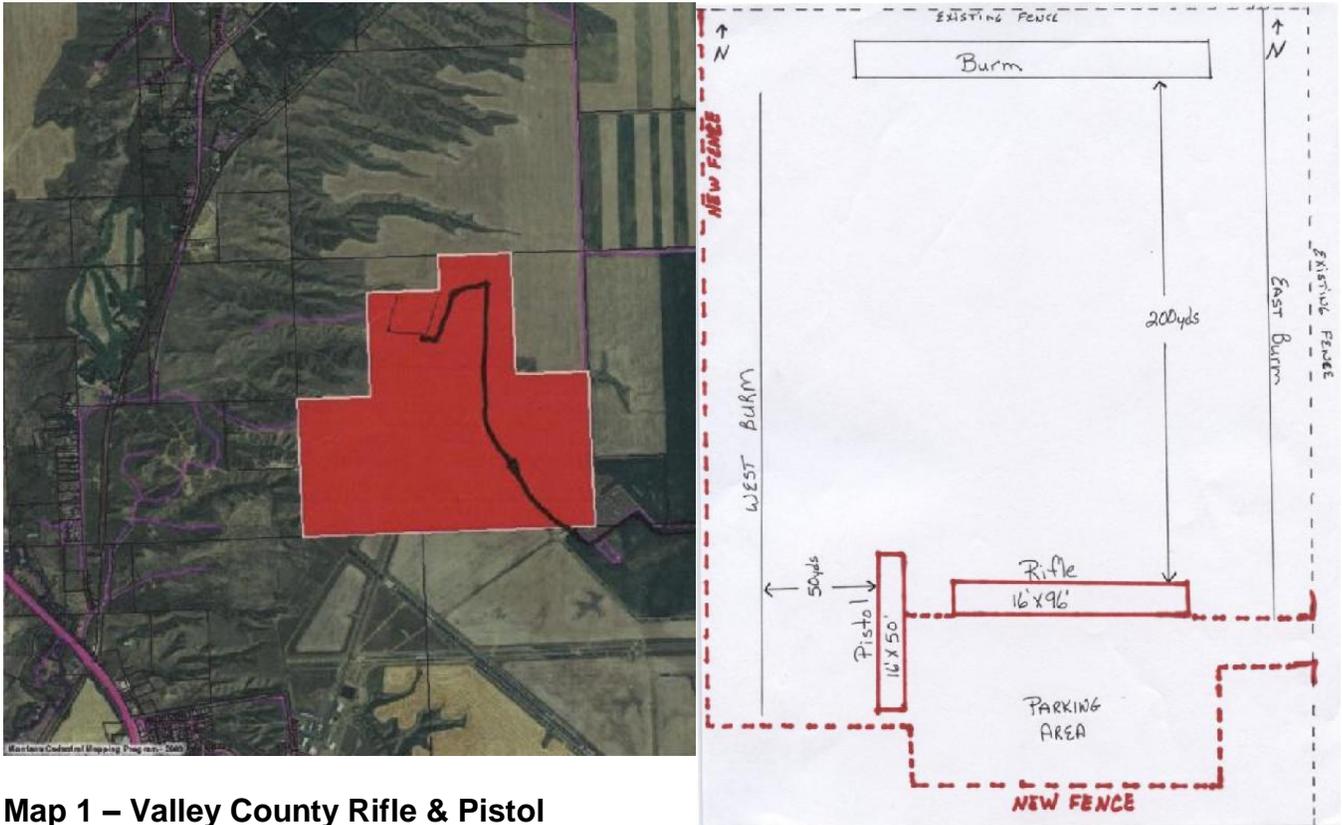
3. Location Affected by Proposed Action: The Valley County Rifle & Pistol Club leases the shooting range property from the Valley County Airport Commission. The club is located in Valley County, Montana forming a part of the Glasgow International Airport, and is described as T29N R39E Sect. 35, S2 NE NW.

4. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action: MCA87-1-276 through 87-1-279 (Legislative established policies and procedures for the establishment and improvement of shooting ranges) MCA87-2-105 (Departmental authority to expend funds to provide training in the safe handling and use of firearms and safe hunting practices). The 2007 Montana Legislature has authorized funding for the establishment of a Shooting Range Development Program providing financial assistance for the development of shooting ranges for public purposes. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks has responsibility for the administration of the program, including the necessary guidelines and procedures governing applications for funding assistance under the program.

5. Need for the Action(s): Valley County does not currently have a facility to provide a safe, controlled area to discharge rifles and pistols.

6. Objectives for the Action(s): To provide the community with a safe and readily accessible area for general shooting and to provide a safe environment for shooting classes

7. Maps and Supporting Figures:



Map 1 – Valley County Rifle & Pistol Club with 2 ½ mile access road from Highway 24 N.

Figure 1 – Layout of proposed range

8. Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected:

The proposed improvements will be safely spread within the leased properties, allowing for future expansion (Map 1 and Figure 1). Leased portion approved for the range is 250 yards X 250 yards.

9. Affected Environment (A brief description of the affected area of the proposed project):

The site for the range was formerly a military shooting range (old Glasgow AFB) that had been abandoned and the area has also been used for grazing. There are no surface waters or delineated wetlands within the lease area. Mostly dry land with prairie grasses.

10. Description of Project: Build a new shooting range to include: fencing, gates, safety and informational signs, and dirt work for berms and backstops. Additionally to construct two 3-sided shooting shelters, with 14 shooting benches. One shelter will be on the rifle range and the other on the pistol range. See Map 1 and Figure 1.

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Abbreviated Checklist – The degree and intensity determines extent of Environmental Review. An abbreviated checklist may be used for those projects that are not complex, controversial, or are not in environmental sensitive areas)

Table 1. Potential impact on physical environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources				X		
2. Terrestrial or aquatic life and/or habitats				X		#2
3. Introduction of new species into an area				X		
4. Vegetation cover, quantity & quality				X		
5. Water quality, quantity & distribution (surface or groundwater)				X		#5
6. Existing water right or reservation				X		
7. Geology & soil quality, stability & moisture				X		
8. Air quality or objectionable odors				X		
9. Historical & archaeological sites				X		
10. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy				X		
11. Aesthetics				X		

Comments (A description of potentially significant, or unknown, impacts and potential alternatives for mitigation must be provided.)

2. & 5. There are no surface waters nor delineated wetlands on the leased property.

Table 2. Potential impacts on human environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Social structures and cultural diversity				X		
2. Changes in existing public benefits provided by wildlife populations and/or habitat				X		
3. Local and state tax base and tax revenue				X		
4. Agricultural production				X		
5. Human health				X		#5
6. Quantity & distribution of community & personal income				X		
7. Access to & quality of recreational activities				X		#7
8. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals (ordinances)				X		
9. Distribution & density of population and housing				X		
10. Demands for government services				X		
11. Industrial and/or commercial activity				X		

Comments (A description of potentially significant, or unknown, impacts and potential alternatives for mitigation must be provided.)

5. Range site plans, construction and the ongoing operational and maintenance plans meet the standards of safety for the range participants and the public at large. The #1 priority of the new Valley Rifle & Pistol club is to fence the range, with two locked gates and to install safety and informational signs.

7. Range will provide year round controlled access and fulfils a need for a range to accommodate law enforcement training, hunter education, and public shooting. Range will be operated by the Valley Rifle & Pistol club for members and will additionally be open to the public on certain days and times.

Part III. Environmental Consequences

Does the proposed action involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely harmful if they were to occur? NO

Does the proposed action have impacts that are individually minor, but cumulatively significant or potentially significant? This proposed action has no impacts that are individually minor, but cumulatively significant or potentially significant. Cumulative impacts have been assessed considering any incremental impact of the proposed action when they are combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, and no significant impacts or substantially controversial issues were found. There are no extreme hazards created with this project and there are no conflicts with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan.

Identification of the Preferred Alternatives:

The proposed alternative A, alternative B and the no action alternative were considered.

- **Alternative A (Proposed Alternative)** is as described in paragraph 10 (Description of Project) to build a safe regulated rifle and pistol range.
- **Alternative B (No Action Alternative)** Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Shooting Sports Grant money would be denied and the area will remain without a safe regulated shooting range.

Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented: Two alternatives have been considered, **A** (Proposed Alternative) and **B** (No Action Alternative). There were no other alternatives that were deemed reasonably available, nor prudent.

Neither the proposed alternative (**A**) nor the no action alternative (**B**) would have any significant negative environmental or potentially negative consequences.

- There are beneficial consequences to Acceptance of the **Proposed Alternative (A)** increasing shooting sports opportunities in Valley County are to build a rifle and pistol range on the leased club properties.
- The **No Action Alternative (B)** would be to not build a regulated rifle & pistol range to provide safe shooting opportunities but to continue on with unregulated shooting activities in the surrounding area. Land use would remain the same. Present activities include uncontrolled target shooting without a regulated range. Therefore the proposed alternative is the prudent alternative.

Describe any Alternatives considered and eliminated from Detailed Study:

NONE

List and explain proposed mitigative measures (stipulations):

NONE

Individuals or groups contributing to, or commenting on, this EA:

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Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

PART IV NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

All of the pertinent or potential impacts of the project have been reviewed, discussed, and analyzed. None of the project reviewed were complex, controversial, or located in an environmentally sensitive area. The projects being proposed are on properties leased from The Airport Commission to the Valley County Rifle & Pistol club. The low impact activities proposed, and the increased recreational opportunity, all indicate that this should be considered the final version of the environmental assessment. There are no significant environmental or economic impacts associated with the proposed alternative (A). The Valley County Rifle & Pistol Club's proposed alternative, to provide a safe regulated shooting opportunity is supported by its members and the public. Therefore, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks should approve the proposed alternative (A) for the modernization and expansion proposals outlined in Para. 2 & 10.

EA prepared by: GENE R. HICKMAN

Ecological Assessments
Helena, MT 59602

Date Completed: July 13, 2009

PART IV. EA CONCLUSION SECTION

Recommendation and justification concerning preparation of EIS:

None required.

Describe public involvement, if any:

Announcement for EA comment will be published in the Glasgow Courier and on the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks website to allow an opportunity for public review. Additionally the EA will be available for review on the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks website.