



MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

PO Box 200701 Helena, MT 59620-0701
(406) 444-9947

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

PART I. PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION

1. Project Title: Missoula Trap and Skeet Club

2. Type of Proposed Action:

Members of the Missoula Trap and Skeet Club (MTSC) propose to reconstruct the Olympic Trap facility by rebuilding the bunker, replacing the roof and doors, updating the electrical facilities to meet modern codes, and replacing all 15 of the clay pigeons throwing machines.

3. Location Affected by Proposed Action:

The Missoula Trap and Skeet Range is located on U.S. Highway 10 approximately 9 miles west of Missoula, Montana at 8650 Old Highway 10, Missoula, MT, 59808; Latitude 46.9544, Longitude -114.1483; Section 20, Township 14 North, Range 20 West.



Figure 1 – General Location of Missoula Trap and Skeet Range, Missoula, Montana



Figure 2. Aerial View of the Project Area

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 MTSC Range is the only shooting facility in Montana that offers the opportunity for International/Olympic Trap shooting for both recreational enjoyment and sanctioned International/Olympic competitive events. In fact, the International/Olympic Trap Range at the MTSC Range is the only such facility between Renton, Washington and Colorado Springs, Colorado and it receives significant and increasing use by club members and the public. The concrete bunker that houses all the equipment is crumbling which makes it unsafe for occupancy. The bunker needs a new concrete roof and weather tight doors. The machines that throw the clay pigeons are 45 years old and are no longer serviceable. The electrical service needs to be updated to meet modern safety codes. The MTSC proposes to rebuild the bunker, replace the roof and doors, update the electrical to meet code, and replace of 15 of the machines that throw the clay pigeons. The proposed improvements will contribute to the long-term safety, convenience, and usefulness of the facility for the club members, the local community, and the general public.

6. Objectives for the Action(s):

The goals for the MTSC are to improve the safety, convenience, and usefulness of the trap and skeet range by rebuilding the bunker, replacing the roof and doors, updating the electrical facilities to meet modern codes, and replacing all 15 of the clay pigeons throwing machines.

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

The proposed project would involve approximately one acre of the 75-acre MTSC Range.

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

The MTSC Range is located on 75 acres of private land owned in fee title by the MTSC. The property is not located within a floodplain and there are no permanent surface waters or wetlands on the property. The range offers shooting opportunities for shotgun only.

9. Description of Project:

The proposed project involves construction of an additional storage building, extension of safety fences between the skeet fields, and installation of facilities to allow for off-hours access to two of the skeet fields.

The estimated budget includes:

▪ Trap Machines	\$ 46,000
▪ Construction Materials	\$ 16,950
▪ Labor- Paid	\$ 8,050
▪ Miscellaneous Contracted Services	\$ 3,000
▪ Misc. Access Materials and Items	<u>\$ 1,000</u>
▪ Total Project Budget	\$ 75,000
▪ Total Funding Requested from FWP	\$ 37,500

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

None

Permits, Licenses and/or Authorizations:

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

Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	\$37,500

11. Affiliations, Cooperating Agencies, User Groups and/or Supporting Groups:

The MTSC Range is a private range with an annual membership fee of \$40 for individuals and of \$50 for families. Open range days are offered at no cost one time to non-members and member guests and during organized matches, new shooter clinics, and other public events. Several organizations use the range each year, including various veteran's groups, law enforcement, 4-H, ATA, NSSA, USAUS, Scholastic Clays Target Program, Boys Scouts, US Forest Service, the three local high schools and four junior highs, VA, Missoula Police Department, Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, University of Montana, and FWP Hunters Education. In addition, 21 events are hosted by the at the range, including charitable events, shooting classes, and gun safety classes.

12. History of the Planning and Scoping Process, and Any Public Involvement:

Because the is a nonprofit private shooting club for members, there has been no public involvement in the planning process. Proposed range development 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 and Contact:

Mark McMurray, 19225 Arabian Lane, Frenchtown, MT 59834 (406) 540-3664.

15. Other Pertinent Information:

The MTSC is a private nonprofit shooting club. The closest shooting range providing similar shooting opportunities is over 50 miles from the MTSC Range in Hamilton, Montana.

Shooting range applications require the participating governing body to approve by resolution its submission of applications for shooting range-funding assistance. Resolution Date: January 17, 2021.

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 reconstruct the Olympic Trap facility by rebuilding the bunker, replacing the roof and doors, updating the electrical facilities to meet modern codes, and replacing all 15 of the clay pigeons throwing machines.

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) 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 determine 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		4
5. Water quality, quantity & distribution (surface or groundwater)				X		5
6. Existing water right or reservation				X		
7. Geology & soil quality, stability & moisture				X		7
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		

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
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.

4. The proposed project occupies a small portion of the property. Due to prior land use, native vegetation has been disturbed in the area of the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project will have a minor impact on native vegetation in the area.

7. The proposed project will cause limited displacement of soils but the developments will not substantially affect geological features or establish new erosion patterns. Soil disruption for this site is localized. Erosion control measures will be in effect and disturbed area will be reseeded.

8. Minor and temporary dust and vehicle emissions would be created by construction equipment during construction. However, the construction time is short and human effects will be limited due to the sparse population near the property.

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		5
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 agricultural land used for grazing and hay production and to privately owned commercial property.

5. The proposed extension of the safety fence would improve the safety for members and the public using the range.

7. The proposed developments will increase shooting opportunities 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 projects 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's Proposed Alternative, to rebuild the bunker, replace the roof and doors, update the electrical facilities, and replace all 15 of the clay pigeons throwing machines, 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 cumulative 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:

- Mark McMurray, 19225 Arabian Lane, Frenchtown, MT 59834 (406) 540-3664.
- MT Fish Wildlife and Parks

EA prepared by:

Andrea Darling, Darling Natural Resource Consulting, Montana City, MT 59634

Date Completed:

April 22, 2021

Describe public involvement, if any:

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