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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

PART I. PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION

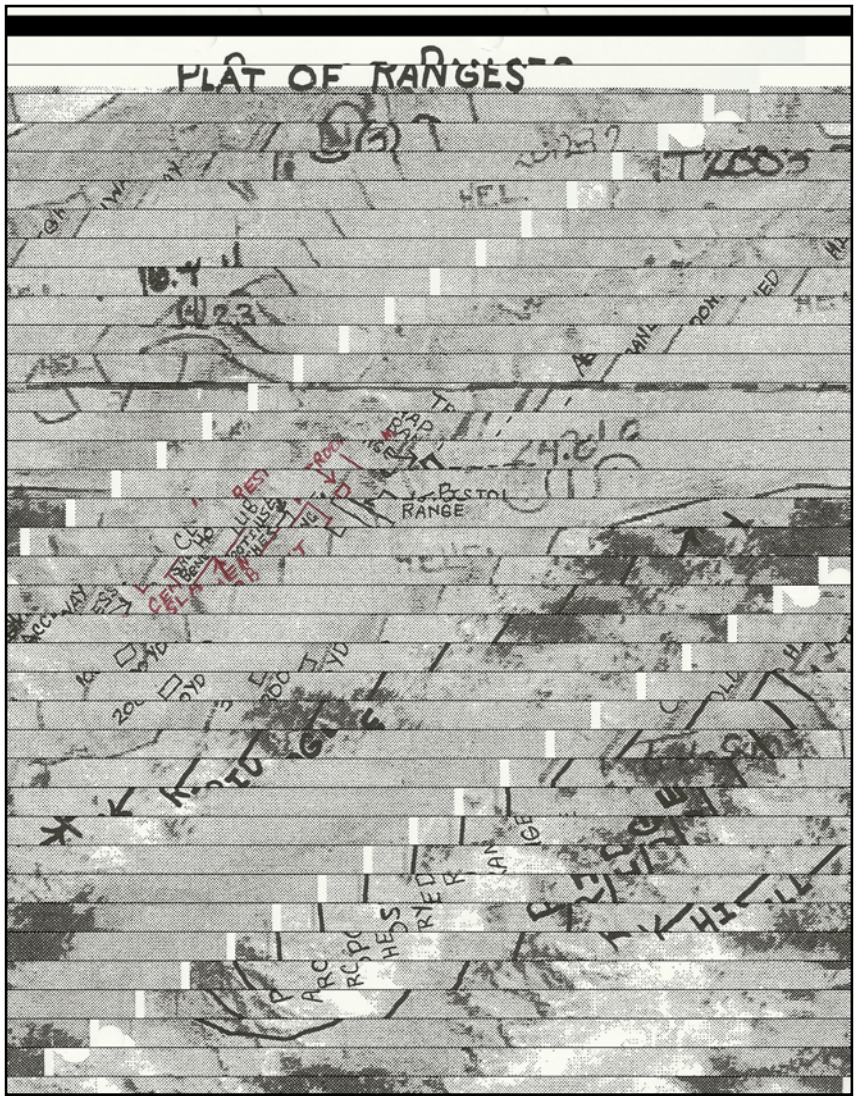
1. Project Title: Treasure Shooting Association Range

2. Type of Proposed Action:

- Installation of privacy fencing around the toilet.
- Construction of shooting bench and cover.

3. Location Affected by Proposed Action:
The Treasure Shooting Association (TSA) Range is located on 35 acres 4 miles southwest of Hysham, Montana along Old Highway 10, Lat. 46.2486, Long. -107.28637.

Map 1 – Aerial View of Treasure Shooting Association Range, Hysham, Montana.



Map 2 - Proposed Improvements for the Treasure Shooting Association Range

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):

- Privacy and wheelchair accessibility is needed around the existing chemical toilet.
- A shooting bench concrete pad and canopy would encourage more participation in shooting sports in the community, especially rifle shooting, and provide wheelchair accessibility.

6. Objectives for the Action(s):
The objectives of the proposed improvements is to place a chemical toilet on a cement slab and enclose the toilet with fencing to provide wheelchair accessible, secure, and private toilet facilities. In addition, the shooting bench concrete pad and canopy would provide for wheelchair accessibility and improve the participation and enjoyment of shooting sports in the area.

7. Project Size: estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected:
The proposed improvements would cover approximately 664 square feet of the 35-acre Treasure Shooting Association range.

8. Affected Environment (A brief description of the affected area of the proposed project):
The property is located on 35 acres of privately owned land. The Treasure Shooting Association entered into a 10-year lease agreement with Richard and Dan Cunningham in 2006, which was later extended to 2023. The property is not located within or adjacent to a floodplain and there are no permanent surface waters or wetlands on the property. All water on the range is seasonal and is directed away from the property via natural water channels and a ditch alongside Old Highway 10. The range offers opportunities for several shooting sports, including rifle, pistol, and shotgun.

9. Description of Project:
An 8” X 8” cement pad would provide a secure foundation for the chemical toilet. The toilet would be enclosed in an 8’ tall fence for privacy. The 8’ X 60’ X 6” reinforced concrete slab to be used as a shooting bench would be constructed at the main firing line. An enclosed canopy would also be installed.

10. List any Other Local, State, or Federal Agency that has Overlapping or Additional Jurisdiction:
None

Permits, Licenses and/or Authorizations:

Agency Name	Permit	Date Filed/#
N/A		

Funding:

Agency Name	Funding Amount
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	$4,290

11. Affiliations, Cooperating Agencies, User Groups and/or Supporting Groups:
The Treasure Shooting Association Range is located on 35 acres of exclusively private land leased to the Treasure Shooting Association. This is a private range with a membership fee, though visitors are welcome and are charged on a per round basis. Other organizations that have used the range and events that have been hosted at the range include: 4th of July Kids Fun Shoot; Hunter and Bow Safety Classes; Invitational Open Pre-

season Rifle Shoot; and Invitational Open Trap Shoot.

12. History of the Planning and Scoping Process, and Any Public Involvement:
Because the Treasure Shooting Association is a nonprofit private shooting club for members, there has been no public involvement in the planning process. Proposed range improvement proposals have been discussed with the club members and the associated project vendors and contractors.

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

14. Names, Address, and Phone Number of Project Sponsor:
Ronald Thomas, P.O. Box 413, Hysham, MT, 59038, (406) 342-5218.

15. Other Pertinent Information:
The Treasure Shooting Association is a nonprofit private shooting club. The range provides the only shooting facilities in 39 miles of the property, with the closest near Forsyth, Montana.

Shooting range applications require the participating governing body to approve by resolution its submission of applications for shooting range-funding assistance. Resolution Date: April 30, 2013.

PART II. IDENTIFICATION OF THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES

Alternative A, the **Proposed Alternative,** and **Alternative B**, the **No Action Alternative**, were considered.

- **Alternative A (Proposed Alternative)** is as described in Part I, paragraph 9 (Description of Project): to construct a private, secure, and wheelchair accessible toilet and a shooting bench concrete pad with canopy. There are beneficial consequences to acceptance of the **Proposed Alternative**.
- **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 the proposed improvements. The no action alternative would have no significant negative environmental or potentially negative consequences. The range will continue on with present conditions. Land use would remain the same.

Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented: Only the proposed alternative and the no action alternative were considered. There were no other alternatives that were deemed reasonably available, nor prudent. Neither the proposed alternative nor 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 was no other alternative that were deemed reasonably available, or prudent. Neither the **Proposed Alternative** nor the **No Action Alternative** would have significant negative environmental or potentially negative consequences.

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 environmentally sensitive areas.

Table 1. Potential impact on physical environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources				**X**		
2. Terrestrial or aquatic life and/or habitats				**X**		**#2**
3. Introduction of new species into an area				**X**		
4. Vegetation cover, quantity & quality				**X**		
5. Water quality, quantity & distribution (surface or groundwater)				**X**		**#5**
6. Existing water right or reservation				**X**		
7. Geology & soil quality, stability & moisture				**X**		
8. Air quality or objectionable odors				**X**		**#8**
9. Historical & archaeological sites				**X**		**#9**
10. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy				**X**		
11. Aesthetics				**X**		

2. & 5. There are no delineated wetlands and no natural water sources within the area proposed for development. No critical wildlife habitat would be affected. Any resident or transient wildlife may leave the immediate area during road re-surfacing activity.

8. Minor and temporary dust and vehicle emissions would be created by construction equipment during construction of the proposed improvements. However, the construction time is short and human effects will be limited due to the sparse population in the surrounding area.

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.

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

4. The site is adjacent to surrounding agricultural land used for grazing and hay production.

7. The construction of the proposed project will improve the quality of the shooting sports within the community.

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 project reviewed were complex, controversial, or located in an environmentally sensitive area. The

projects being implemented are already on an existing range or altered 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 Treasure Shooting Associations' Proposed Alternative, 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, Paragraph 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 extreme 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:

- Ronald Thomas, P.O. Box 413, Hysham, MT, 59038, (406) 342-5218.
- MT Fish Wildlife and Parks

EA prepared by:
ANDREA DARLING
Darling Natural Resource Consulting
Montana City, MT 59634

Date Completed:
July 15, 2013

Describe public involvement, if any:
This draft EA will be advertised on FWP's web site and through a legal ad in the ***Forsyth Independent Press, Forsyth, MT*** announcing a public comment period. A press release will also announce the project and comment period.