

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Fur Farm, Game Bird Farm, Zoo/Menagerie, Shooting Preserve

PART 1. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

Project Title: Jon Andrews Bird Farm

Application Date: May 11, 1999

Name, Address and Phone Number: Jon Andrews, Box 10525, Helena, Montana 59604 (406)442-3004

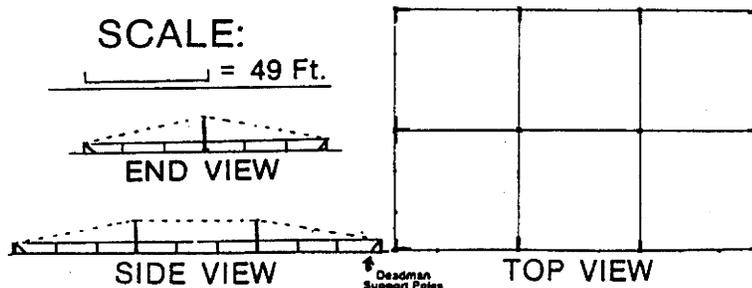
Project Location: T10N, R4W, Sec. 14, lot 29. Just northeast of city limits of Helena, in the Helena Valley south of Alfalfa Road in Lewis & Clark County. Current detailed map with pen locations is attached to application.

Description of Project: The applicant proposes to build a game bird farm to raise birds for commercial sale. The game farm proposes to stock a maximum of 2000 pheasants, 200 chukar partridge, 200 sharptail grouse, 200 ruffed grouse and 200 turkeys. The farm would purchase chicks and raise them for resale and possibly some local release of the pheasants. The applicant proposes to purchase artificially propagated chicks from a licensed hatchery: MacFarlane Pheasant Farm, 2821 So. Hwy. 51, Janesville, WI 53546.

The operation will have one pen to raise and hold birds. The pen will be located as far from Ten Mile Creek as feasible and a minimum of 100 ft. from the break of the upper stream bank.

The pen has not yet been built and construction will begin upon processing of the EA. The pen will be built to the following specifications:

The size of this proposed pen is 147'x 98'. The posts will be set equidistant from each other around the perimeter of the pen - the posts will be approximately 16 feet 4 inches apart. The posts will be 10' long. They will go into the ground 3' and extend 7'. The four sides of the pen will be covered with 1" chicken wire or galvanized after-weaving-wire - either 18 or 20 gauge. Rather than bury the wire an 18" piece of wire will be placed on the ground perpendicular to the side wire. This prevents birds or predators from digging down and under the pen. The wire will extend up the sides of the pen to the tops of the posts. A standard #9 galvanized wire will be strung around the top of the poles and around the perimeter of the pen. Another strand of #9 wire will be strung the length of the pen equidistant from the two sides. Two #9 wires will be strung widthwise splitting the pen in thirds (See diagram). These #9 wires are there to support the roof. The poles to which the #9 wire is attached will have *dead-man' poles for support. Over the top of this grid will be two connected rolls of 150' X 50' of "toprite" nylon netting.



Other groups or agencies contacted or which may have overlapping jurisdiction: A Department of Agriculture import permit will be required for birds shipped from out-of-state.

PART 2. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

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 Or On Attached Pages
1. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources				X		
2. Terrestrial or aquatic life and/or habitats			X			2.1, 2.2
3. Introduction of new species into an area			X			3.1
4. Vegetation cover, quantity & quality				X		
5. Water quality, quantity & distribution (surface or groundwater)				X		
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		9.1
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.)

- 2.1 There is a limited potential for disease transmission from artificially propagated birds to wild birds, although the applicant is purchasing only from certified disease free stock. There is a limited potential for artificially stocked birds breeding with wild birds altering the gene pool.
- 2.2 Pens will be kept at least 100' back from rim or Ten Mile Creek to minimize run-off directly into the creek. However, some run-off will be inevitable.
- 3.1. Chukar partridge habitat does not exist on the property or lands immediately adjacent to the Andrews game bird farm. Although stocked on other game bird farms within the state there is a very limited potential of establishment of viable wild populations and there are unknown impacts if viable wild populations become established. However, there is limited pheasant, grouse and turkey habitat within this area
- 9.1 There are no plans for significant ground disturbance associated with this action.

Although no known historical or archeological sites exist here, if they do exist they will remain unaffected.

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 Or On Attached Pages
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		
6. Quantity & distribution of community & personal income			X			6.1
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			10.1
11. Industrial and/or commercial activity				X		

Comments

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

6.1 Purchase of feed and construction materials will generate some profits to area businesses.

10.1 The game bird farm application processes requires an EA, inspection and review by FWP employees and contract personnel. Initial and periodic follow-up inspections will be required for game farms by an FWP game warden.

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? NO

Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action when alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider. Include a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:

No Action Alternative - Land use would remain the same (agriculture). There would be no danger of diseases or gene pool alteration from introduced birds. No additional profits would be generated and no additional demands would be placed on state government.

List proposed mitigative measures (stipulations) for license: NONE

Individuals or groups contributing to, or commenting on, this EA: NONE

EA prepared by: GENE R. HICKMAN

Date Completed: May 19, 1999

PART 3. DECISION

Recommendation and justification concerning preparation of EIS: No EIS required.

Describe public involvement, if any: None

DECISION NOTICE

All of the pertinent or potential impacts of the project have been reviewed, discussed, and analyzed. Due to minor nature and insignificant effects of the proposed action, this will be considered the final version of the environmental assessment. It is my decision to approve the Game Bird Farm as proposed.

Recommendation for license approval:

<u>Joel Pelemez</u>	<u>6/6/99</u>
Wildlife Manager	Date
<u>J. Keppner</u>	<u>6/6/99</u>
Warden Captain	Date