



**Montana Fish,  
Wildlife & Parks**

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## **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST**

### **PART I. PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION**

**1. Project Title:** Bigfork Rod & Gun Club

**2. Type of Proposed Action:**

Construct a Safe and Secure Storage facility

**3. Location Affected by Proposed Action:** The Bigfork Gun Club is in Flathead County and is located on Highway 83, three miles South of Hwy 209, southeast of Bigfork, Montana.



**Map 2 – Bigfork Gun Club Highway 83, .1 miles south of Hwy 209 junction**

**4. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action:** MCA 87-1-276 through 87-1-279 (Legislative established policies and procedures for the establishment and improvement of shooting ranges) and MCA 87-2-105 (Departmental authority to expend funds to provide training in the safe handling and use of firearms and safe hunting practices). The Montana Legislature has authorized funding for the establishment of a Shooting Range Development Program providing financial assistance for the development of shooting ranges. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) has responsibility for the administration of the program, including the necessary guidelines and procedures governing applications for funding assistance under the program.

To be eligible for grant assistance, a private shooting club or a private organization:

*(a)(i) Shall accept in its membership any person who holds or is eligible to hold a Montana hunting license and who pays club or organization membership fees;*

*(ii) May not limit the number of members;*

*(iii) may charge a membership fee not greater than the per-member share of the club's or organization's reasonable cost of provision of services, including establishment, improvement, and maintenance of shooting facilities and other membership services; and*

*(iv) shall offer members occasional guest privileges at no cost to the member or invited guest and shall make a reasonable effort to hold a public sight-in day each September, when the general public may use the shooting range for a day-use fee or at no cost; or*

*(b) Shall admit the general public for a reasonable day-use fee.*

**5. Need for the Action(s):**

The range needs a safe and secure storage facility. The condition of the existing storage facilities are unreliable and only temporary in nature. The current storage facilities are located in three temporary locations, which consist of two sheds and a "U-Haul" truck box.

**6. Objectives for the Action(s):**

Provide a safe and secure permanent storage facility.

**7. Project Size: estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected:**

The proposed construction of a new storage building is expected to disturb a 30' x 40' spot within the range.

**8. Affected Environment (A brief description of the affected area of the proposed project):**

The Bigfork Gun Club was incorporated as a nonprofit corporation in June of 1988 and is situated on an abandoned landfill, which has been in the possession of the Bigfork Gun Club for more than 24 years. The club property is bordered on all sides by logging ground owned by STOLTZE F H LAND & LUMBER CO of Columbia Falls MT. This land provides an elevated and timbered buffer zone for the range. At this time, it is not clear as to how long Stoltze has been in possession of the logging property.

**9. Description of Project:** Construct a safe and secure storage facility

- Site prep with gravel on a 30' x 40' apron
- Pour a 5" thick 3500 psi concrete slab
- 12' walls with metal exterior and OSB interior
- Metal roof
- 16' x 10' overhead door
- 3' x 6'8" personnel door
- Eight 2' x 4' windows at 9' high spaced evenly with four windows per side

**10. List any Other Local, State, or Federal Agency that has Overlapping or Additional Jurisdiction:**

None

**(a) Permits, Licenses and/or Authorizations:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Date Filed/#</u>
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N/A

**Funding:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	\$17,875.00

**11. Affiliations, Cooperating Agencies, User Groups and/or Supporting Groups:** See gun club webpage at <http://www.bigforkgunclub.com>. The Bigfork Gun Club is a full service facility dedicated to the shooting arts. The Gun Club is a membership only club with guests. Hunter education courses are held there two times a year and the range hosts the Becoming an Outdoor Woman (BOW) program. Regular club activities include Bigfork Defensive Pistol, High Power Rifle, Single Action Shooting Society (SASS), Skeet and Trap shooting, Small bore silhouette and prone, and the United States Practical Shooting Association (USPSA).

**12. History of the Planning and Scoping Process, and Any Public Involvement:** Proposed range improvements proposals have been discussed within the membership of the club, the associated project vendors, contractors, and Tribal authorities.

**13. List of Agencies Consulted/Contacted During Preparation of the EA:**  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

**14. Names, Address, and Phone Number of Project Sponsor:**  
Ken Hannah, 54 Honeysuckle Ln., Kalispell, MT 59901, (406) 890-2075

**15. Other Pertinent Information:**  
Shooting range applications require the participating governing body to approve by resolution its submission of applications for shooting range-funding assistance. Resolution Date: March 5, 2012

## **PART II. IDENTIFICATION OF THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES**

The proposed alternative A, alternative B and the no action alternative were considered.

- **Alternative A (Proposed Alternative)** is as described in Part I, paragraph 9 (Description of Project). Construction of a safe secure storage facility.
- **Alternative B (No Action Alternative)** Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Shooting Range Development Grant money would be denied and the area will remain as an active shooting range without improvements proposed. The range will continue on with present conditions. Land use would remain the same. The no action alternative would have significant negative environmental or potentially negative consequences.

### **Describe any Alternatives considered and eliminated from Detailed Study:**

NONE. Only the proposed alternative and the no action alternative were considered. There were no other alternatives that were deemed reasonably available or prudent.

**List and explain proposed mitigating measures (stipulations):** None

**PART III. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

Abbreviated Checklist – The degree and intensity determines extent of Environmental Review. An abbreviated checklist may be used for those projects that are not complex, controversial, or are not in environmental sensitive areas.

**Table 1. Potential impact on physical environment.**

<b>Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:</b>	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>Potentially Significant</b>	<b>Minor</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Can Be Mitigated</b>	<b>Comments Below</b>
1. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources				X		
2. Terrestrial or aquatic life and/or habitats				X		
3. Introduction of new species into an area				X		
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
10. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy				X		
11. Aesthetics				X		

**9.** This project uses no federal funds nor does it take place on state owned or controlled property; therefore, the Federal 106 Regulations and the State Antiques Act do not apply.

**Table 2. Potential impacts on human environment.**

<b>Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:</b>	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>Potentially Significant</b>	<b>Minor</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Can Be Mitigated</b>	<b>Comments Below</b>
1. Social structures and cultural diversity				<b>X</b>		
2. Changes in existing public benefits provided by wildlife populations and/or habitat				<b>X</b>		
3. Local and state tax base and tax revenue				<b>X</b>		
4. Agricultural production				<b>X</b>		
5. Human health				<b>X</b>		
6. Quantity & distribution of community & personal income				<b>X</b>		
7. Access to & quality of recreational activities				<b>X</b>		
8. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals (ordinances)				<b>X</b>		
9. Distribution & density of population and housing				<b>X</b>		
10. Demands for government services				<b>X</b>		
11. Industrial and/or commercial activity				<b>X</b>		

**5.** Range site plans, construction, and the ongoing operational and maintenance plans meet the standards of safety for the range participants and the public at large.

#### **PART IV. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT**

All of the pertinent or potential impacts of the project have been reviewed, discussed, and analyzed. None of the projects reviewed were complex, controversial, or located in an environmentally sensitive area. The projects being implemented are already on an existing range/altere areas that together with the insignificant environmental effects of the proposed action, indicates that this should be considered the final version of the environmental assessment. There are no significant environmental or economic impacts associated with the proposed alternative. The Bigfork Gun Club's proposed alternative, to construct a safe and secure storage facility and to provide a safe regulated shooting opportunity is supported by its members and the public. Therefore, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks should approve the proposed alternative (A) for the improvements as outlined in Part I, Para. 9.

#### **PART V. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES**

**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?** Individually, the proposed actions have minor impacts. However, it was determined that there are no significant or potentially significant cumulatively impacts. Cumulative impacts have been assessed considering any incremental impact of the proposed action when they are combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, and no significant impacts or substantially controversial issues were found. There are no new hazards created with this project and there are no conflicts with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan.

#### **Recommendation and justification concerning preparation of EIS:**

There are no significant environmental or economic impacts associated with the proposed alternative; therefore, an EIS is not required.

#### **PART VI. EA CONCLUSION SECTION**

#### **Individuals or groups contributing to, or commenting on, this EA:**

Ken Hannah, 54 Honeysuckle Ln., Kalispell, MT 59901  
MT Fish Wildlife and Parks

#### **EA prepared by:**

GENE R. HICKMAN  
MS Wildlife Management  
Ecological Assessments  
Helena, MT 59602

**Date Completed:** July 29, 2012

#### **Describe public involvement, if any:**

This draft EA will be advertised on FWP's web site and through a legal ad in the *Bigfork Eagle* announcing a public comment period. A press release will also announce the project and comment period.