

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Avalanche 1 Course
Proposed Implementation Date:	January 2011
Proponent:	Montana Outdoor Science School (MOSS)
Location:	Township 2S Range 6E Sections 34 & 35 and Township 3S R6E Sections 1,2,3,11,&12
County:	Gallatin
Trust:	Capitol Building, Eastern/Western, Pine Hills School, and Deaf and Blind School

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The proposed Land Use License would be to allow Montana Outdoor Science School (MOSS) to conduct two Avalanche One Courses on School Trust Land. The courses teach transceiver use, avalanche rescue, up and down hill route finding, and snow stability evaluation in relation to decision making.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

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

Mount Ellis Academy, lessee (T3S R6E Section 1) – No issues, concerns, or conflicts.

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

Gallatin County Search and Rescue/Sheriff's Office – in case of emergencies.

MOSS Emergency Action Plan – Lead and co-instructor are both certified Wilderness First Responders, CPR certified, and both carry first aid kits.

In the event of an accident, depending on severity, they will try to have the patient get out on their own (without outside help) if they are able to ski on both legs without pain (for example, a sprained wrist). If the patient is not able to ski out on their own, and it is dangerous to the patient (risking further injury) and/or group, they will try to call out to search and rescue if reception, and if not, will send out 3 people to call search and rescue (with a detail description of where the patient is located, the extent of injury and what they are in need of), while 3 people stay with the patient to administer first aid, food, water, warmth, etc.

Once at the roadhead, MOSS will be contacted (sooner if there is cell reception) and the patient will be brought to the appropriate medical facility for care.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Action: Grant the Land Use License to allow Montana Outdoor Science School to conduct Avalanche 1 Courses on School Trust Land.

No Action: Do not grant the Land Use License to allow Montana Outdoor Science School to conduct Avalanche 1 Courses on School Trust Land.

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 course will take place in the winter on snow and frozen ground. No impacts would be expected.

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 course will take place in the winter on snow and frozen ground. No impacts would be expected.

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.

There will be no impact to air quality.

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.

The course will take place in the winter on snow and frozen ground. No impacts would be expected.

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.

No direct or cumulative effects are expected to occur to fish and/or wildlife.

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.

The Montana Natural Heritage Program list the Wolverine, Canada Lynx, Grizzly Bear, Golden Eagle Great Blue Heron, Cassin's Finch, Veery, Brown Creeper, Black-billed Cuckoo, Bobolink, Pinyon Jay, Clark's Nutcracker, Great Gray Owl, Western Toad, Northern Leopard Frog, Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout, and A Stonefly as species of concern for the Townships and Ranges of the proposed Land Use License. Due to the limited scope of the proposed license, no direct or cumulative impact to unique, endangered, fragile or limited environmental resources is anticipated.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

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

No historical and/or archaeological sites have been identified. Two site leads (old cabins) have been documented on T3S R6E Sections 2 and 12.

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 area is currently used for recreational activities. If granted, the license would bring an increased number of people to the area on the weekends the classes are held.

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.

Currently the area is being analyzed for a proposed Timber Sale.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>RESOURCES</i> potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.• Explain <i>POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS</i> 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.

Recreational activities in the backcountry come with greater inherent risks; however an Avalanche 1 course could decrease health and safety risks because participants will gain an understanding of how terrain, weather, snowpack and human factors contribute to avalanche hazards.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

No effect.

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.

No effect.

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.

No effect.

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

Gallatin County Search and Rescue/Sheriff's Office may be needed if a medical emergency arises.

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.

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 area is currently used for recreation. Recreational use in the area will be increased by the class participants on the days classes are held.

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.

No effect.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

No effect.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

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

No effect.

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 Land Use License would generate \$150.00 in revenue for the trust.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Katie Svoboda /s/	Date: 1/12/2011
	Title: Bozeman Unit Office Manager	

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED : Grant the Land Use License to allow Montana Outdoor Science School to conduct Avalanche 1 Courses on School Trust Land.

6. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS: No significant impact would be expected, nor would there be a cumulative effect on the current proposed Bear Canyon Timber Sale analysis.

As part of the License we will be requiring proof of liability Insurance, a risk management plan and itineraries for periods of use.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

EIS More Detailed EA No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Craig Campbell
	Title: Bozeman Unit Manager
Signature: Craig Campbell/s/	Date: January 13, 2011