

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Geo-Science Study on Tectonic Movement
Proposed Implementation Date:	June, 2012
Proponent:	University of Montana, Department of Geo-science
Location:	Section 16, Township 13 South – Range 08 West
County:	Beaverhead County

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Temporary geophysical observations of tectonic and earthquake related ground motions from June 1, to August 1, 2012.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:
Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

FWP Wildlife Biologist, Bob Brannon
DNRC Archeologist, Patrick Rennie
No lessee of the section at this time.
NRIS Search

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

NONE

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Action Alternative: Allow Rebecca Bendick of the University of Montana Geo-Sciences Department to perform temporary geophysical observations of tectonic and earthquake related ground motions.

No Action Alternative: Deny Rebecca Bendick of the University of Montana Geo-Sciences Department to perform temporary geophysical observations of tectonic and earthquake related ground motions.

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 any cumulative impacts to soils.

The equipment will lie on top of the ground and no geological or soils disturbance will occur. This proposal would have no long term or cumulative impacts on the geology or soils in the area.

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 cumulative effects to water resources.

There isn't any surface water located in the vicinity of this proposal. No long term or cumulative effects are anticipated to water quality from this proposal.

6. AIR QUALITY:

What pollutants or particulate would be produced? Identify air quality regulations or zones (e.g. Class I air shed) the project would influence. Identify cumulative effects to air quality.

This proposal will have no long term or cumulative impacts on air quality in the area that it is proposed.

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 cumulative effects to vegetation.

This proposal will have no long term or cumulative impacts to vegetation cover in the area.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:

Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

An NRIS search of the area revealed that the area is used by *Buteo regalis*, Ferruginous Hawk, and *Aquila chrysaetos*, Golden Eagle, *Centrocercus urophasianus*, Greater Sage Grouse, *Brachylagus idahoensis*, Pygmy Rabbit may be present on or around this state section. No critical nesting habitat has been identified in the area of the proposal. This proposal however has a small footprint and will only last for a short duration, (2 months) no critical habitat will be impacted and no long term or cumulative impacts to terrestrial, avian and aquatic habitats are anticipated.

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 cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

No endangered species were identified during a Montana Natural Heritage search of the area. Sensitive species that were identified were listed above in #8. Because of this proposal's small foot print and short duration no long term or cumulative impacts are anticipate from this proposal.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

A possible hunting blind or a dug out into rock was identified during a field evaluation of the area by Chuck Maddox, Land Use Specialist on the Dillon Unit. The site is located east of the ridge top in the NE ¼ of the section. The coordinates of the area that the proposal would occur is ¼ of a mile away from the archaeological site location. Patrick Renee DNRC Archeologist was not concerned with the proposal as long as the site is avoided there would be no cultural resource concerns.

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 cumulative effects to aesthetics.

Aesthetics of the site will not be affected. There will be no long term or cumulative impacts to aesthetics associated with this proposal.

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 cumulative effects to environmental resources.

There will be no long term or cumulative impacts to demands on environmental resources of land, water, air or energy associated with this proposal.

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.

There were no other projects or plans identified during the scoping process for this proposal. The section is surrounded by BLM lands and at this time there isn't any known analysis of the area that will occur. The surrounding BLM lands are also being used for this research project.

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.

There isn't any known or identified health or safety risk associated with this proposal.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

The section is currently not leased so no legal commercial or agricultural activities are occurring on this section so the proposal would have no long term or cumulative impacts on agricultural activities.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:

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

The proposal will not produce or eliminate any permanent jobs in Beaverhead County.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:

Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

The proposal will not affect the local or state tax revenue. There will be no long term or cumulative effects to the tax base.

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 cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services.

This proposal will have no long term or cumulative impacts on the demand for government services.

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.

This proposal will not affect County, State or BLM environmental plans and goals for the area.

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 cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

This proposal will not have any effect on recreational activities in the vicinity of the proposal.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:

Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify cumulative effects to population and housing.

The proposal will have no affect on density and distribution of population and housing in the area.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

This proposal will have no long term or cumulative effects on traditional and native lifestyles.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

The proposal will not have any long term or cumulative effects on the cultural uniqueness and diversity of the area.

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

This proposal would generate \$150.00 for the common school trust if allowed to proceed.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Tim Egan	Date: May 17, 2012
	Title: Unit Manager	

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Grant authority to conduct geophysical observations of tectonic movement

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

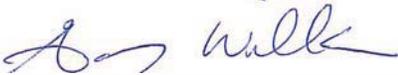
Significant impacts are not anticipated as result of the proposed activity.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

EIS

More Detailed EA

No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Garry Williams
	Title: Area manager, Central Land Office
Signature: 	Date: 5/22/2012

Geo-Science Observation Site Section 16, Township 13 South - Range 8 West MPM

