

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Sun Mountain Lumber Log Hauling Road Use
Proposed Implementation Date:	August, 2013
Proponent:	Sun Mountain Lumber
Location:	Sections 16, Township 1 South – Range 16 West
County:	Beaverhead

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The proposed action is the issuance of a Land Use License for log hauling on approx. 2,400 ft of existing road. The purpose of the action is to allow access for a salvage timber sale and log hauling from timber harvested on Carl Lewis property. An estimated 250 MBF of timber will be harvested and hauled over the road.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

The following parties were contacted for this proposal;

- DNRC, Archaeologist, P. Rennie
- FWP, Wildlife Biologist, Vanna Boccadori
- FWP Fisheries Biologist, Matt Jaeger
- Montana Natural Heritage Program
- Carl Lewis, Lessee

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

NONE

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

No Action Alternative: A Land Use License would not be issued for the hauling of logs over state land.

Action Alternative: The Land Use License would be issued as proposed to haul approximately 250 MBF of timber over 1473 feet of existing road.

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 route follows an existing road on an open ridgeline on the State Land. Soils are a granitic loam but road grades are very gentle and road can be used without any additional construction. Impacts to the road are not expected.

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 aren't any perennial or intermittent streams or springs within the project area. No long term or cumulative effects are anticipated 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.

The project includes piling and burning of harvested logging slash on private lands. Localized short duration particulate emissions occur during slash burning. Slash burning is normally conducted in late October through November.

Particulate emissions during this period are regulated by the DEQ and the Cooperative Airshed groups.

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.

No rare plants or cover types have been noted in the project area or on the State tracts. The area along the road is mainly bunch grasses and sage brush.

No noxious weeds have been noted along the road to the proposed project or on the State tracts.

The DNRC requires the washing of equipment, seeding of grass and monitoring of disturbed areas to minimize the potential of noxious weeds being introduced.

No long term or cumulative effects or impacts to plant communities are anticipated.

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.

A variety of big game, small mammals, raptors and songbirds potentially use this area. NRIS searches of the area revealed a number of sensitive species occur near the proposed haul route location. Sage grouse, Fishers and Wolverines have been present within the proposed project area however the hauling would occur on an existing road with little impact to habitat or animal behavior.

Due to the size and duration of the proposed project, the hauling will only take about 2 weeks to complete no impacts are expected to wildlife and fisheries habitats.

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.

Due to the size and duration of the proposed project, no impacts are expected to occur to any endangered, threatened or sensitive species.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

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

There are no cultural resource concerns within the proposed project area. No additional archaeological investigative work is recommended prior to road use.

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.

The proposed use is confined to an existing road that receives minimal use from the lessee and the occasional hunter during the big game hunting season. Due to the size and duration of this proposal there isn't any long term or cumulative impacts to aesthetics anticipated from 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.

NONE

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 are no known studies, plans or projects currently being investigated for this parcel of land or under MEPA review. The same road was used in 2004 for the hauling of timber off of the BLM salvage Mussigbrod Timber Sale.

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.

NONE

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

NONE

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.

People are currently employed in the wood products industry. Due to the relatively small size of the timber sale program, there would be no measurable cumulative impact from this proposed action on employment.

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.

People are currently paying taxes from the wood products industry in the region. Due to the relatively small size of the timber sale program, there would be no measurable cumulative impact from this proposed action on tax revenues.

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.

There would be no measurable cumulative impacts related to demand for government services due to the small size of this proposal, the short-term impacts to traffic and the small possibility of a few people temporarily relocating to the area.

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.

NONE

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.

Persons possessing a valid state lands recreational use license or FWP conservation license may conduct recreational activities on the tract. The proposed project would not affect the existing access for the general public.

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.

There would be no measurable cumulative impacts related to population and housing due to the relatively small size of the timber sale on private lands and the use of the road on state lands, and the fact that people are already employed in this occupation in the region.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

NONE

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

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

NONE

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.

If the action alternative is chosen this LUL would generate \$750.00 of revenue for the Common School trust.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Tim Egan	Date: 8/14/2013
	Title: Dillon Unit Manager	

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Select the Action Alternative. The road exist today with no new construction needed to implement the LUL. Mitigation measures will ensure impacts are minimiuzed.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

Mitigation measures to prevent any long term or cumulative effects include the following;

- (1) Licensee’s use of the road will be limited to dry, frozen or snow covered conditions to prevent rutting and surface displacement. Any damages to the road surface or drainage features must be immediately repaired.
- (2) Licensee must repair or replace any damaged leasehold improvements including but not limited to fences, gates, cattleguards and culverts.
- (3) Licensee is not permitted to reconstruct or relocate any portion of the existing road without prior written approval by DNRC’s Dillon Unit Office.

- (4) Sun Mountain Lumber will contact Dillon Unit once hauling has been completed for a final inspection to assure the road has proper drainage and meets BMP requirements.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

EIS

More Detailed EA

No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Hoyt Richards
	Title: CLO Area Manager
Signature: /s/	Date: August 15, 2013.