

# RECEIVED

DNRC - Trust Land Management Division  
JUN 30 2006

DS-252

## CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL  
POLICY OFFICE

**Project Name:**

Granite Creek Salvage TP/Equipment Operation in SMZ/Relic channels to Libby and Granite Creeks

**Proposed Implementation Date:** 6/15/06

**Proponent:** Montana DNRC

**Type and Purpose of Action:**

Operate tracked or wheeled skidding equipment in class three SMZ between 200 ft. intervals to salvage dead material.

**Location:** E 1/2 Sec. 14, T30N, R31W

**County:** Lincoln

### I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.	No neighbors will be affected No public scoping is deemed necessary.
2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:	None
3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:	1) No-action. 2) Operate tracked or wheeled skidding equipment within class three SMZs between 200 ft. intervals to access timber. 3) over-lapping SMZ corridors would require extensive winch line set-ups, decreasing accessible volume and adding exceptional labor.

### 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?	[Y] Land type 106 Silty volcanic ash influenced loess overlaying very gravelly, sandy glacial outwash deposits High surface erodibility and low subsurface erodibility
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?	[Y] The stream affected is a network of relic stream channels to Granite Creek and Libby Creek. The proposed mitigation measures should prevent sediment delivery into the stream.
6. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?	[ N] Normal air pollution that is associated with a standard logging operation.
7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?	[ N] No rare, sensitive plants or cover types were observed during ground reconnaissance. Minimal vegetation disturbance will occur from logging.
8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?	[ N] There is no significant use by important wildlife, birds or fish. This is not a fish-bearing stream.

RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
9. 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?	[ N ] The class three SMZs affected by this action are currently dry and could not support fish themselves. Threatened or endangered species may migrate through the area's Libby and Granite Creeks. Bull Trout and Cutthroat trout live and spawn in both Granite and Libby Creeks.
10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?	[ N ] No historical archeological or paleological resources were observed during ground reconnaissance.
11. 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?	[ N ] Normal temporary noise increase associated with standard logging operation.
12. 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?	[ N ] No limited resources will be used from the project. There are no other activities nearby that will affect the project.
13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?	[ N ] There are no other known studies or plans for this area.

## III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?	[ N ] Normal health risks associated with a standard logging operation.
15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	[ N ] This project will add additional timber to the local woods product industry.
16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so estimated number.	[ N ] This project will add some additional work and income to the local work force.
17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?	[ N ] Minor additional income tax revenue will be generated from the additional work.
18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed?	[ N ] Traffic will not be significantly altered from the project.
19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?	[ N ] There are no known zoning management plans in this area.

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?	[ N ] This project will not influence the recreation potential. There are no wildernesses in this area.
21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?	[ N ] This project will not influence the local population.
22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	[ N ] Native communities or lifestyles will not be disturbed.
23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	[ N ] Cultural uniqueness will not be disturbed.
24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:	[ N ] There are no other unique social or economical qualities in this area.

EA Checklist Prepared By: Michael Justus

DNRC Service Forester

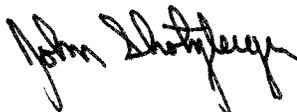
5/30/06

IV. FINDING	
25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED: Alternative 2	Operate tracked or wheeled skidding equipment in class three SMZs between 200 ft. intervals to salvage dead material.
26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:	Proposed mitigation measures should protect the integrity of the Streamside Management Zone
27. Need for Further Environmental Analysis:  <input type="checkbox"/> EIS <input type="checkbox"/> More Detailed EA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Further Analysis	

EA Checklist Approved By:  
Name

John Shotzberger

Signature



Title

Libby Unit Manager

Date

6-12-2006

DS-97

STATE OF MONTANA  
Department Of Natural Resources and Conservation  
**ALTERNATIVE PRACTICE REQUEST**

Name of Owner: Montana DNRC

Phone Number: 406 293 2711

Address: 14096 US Hwy 37, Libby, MT 59923

Operator: Fred Cooper Logging

Site-Specific Alternative Practice Requested:

- 1). **Cross or enter class 3 SMZs of relic channels of Libby and Granite Creek.**

**Explanation and Justification for Alternative Practice:** Over-lapping SMZ corridors restrict accessibility and economic feasibility to salvage dead timber. Wheeled or tracked equipment will be allowed to enter or cross class three SMZs at intervals less than 200 Feet to access dead timber.

**Planned Mitigation Measures:** Equipment will be operated within SMZs only during dry or frozen conditions. Any disturbed soil within SMZs will be grass seeded following use. Sale administrator will pre-approve skid trails in SMZ.

Starting Date: June 15, 2006

Completion Date: June 15, 2008

The following questions refer to the area where the alternative practice will be performed.

Legal Description: E ½ Sec. 14, T30N R31W.

Lineal Extent Along Stream: Approx 100 ft SMZ %: 0% slope SMZ Width: 50 feet

Stream Class (Check one): One Two Three  X Wetlands:  X Yes  No

INCLUDE A TOPO MAP showing the logging unit boundaries, alternative practice area boundaries, streams, wetlands, and existing and/or proposed roads.

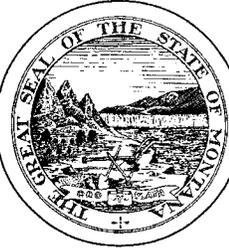
Approved alternative practices, including any additional conditions approved by DNRC, shall have the same force and authority as the standards contained in 77-5-303, MCA, and shall be enforceable by DNRC under 77-5-305, MCA, to the same extent as such standards.

APPLICANT SIGNATURE: Jeremy Rank

Inaccurate or incomplete information will affect the ability to evaluate this alternative practice.

R:3/93

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
AND CONSERVATION  
LIBBY UNIT OFFICE



BRIAN SCHWEITZER, GOVERNOR

STATE OF MONTANA

PHONE (406) 293-2711  
FAX (406) 293-9307

14096 US HWY 37,  
LIBBY, MT 59923

Montana DNRC  
14096 US Hwy 37  
Libby, MT 59923

May 30, 2006

Dear Montana DNRC Libby Unit,

This letter is in reference to your request to the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) for an Alternative Practice to the Streamside Management Zone Law in the E ½ of section 14, T30N R31W. After review of the Checklist Environmental Assessment prepared for this request, the Alternative Practice to allow **Equipment operation in the SMZ** is hereby approved, subject to the following conditions:

1. The alternative practice is approved for a period of two years from the date of issuance, and cover the area described in the legal description.
2. All SMZ's must be flagged.
3. Skid trail crossings inside the SMZ will be pre approved by a DNRC Forest Officer.
4. A slash filter windrow will be placed on each side of the stream crossing to prevent sediment from being side cast into the stream channel during skidding
5. All logs must be de-limbed and the top removed before skidding across the stream crossing (log length skidding).
6. After the logging is completed, the skid trail crossings will use appropriate erosion control to prevent sediment delivery into channels (ie. slash filters, grass seeding, water bars, mulching).

Conditions #1, 2, & 3 must be completed prior to the start of logging operations. Conditions # 4 &5 must be monitored during operation. Condition 6 must be completed on completion of logging and hauling operations or before Spring break up.

Approved alternative practices, including any additional conditions required by DNRC, shall have the same force and authority as the standards contained in 77-5-303, MCA, and be enforceable by DNRC under 77-5-303, MCA, to the same extent as such standards.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your operator understand that an alternative practice has been issued for their operations in this area, and these conditions must be fully met to achieve compliance with the SMZ Law.

**This approval is contingent upon your execution and return of the attached statement to the DNRC Libby Unit Office. No actions related to this alternative practice are to be taken until the statement is returned to DNRC.**

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter. Please call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of John Sholtzberger in black ink.

John Sholtzberger  
Libby Unit Manager  
DNRC

Pc: Alternative Practice file  
Area Office  
Service Forestry Bureau  
Environmental Quality Council