

DEPARTMENT OF FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS
 1420 E 6th Ave, PO Box 200701 Helena, MT 59620-0701
 (406) 444-2535

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Title Alkali Creek: Aronson Ave Work Bridge

Division/Bureau Fisheries/Management

Program Fisheries

Description of Project COP Construction will install a temporary work bridge across Alkali Creek at T1N, R 26E, S27 to help install a permanent bridge as part of an extension of Aronson Avenue. The bridge will have a timber deck 10" X 18" X 22' and will fully span the creek about 8' above the low-water surface, which is above the high-water elevation. The project will require the topping of several Russian Olive trees and, perhaps, small cottonwoods. MDT BMP's will be observed.

I. POTENTIAL IMPACT ON PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

	MAJOR	MODERATE	MINOR	NONE	UNKNOWN	COMMENTS ON ATTACHED PAGES
1. Terrestrial & aquatic life and habitats				X		
2. Water quality, quantity & distribution				X		
3. Geology & soil quality, stability & moisture			X			I.3.
4. Vegetation cover, quantity & quality			X			I.4.
5. Aesthetics				X		
6. Air quality				X		
7. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources				X		
8. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy				X		

	MAJOR	MODERATE	MINOR	NONE	UNKNOWN	ON ATTACHED PAGES
13. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals				X		
14. Transportation networks & traffic flows			X			

Other groups or agencies contacted or which may have overlapping jurisdiction US Army Corps of Engineers, Floodplain Administrator

Individuals or groups contributing to this EA None

Recommendation concerning preparation of EIS None required; no significant impacts.

EA prepared by : Jim Darling

Date: April 20, 2008

COMMENTS

I.3. Topsoil will be temporarily disturbed to build approach ramp on the southern end of the bridge. It will be redistributed and seeded in accordance with MDT BMP's.

I.4. Several Russian olives, and perhaps small cottonwoods or willows will be topped to make room for the bridge. Most should sprout back.

II.14. The work bridge will facilitate construction of the permanent bridge that will improve traffic flow to and from Billings Heights.

ALTERNATIVES

NO ACTION: Without a work bridge, the permanent bridge would not be completed, or would completion would be delayed. More disruption of Alkali Creed would be expected as large equipment attempted to maneuver beneath the permanent bridge. It is likely that some vegetation would be removed in the process.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE: Construction of the permanent bridge would be expedited, and Alkali Creek would be least affected.

**APPENDIX A
PRIVATE PROPERTY ASSESSMENT ACT CHECKLIST**

The 54th Legislature enacted the Private Property Assessment Act, Chapter 462, Laws of Montana (1995). The intent of the legislation is to establish an orderly and consistent process by which state agencies evaluate their proposed actions under the "Takings Clauses" of the United States and Montana Constitutions. The Takings Clause of the Fifth Amendment of the United States Constitution provides: "nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation." Similarly, Article II, Section 29 of the Montana Constitution provides: "Private property shall not be taken or damaged for public use without just compensation..."

The Private Property Assessment Act applies to proposed agency actions pertaining to land or water management or to some other environmental matter that, if adopted and enforced without compensation, would constitute a deprivation of private property in violation of the United States or Montana Constitutions.

The Montana State Attorney General's Office has developed guidelines for use by state agency to assess the impact of a proposed agency action on private property. The assessment process includes a careful review of all issues identified in the Attorney General's guidance document (Montana Department of Justice 1997). If the use of the guidelines and checklist indicates that a proposed agency action has taking or damaging implications, the agency must prepare an impact assessment in accordance with Section 5 of the Private Property Assessment Act. For the purposes of this EA, the questions on the following checklist refer to the following required stipulation(s):

(List any mitigation/stipulations required, or note "None".)

None.

**DOES THE PROPOSED AGENCY ACTION HAVE TAKINGS IMPLICATIONS
UNDER THE PRIVATE PROPERTY ASSESSMENT ACT?**

YES	NO	
_____	<u> X </u>	1. Does the action pertain to land or water management or environmental regulation affecting private real property or water rights?
_____	<u> X </u>	2. Does the action result in either a permanent or indefinite physical occupation of private property?
_____	<u> X </u>	3. Does the action deprive the owner of all economically viable uses of the property?
_____	<u> X </u>	4. Does the action deny a fundamental attribute of ownership?
_____	<u> X </u>	5. Does the action require a property owner to dedicate a portion of property or to grant an easement? [If the answer is NO , skip questions 5a and 5b and continue with question 6.]

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|-------|--------------|---|
| _____ | _____ | 5a. Is there a reasonable, specific connection between the government requirement and legitimate state interests? |
| _____ | _____ | 5b. Is the government requirement roughly proportional to the impact of the proposed use of the property? |
| _____ | <u> X </u> | 6. Does the action have a severe impact on the value of the property? |
| _____ | <u> X </u> | 7. Does the action damage the property by causing some physical disturbance with respect to the property in excess of that sustained by the public generally? [If the answer is NO , do not answer questions 7a-7c.] |
| _____ | _____ | 7a. Is the impact of government action direct, peculiar, and significant? |
| _____ | _____ | 7b. Has government action resulted in the property becoming practically inaccessible, waterlogged, or flooded? |
| _____ | _____ | 7c. Has government action diminished property values by more than 30% and necessitated the physical taking of adjacent property or property across a public way from the property in question? |

Taking or damaging implications exist if **YES** is checked in response to question 1 and also to any one or more of the following questions: 2, 3, 4, 6, 7a, 7b, 7c; or if **NO** is checked in response to questions 5a or 5b.

If taking or damaging implications exist, the agency must comply with Section 5 of the Private Property Assessment Act, to include the preparation of a taking or damaging impact assessment. Normally, the preparation of an impact assessment will require consultation with agency legal staff.