CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Avian Science Center (Bird Monitoring Program)

Proposed Implementation Date*:* May 20, 2012

Proponent: Avian Science Center

Location: Various across the state

County: Various across the state

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

This checklist EA is for the use of various school trust land for the purpose of bird monitoring and surveying. The goal of the program is to provide density estimates for approximately 200 species of birds and track population trends at a regional scale. Points of interest are across the state on a combination of school trust land, other state land, and private land. This observational research is to be done on foot, resulting in minimal to no impact.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:
Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project. List number of individuals contacted, number of responses received, and newspapers in which notices were placed and for how long. Briefly summarize issues received from the public.

No scoping was done for this project because there are no impacts anticipated.

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:
Examples: cost-share agreement with U.S. Forest Service, 124 Permit, 3A Authorization, Air Quality Major Open Burning Permit.

No other permits required for the proposed activity.

3. ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT:
Describe alternatives considered and, if applicable, provide brief description of how the alternatives were developed. List alternatives that were considered but eliminated from further analysis and why.

No Action Alternative-Do not proceed with authorizing the use of trust land for bird monitoring.

Action Alternative- Proceed with authorizing the use of the trust land for bird monitoring.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to soils.

The proposed project will occur in various locations throughout the state. Neither the Action Alternative nor the No Action Alternative should result in any direct or indirect impacts.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to water resources.

The proposed project will occur in various locations throughout the state. Neither the Action Alternative nor the No Action Alternative should result in any direct or indirect impacts.

6. AIR QUALITY:
What pollutants or particulate would be produced (i.e. particulate matter from road use or harvesting, slash pile burning, prescribed burning, etc)? Identify the Airshed and Impact Zone (if any) according to the Montana/Idaho Airshed Group. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to air quality.

The proposed project will occur in various locations throughout the state. Neither the Action Alternative nor the No Action Alternative should result in any direct or indirect impacts.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to vegetation.

Implementation of the No Action Alternative would result in no impact on the vegetation cover quantity or quality.

Implementation of the Action Alternative will have impacts to the vegetation cover identical to that expected under a typical rec. use permit. Points of interest are to be accessed on foot from the road.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:
Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

The proposed project will occur in various locations throughout the state. Neither the Action Alternative nor the No Action Alternative should result in any direct or indirect impacts.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

The proposed project will occur in various locations throughout the state. Neither the Action Alternative nor the No Action Alternative should result in any direct or indirect impacts.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:
Identify and determine direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

The proposed project will occur in various locations throughout the state. Neither the Action Alternative nor the No Action Alternative should result in any direct or indirect impacts.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to aesthetics.

The proposed project will occur in various locations throughout the state. Neither the Action Alternative nor the No Action Alternative should result in any direct or indirect impacts.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to environmental resources.

The proposed project will occur in various locations throughout the state. Neither the Action Alternative nor the No Action Alternative should result in any direct or indirect impacts.

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.

The proposed project will occur in various locations throughout the state. Neither the Action Alternative nor the No Action Alternative should result in any direct or indirect impacts.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

- *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.*

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

Action Alternative: Potential safety concerns for researchers accessing the school trust land include grizzly bear activity as well as activity from any timber sales occurring in a specific area. License will direct licensees to contact the local Unit Office before accessing sites for information in those specific areas.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

The proposed project will occur in various locations throughout the state. Neither the Action Alternative nor the No Action Alternative should result in any direct or indirect impacts.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:

Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to the employment market.

The proposed project will occur in various locations throughout the state. Neither the Action Alternative nor the No Action Alternative should result in any direct or indirect impacts.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:
Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

The proposed project will occur in various locations throughout the state. Neither the Action Alternative nor the No Action Alternative should result in any direct or indirect impacts.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services

The proposed project will occur in various locations throughout the state. Neither the Action Alternative nor the No Action Alternative should result in any direct or indirect impacts.

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.

The proposed project will occur in various locations throughout the state. Neither the Action Alternative nor the No Action Alternative should result in any direct or indirect 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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

The proposed project will occur in various locations throughout the state. Neither the Action Alternative nor the No Action Alternative should result in any direct or indirect impacts.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:
Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to population and housing.

The proposed project will occur in various locations throughout the state. Neither the Action Alternative nor the No Action Alternative should result in any direct or indirect impacts.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:
Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

The proposed project will occur in various locations throughout the state. Neither the Action Alternative nor the No Action Alternative should result in any direct or indirect impacts.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:
How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

The proposed project will occur in various locations throughout the state. Neither the Action Alternative nor the No Action Alternative should result in any direct or indirect impacts.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.

This LUL will return $200.00 to three trusts: MT Tech (3%), Capitol Buildings (7%), and Common Schools (89.5%). The agreement has the potential to be renewed annually for up to 10 years.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	**Name:** Jessica Jenewein	**Date:** May 9, 2012
	Title: REMB Lease Manager	

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

I have selected the Action Alternative.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

☐ EIS ☐ More Detailed EA ☐ No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	**Name:** Jeanne Holmgren	
	Title: Chief/Real Estate Management Bureau	
Signature: /s/ Jeanne Holmgren		**Date**: 6/5/12