

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

██████████: U.S. FOREST SERVICE SKIDDER CROSSING ALTERNATIVE PRACTICE

██████████: BEAVERHEAD-DEERLODGE NATIONAL FOREST, BUTTE RANGER DISTRICT, 1820 MEADOWLARK LANE, BUTTE, MONTANA 59701

██████████: ALTERNATIVE PRACTICE TO THE STREAMSIDE MANAGEMENT ZONE LAW 77-5-305 MCA, RULE - 4 (36.11.304), EQUIPMENT OPERATION IN THE SMZ. PROPOSED FROZEN GROUND SNOW-COVERED SKIDDER CROSSING ON A CLASS 2 STREAM SEGMENT. APPROXIMATELY 10 MBF WILL BE SKIDDED A

RECEIVED

██████████: SECTION 21, TOWNSHIP 6 NORTH, RANGE 6 WEST

MAR 16 2004

██████████: JEFFERSON, MONTANA

LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL
POLICY OFFICE

I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT	
1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this Project.	Proposed project area was not identified on the 303d list, although the Boulder River some 2,300 feet to the north was. The Forest Service may also conduct some sort of Environmental Impact Statement as part of their timber sale proposal.
2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:	None required. Proposed structure is a temporary frozen ground snow-covered crossing on Class 2 intermittent stream.
3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:	No Action: Do not Approve Alternative Action. Alternative As Proposed: Approve an Alternative Practice to allow for a temporary frozen ground snow-covered crossing.
II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES N = Not present or No Impact will occur. Y = Impacts may occur (explain below)
4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are fragile, compactable or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] This skidder crossing will be used under frozen snow-covered ground conditions, therefore minimal soil degradation should occur. Degradation to stream bed and banks, as well as the adjacent approaches should be minimal as the following precautions are being implemented: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A log bundle (using logs greater than 12 inches) should be placed into channel to protect streambed and bank configuration. It should also serve to disperse ground pressure when being used by logging equipment. 2. Skid trail approaches may require planting grass seed to stabilize exposed soil conditions and reduce potential surface runoff. 3. Slash-filter windrow or other sediment trapping device should be constructed parallel to the

	<p>stream channel and across skid trail. No known cumulative impacts are likely to occur as a result of this proposed action.</p>
<p>5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION: Are important surface or groundwater resources present? Is there potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action? Would the Alternative Practice conserve the integrity of the SMZ, and these specific functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Ability to act as an effective sediment filter B. Ability to provide shade to regulate stream temperature C. Protection of stream channel and banks D. Ability to provide large, woody debris for eventual recruitment into the stream to maintain riffles, pools and other elements of channel structure E. Promote floodplain stability. 	<p>[N] This skidder crossing will be used during minimal seasonal flow periods, for a short duration of time (10 trips, 1.5 loads), and under frozen snow-covered ground conditions. Proposed activity should not adversely impact this watershed.</p> <p>This Class 2 stream originates from a spring southwest of the crossing location and flows approximately 2,300 feet north before spilling into the Boulder River. No known downstream activities should be impacted by the implementation of this project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (A.) Installation, excavation, and clearing should be minimal in the construction of this crossing. Minimal sediment may be deposited on top of the crossing by pole skidding timber down the approaches. It is anticipated that this amount should be minimal due to the frozen ground, snow-cover conditions under which operations will take place. After the stream crossing structure is removed the approaches may be grass seeded to stabilize exposed soil conditions and reduce potential surface runoff. A slash-filter windrow, or other sediment trapping device may need to be constructed parallel to the stream channel and across the skid trail to reduce potential erosion. (B.) A minimal amount of shrubs exist at the proposed project site and will not be impacted in the construction or use of this crossing. Because the project is proposed for winter use, stream temperatures should not be adversely affected. (C.) It is anticipated that the log bundle crossing will act to protect the vegetative root mass, 2-3 foot stream channel, and banks from scouring. The large diameter logs (greater than 12 inches in diameter) should also serve to disperse ground pressure. (D.) Minimal trees or shrubs will need to be removed along the skid route within the SMZ to implement this proposed project. All tree retention requirements under Rule #5(36.11.305) shall be adhered to. (E.) This log bundle crossing should not affect floodplain stability. Flow should be somewhat maintained as water is free to move through the openings between the logs. This crossing will be implemented during winter conditions, which should coincide with minimal seasonal stream flow.
<p>6. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?</p>	<p>[N]</p>

<p>7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?</p>	<p>[N]</p>
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RESOURCE	[Y/N]POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
<p>8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action? Would the SMZ retain the ability to support diverse and productive aquatic and terrestrial habitats?</p>	<p>[N] Minor Class 2 stream- very minimal flow for majority of the year. Not a fishery. Associated landscape is currently being used as a campground. The SMZ should retain its current ability to support diverse and productive aquatic and terrestrial habitats.</p>
<p>UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?</p> <p>9. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?</p>	<p>[N]</p>
<p>10. AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from populated or scenic areas? Will there be excessive noise or light? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?</p>	<p>[N]</p>
<p>11. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY: Will the project use resources that are limited in the area? Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?</p>	<p>[N]</p>
<p>12. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of other private, state or federal current actions w/n the analysis area, or from future proposed state actions that are under MEPA review (scoping) or permitting review by any state agency w/n the analysis area?</p>	<p>[N]</p>

III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

RESOURCE	[Y/N]POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
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13. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?	[N]
14. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	[N]
16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number. Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N]
17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N]
18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N]
19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?	[N]
RESOURCE	[Y/N]POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] Timber harvesting will take place within a U.S. Forest Service campground to remove potential risk trees that are infested with bark beetles.
21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N]
22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	[N]
23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	[N]
24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES: Is there a potential for other future uses for easement area other than for timber management? use hypothetical? What is the estimated return to the trust. Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N]

EA Checklist Prepared By: Shawn P. Morgan Helena Unit Forester 02/11/04
Name Title Date

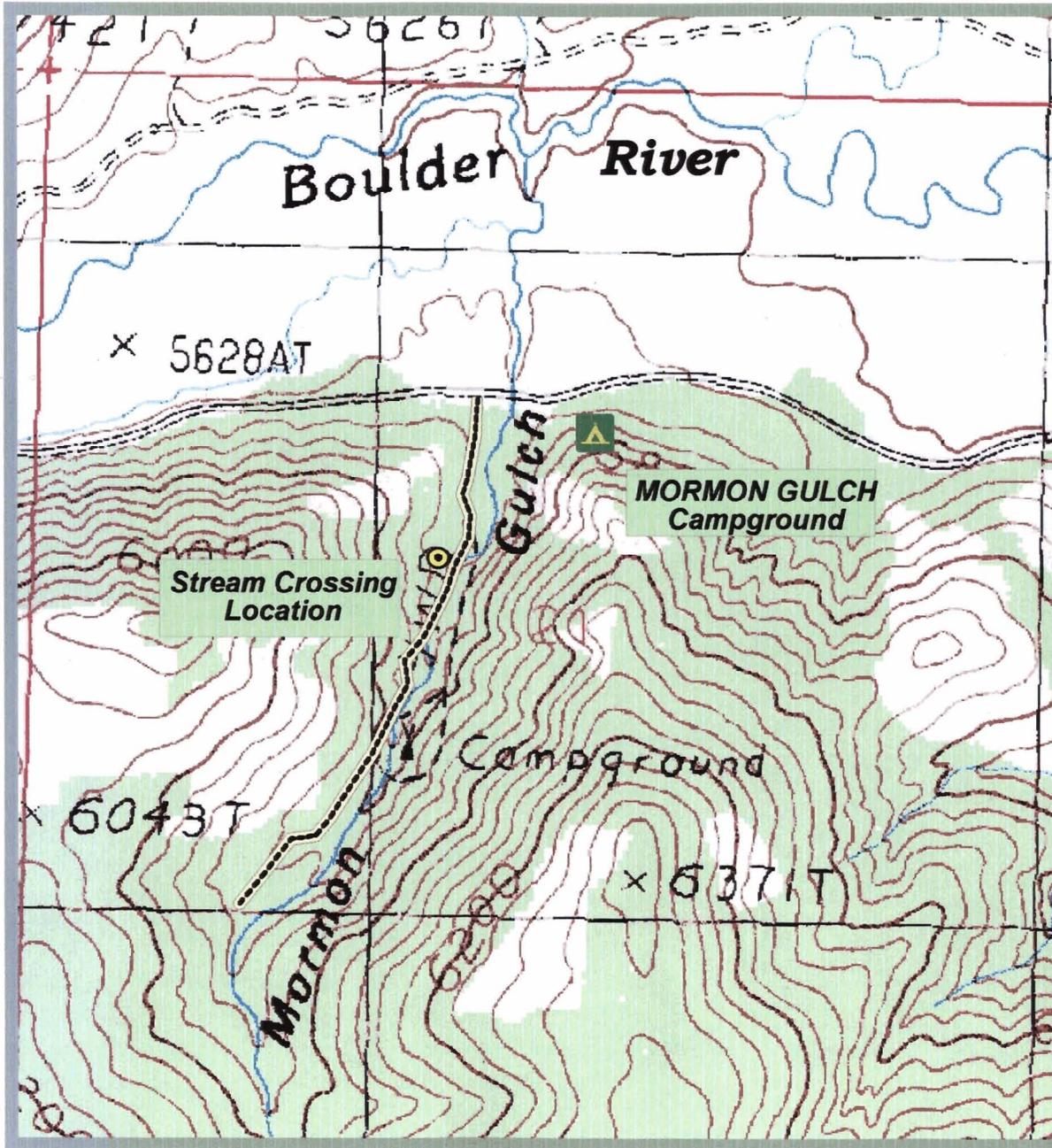
IV. FINDING

<p>25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:</p>	<p>ALTERNATIVE AS MITIGATED: Approve an alternative practice to allow for the development of a frozen ground, Snow-bridge crossing. The following mitigation measures are recommended.</p> <p>SKID TRAIL CROSSING:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Logs greater than 12 inches in diameter shall be cabled together creating a "log bundle" and then placed into the stream channel to protect vegetative root mass, streambed and bank, and to disperse ground pressure during skidding operations. 2. Skid trails leading up to, and departing from water crossing location shall be maintained to minimize potential direct delivery of sediment to the stream channel. After use, these trails may need to be planted with appropriate grass seed to stabilize exposed soil conditions and reduce potential surface runoff. 3. A slash-filter windrow, or other sediment trapping device shall be constructed parallel to the stream channel and across the skid trail, to effectively minimize the potential of direct delivery of sediment into the waterway. 4. All slash and debris will be cleaned by hand from the crossing site. 5. When harvesting activities are completed and use of the crossing structure is no longer needed, removal of the log bundle from the crossing area will be done such that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The streambed and bank area left intact. b. Vegetation in and around crossing locations is maintained. c. Sediment and/or debris that have been trapped on top of the logs are removed from the crossing site without being deposited in the stream channel. <p>Notify DNRC Helena Unit office if problems are encountered meeting the conditions of this Alternative Practice and when all of the harvesting activities directly associated to this practice are completed.</p>
<p>26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:</p>	<p>MEASURES RECOMMENDED MITIGATING POTENTIAL IMPACTS: None expected. See Mitigations Measures in 25.</p>
<p>27. Need for Further Environmental Analysis:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> EIS <input type="checkbox"/> More Detailed EA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Further Analysis</p>	

EA Checklist Approved By:	D. J. Bakken	Helena Unit Manager
	Name	Title
	/S/ Darrel J. Bakken	2/17/2004
	Signature	Date

ATTACHMENTS
 Alternative Practice Request
 Topographical Location Map

cc: Applicant
 Unit Office
 Land Office
 Service Forestry Bureau



Scale = 1:10000

Beaverhead - Deerlodge National Forest

AP-CLO-02-04

**Township: 6 North
Range: 6 West
Section: 21**

