Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620

August 27, 2010

Governor's Office, Mike Volesky; mvolesky@mt.gov
Environmental Quality Council, Maureen Theisen, mtheisen@mt.gov
Dept. of Environmental Quality, Tom Ellerhof, tellerhof@mt.gov
Dept. of Natural Resources & Conservation, P.O. Box 201601, Helena, MT 59620-1601
MT Historical Society, SHIPO, P.O. Box 201202, Helena, MT 59620-1202
MT State Library, 1515 E. Sixth Ave., P.O. Box 201800, Helena, MT 59620
Montana Wildlife Federation; csharpe@mtwf.org
Montana Audubon; jellis@mtaudubon.org
Montana Environmental Information Center; meic@meic.org
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Region, Andrea Jones (email)
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Washoe Fish Hatchery
Pat Huber, Director-Parks and Recreation, 923 East Fifth, Anaconda, MT 59711,
Ray Haffey, (e-mail)

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) has released a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for public comment regarding a proposal to grant funds to the Anaconda-Deer Lodge County for a shooting range improvement grant to provide $11,535 to construct an archery range. The range is located on county property in Anaconda, Montana.

Written comments will be accepted through September 17, 2010 at 5:00 pm and can be submitted to FWP, PO Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620, or by email to kcunningham@mt.gov . Copies of the EA can be obtained by visiting the web at http://fwp.mt.gov/news/publicnotices/ or by contacting FWP at the above address.

Sincerely,

Kurt Cunningham
Shooting Range Grant Coordinator

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

1420 E 6th Ave, PO Box 200701 Helena, MT 59620-0701
(406) 444-1267

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

PART I. Purpose of and Need for Action

1. Project Title: Anaconda Sportsmen Club and Anaconda-Deer Lodge County (ADLC)

2. Type of Proposed Action:
New Archery Target Range

3. Location Affected by Proposed Action: The Anaconda Sportsmen Club is located in Anaconda-Deer Lodge County, Anaconda, Montana. The proposed range will be on county property northwest of the town of Anaconda and west of N. Cable Road at "Heffner's Dam. The properties are to the south of the ARCO property line (See Map 1

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 Montana Legislature has authorizes funding for the establishment of a Shooting Range Development Program providing financial assistance for the development of shooting ranges. 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.

To be eligible for grant assistance, a private shooting club or a private organization:

(a)(i)shall accept in its membership any person who holds or is eligible to hold a Montana hunting license and who pays club or organization membership fees;
(ii)may not limit the number of members;
(iii)may charge a membership fee not greater than the per-member share of the club's or organization's reasonable cost of provision of services, including establishment, improvement, and maintenance of shooting facilities and other membership services; and
(iv)shall offer members occasional guest privileges at no cost to the member or invited guest and shall make a reasonable effort to hold a public sight-in day each September,

when the general public may use the shooting range for a day-use fee or at no cost; or (b) shall admit the general public for a reasonable day-use fee.

5. Need for the Action(s): There was a void created in the outdoor archery sport when the Pintlar Bowman Archery Club, originating in the 1950s, dissolved. There is the need to relocate the archery range from in town to a safer area. The Anaconda Sportsmen Club in partnership with the Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Parks and Recreation is trying to meet the community archery demands by building a new archery range.

6. Objectives for the Action(s): Bring back outdoor archery and meet community demands for a facility for archery sports in a new safer location.

7. Maps and Supporting Figures:

Map 1 – Arial Photo showing location and boundaries of the proposed project properties. The west boundary of the property is formed by N. Cable Road. The north boundary is the ARCO and ADLC property lines. The east boundary is shown in red. The old dam & pond are shown in the center outlined in black with an arrow showing flow to Warm Springs creek. The proposed archery range will be in the extreme northwest corner and is highlighted in yellow.

There is a small “pump-house” structure visible to the east of the proposed range.

Figure 1 – Proposed site of the archery range looking east northeast toward pump house. The edge of the riparian area is marked by willow (“red brush”) beyond the Aspens and the pump house in the background.

Figure 2 – Looking south along North Cable Road. Proposed properties are on the left. Willow indicates the edge of the riparian area.

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

The proposed improvements will be safely spread within a much smaller area on the properties (see Map 1 and Figure 1).

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

The surrounding area and most of range is agricultural. The property for the new range has been county property for many years. There is a wetland or "slough" just to the southeast of the proposed archery range. The proposed range itself is above and west of the wetlands. That "slough" surrounds an old dam which is fed by an artesian spring. The runoff from the spring through the dam is into Warm Springs Creek to the south. Future plans are to repair the dam and create a public or "kids" fishing pond. However, the proposed archery range is "above" and to the northwest of the wetlands.

10. Description of Project:

Build a new archery range: including a cement shooting line providing handicapped accessibility. Providing twelve shooting stations in a "V" formation. Half of the shooting stations will have odd

distances from 15-55 yards and the other half will incorporate even distances between 10-50 yards. Additionally two five yard targets will be placed at both ends for beginning youth and initial site-in. Treated posts and frames will house outdoor target shooting butts. The range will also have storage and a handicapped accessible outdoor toilet facility. The project will therefore require installation of treated posts for targets, purchase and installation of 12 Super Butt targets, pouring concrete for 4'X70' shooting lane, purchase and installation of a handicapped toilet, purchase and installation of a 10'X12' storage shed, and fencing.

In Accordance With (IAW) contracts agreements with Fish, Wildlife & Parks, all projects are to be completed by June 30, 2011.

11. List any Other Local, State, or Federal Agency that has Overlapping or Additional Jurisdiction:

(a) Permits, Licenses and/or Authorizations:

Agency Name	Permit
None	

Funding:

Agency Name	Funding Amount
Anaconda Project Facilitators	$ 1,000
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	$11,535

12. Affiliations, Cooperating Agencies, User Groups and/or Supporting Groups:
Anaconda Sportsman's Club, Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Parks and Recreation, Fish, Wildlife and Parks Bow Hunter Education, 4H, Boy and Girl Scouts, and the National Archery in the Schools Program.

13. History of the Planning and Scoping Process, and Any Public Involvement:
Proposed range plans and enhancements had been discussed within the membership of the club, with the county commission, with possible partners and with the associated project vendors and contractors. No other public involvement was deemed necessary.

14. List of Agencies Consulted/Contacted During Preparation of the EA:
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

15. Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor:
Pat Huber, Director-Parks and Recreation, 923 East Fifth, Anaconda, MT 59711, (406) 563-3408, prphuber@hotmail.com

16. Other Pertinent Information: The Anaconda Sportsmen Club has been in existence since the 1940's. The Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Commissioner's, have reviewed and approved this project as part of their promotion of archery as a healthy lifetime sport. The County's Parks and Recreation Department sponsors sports activities throughout the city and county. They work closely

with the Anaconda School District to utilize various facilities for youth and adult activities. The county Parks and Recreation Department, will partner with the Anaconda Sportsmen Club for operations and maintenance of the proposed archery range. Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Parks and Recreation will provide all the maintenance and liability insurance necessary for the area and the Sportsmen's Club will operate the range.

Shooting range applications require the participant's governing body to approve by resolution its submission of applications for shooting range funding assistance. Resolution Date: May 4, 2010

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		#4
5. Water quality, quantity & distribution (surface or groundwater)				X		#5
6. Existing water right or reservation				X		
7. Geology & soil quality, stability & moisture				X		#7
8. Air quality or objectionable odors				X		#8
9. Historical & archaeological sites				X		#9
10. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy				X		
11. Aesthetics				X		

Comments **2. & 5**. There is a wetland or "slough" to the southeast of the proposed archery range. The proposed range itself is above and west of the wetlands.

4. The minor elimination of vegetation for the implementation of the proposed action will not change the overall abundance and diversity of plant species within the area. The proposed projects occupy a very small portion of the individual properties and native vegetation is minimally present anywhere on the property. Therefore it is determined to have an insignificant impact on native vegetation in the area.

7. The project will cause minimal displacement of soils but these improvements and minor construction will not substantially effect geological features or establish new erosion patterns. Soil disruption for this site is localized. Erosion control measures will be in effect and disturbed areas will treated.

8. Very minor and temporary dust and vehicle emissions may be created by construction equipment during the proposed construction, but the impact is minimal.

9. This project uses no federal funds, therefore, the Federal 106 Regulations does not apply, but the

State Antiques Act does apply, but it is on state owned properties. Previous archeological surveys on the shooting complex did not find any historical or archeological sites in the proposed project area.

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		
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

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.

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 Part I paragraph 10 (Description of Project) to provide funding for the construction of a new archery range on county property.

- **Alternative B (No Action Alternative)** Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Shooting Sports Grant money would be denied and the area might remain county property with an archery 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 archery opportunities in the Anaconda area by constructing a new archery range.
- The **No Action Alternative (B)** would be to not to fund the development of a new archery range which might result in a new archery range not being built and thus no new archery opportunities for the community.

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:
Pat Huber, Director-Parks and Recreation, 923 East Fifth, Anaconda, MT 59711
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 owned by Anaconda-Deer Lodge County. 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 Anaconda-Deer Lodge Archery range proposed alternative, to provide safe regulated archery opportunities is supported by the community. Therefore, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks should approve the proposed alternative (A) for the new range construction as outlined in Part I paragraphs 2 & 10.

EA prepared by: GENE R. HICKMAN
Ecological Assessments
Helena, MT 59602

Date Completed: June 23, 2010

Amended by: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks August 27, 2010

PART V. EA CONCLUSION SECTION

Recommendation and justification concerning preparation of EIS:

There are no significant environmental or economic impacts associated with the proposed alternative, therefore an EIS is not required.

Describe public involvement, if any:

Announcement for EA comment will be published in the Anaconda Leader, Montana Standard 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. Comments will be accepted until 5 p.m. September 17, 2010.