

## CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

<b>Project Name:</b>	Grannis Fishing Access Site (Shields River)
<b>Proposed Implementation Date:</b>	January 2010
<b>Proponent:</b>	Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MTFWP)
<b>Location:</b>	Township 1S, Range 10E, Section 16
<b>County:</b>	Park
<b>Trust:</b>	Common Schools

### I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

This Easement would be for a fishing access site, consisting of a parking area, located on 1 acre of School Trust Land along the Shields River south of Grannis.

DNRC is tasked with the management of the Trust Lands for the economic benefit of the trust beneficiaries, including management of dispersed recreational use as part of the recreational use permits, but is not well suited to managing concentrated recreational use. MTFWP is better suited to managing the concentrated recreational use associated with this site.

The land of this parcel has been used for recreation and access to the Shields River for fishing and wading. Due to accommodating these recreational purposes and careless vehicle use, the land has been degraded. The proposed easement would allow MTFWP to relocate/construct a parking area and grant them management to continue recreational activities at the site.

### II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

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

FWP – Environmental Assessment

Montana Department of Transportation

Montana Natural Heritage Program website – Species of Concern

Patrick Rennie – DNRC Archaeologist

Brad Palmer – Lessee and adjacent landowner

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

Park County Weed District – Weed Inspection

Montana Department of Transportation – Easement from center line of Hwy 89 out 70 feet.

#### 3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

**Grant Easement:** Grant the easement for a fishing access site, consisting of a parking area, to MTFWP for management of recreational activities.

**No Action:** Do not grant the Easement for a fishing access site, consisting of a parking area, to MTFWP for management of recreational activities. Leaving the site as is, continuing to be degraded unmanaged use.

**Close the Site:** Do not grant the Easement and close the site that is currently being used for recreational activities due to the degradation caused by unmanaged use.

### 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.*

Granting the easement should cause no further damage to geology and soil quality, stability, and moisture. The public will continue to use the site, but it will be under management and maintenance of MTFWP. The construction of a new parking lot will have localized soil disruption; this disruption will be less than one acre in size and will be adjacent to Highway 89.

#### 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.*

Granting the easement should cause no damage to water quality, quantity and distribution. The public will continue to use the site, but it will be under management and maintenance of MTFWP.

#### 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.*

Granting the easement should not have a negative effect on vegetation cover, quantity and quality. The public will continue to use the site, but it will be under management and maintenance of MTFWP. Vegetation will be lost at the site of the new parking area; there should not be any negative effects to the overall vegetation of the section. A noxious weed management plan will be implemented.

#### 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.*

Montana Natural Heritage Program listed three species (Gray Wolf, Bald Eagle, and Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout) of concern in Township 1S Range 10E. Due to the limited scope of the easement no impacts are expected on terrestrial, avian and aquatic life and habitats. The public will continue to use the site, but it will be under management and maintenance of MTFWP.

#### 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.*

With the current public use and the limited size of the site, the easement should have no effect on unique, endangered, fragile or limited environmental resources.

#### 10. **HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:**

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

The whole area within the easement has been heavily disturbed over the years from flood activity/meandering of the River and road construction work back in the early 1980's. There are no cultural resource concerns with issuing the easement.

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**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.*

Granting the easement would relocate a parking area that is currently in use. The parking area and signage will be visible from the road.

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**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

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**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.*

None

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

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**14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:**

*Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.*

None

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**15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:**

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

Bowman, Wayne & Sterling, Ag and Grazing Lease # 1994, Total lease acres 314.  
Palmer, Brad, Grazing Lease #641, Total lease acres 160.

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**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.*

None

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**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

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**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

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**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.*

None

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**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.*

Public recreational activities will continue on this site if the easement is granted.

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**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

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**22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:**

*Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.*

None

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**23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:**

*How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?*

No affect

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**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.*

The easement would generate \$2,000 in revenue for the School State Trust Land

<b>EA Checklist Prepared By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Katie Svoboda /s/	<b>Date:</b> 10/26/2009
	<b>Title:</b> Office Manager	

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<b>V. FINDING</b>
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**25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:**

Grant Easement: Grant the easement for a fishing access site, consisting of a parking area, to MTFWP for management of recreational activities.

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**26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:**

Selling an easement to MT Fish Wildlife & Parks will increase public access to the Shields River. The site management provided by MT FWP will reduce the degradation of the land, providing for a higher quality of future recreational use. This action will meet the DNRC obligation to the Trust and the long term benefit of the land.

No Significant impact would be expected.

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**27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

EIS       More Detailed EA       No Further Analysis

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<b>EA Checklist Approved By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Craig Campbell
	<b>Title:</b> Bozeman Unit Manager
<b>Signature:</b> Craig Campbell /s/	<b>Date:</b> 02/??/2010