



MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

PART I. PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION

1. Project Title: Yaak Rod and Gun Club Proposed Improvement Project

2. Type of Proposed Action:

Members of the Yaak Rod and Gun Club (YRGC) propose improving the safety and enhancing neighbor relations for the YRGC Range by erecting a shot screen at the skeet range to prevent shot from falling onto neighboring land.

3. Location Affected by Proposed Action:

The YRGC Range is located off Yaak River Road (County Road 508) on Shooting Range Road approximately .5 miles southwest of Yaak, Montana; latitude 48.83419, longitude -115.709399; southwest ¼ of Section 35, Township 36 North, Range 32 West (Figure 1 and 2).

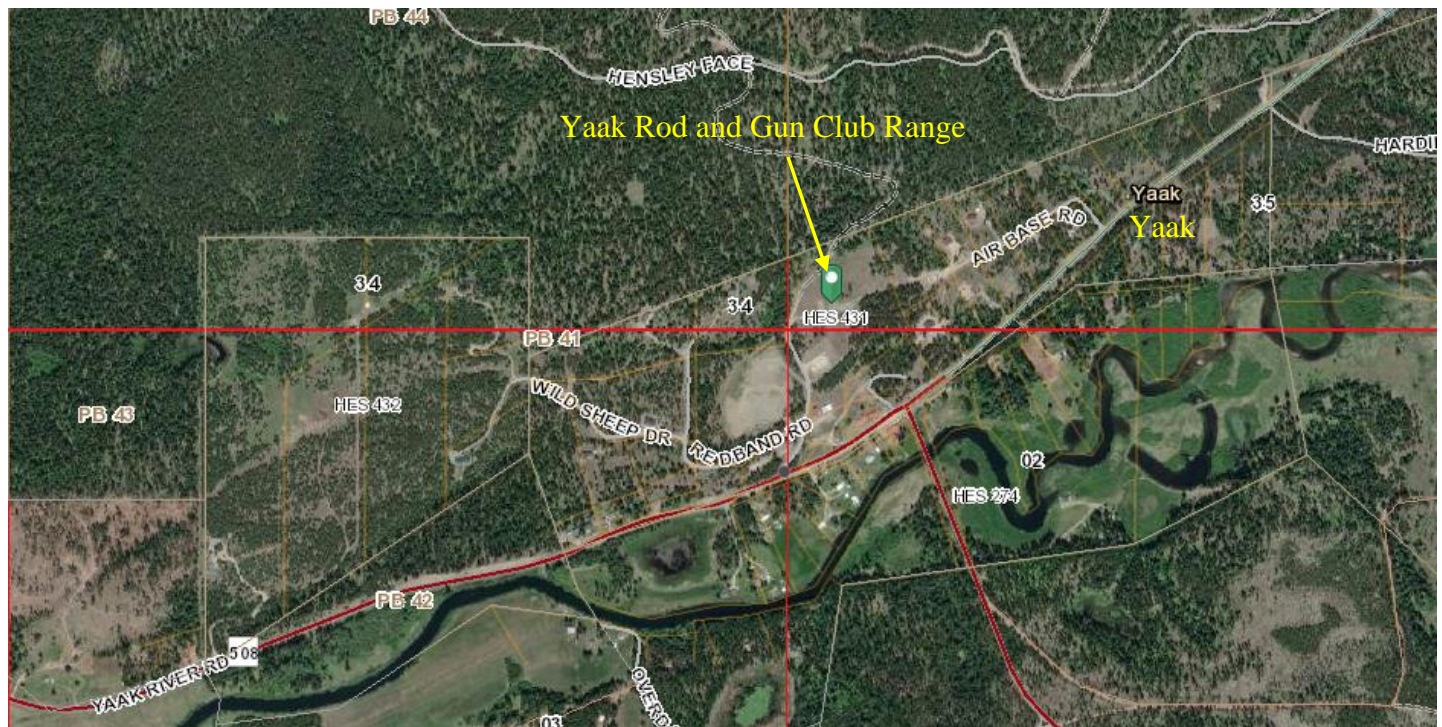


Figure 1. General Location of Yaak Rod and Gun Club Range, Yaak, MT.



Figure 2 – Yaak Rod and Gun Club Proposed Project, Yaak, Montana.

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 objective of the YRGC proposed project is to improve the safety of and neighbor relationships with the YRGC Range. Lead shot from the skeet range is carrying over the property line to two other properties adjacent to the YRGC Range. The shot screen will prevent that from happening and will keep peace with the neighbors while allowing visitors to keep shooting. The shot screen is currently used at several ranges that have been affected by encroaching development. The YRGC has talked with the product supplier and visited one of the ranges using the shot screen.

6. Objectives for the Action(s):

The 2021 goal for the YRGC is to improve the YRGC Range safety in order to improve the long-term usefulness and convenience of the facility the club members, neighbors, local community, and general public.

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

The proposed project would involve approximately 1 acre of the 28-acre YRGC Range.

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

The YRGC Range is located on 28 acres of public land leased from Lincoln County. The YRGC signed a 40-year Lease on October 11, 2006, with the option to renew the Lease for additional terms of five years. The YRGC lease of county-owned land will be effective through October 10, 2046. 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 rifle, pistol, shotgun, and black powder shooting.

9. Description of Project:

The proposed project would involve erecting a 16' X 50' shot screen on 55' poles for the skeet range. This will catch shot that is currently leaving the property and landing on neighboring land. The YRGC plans to double the shot screens for a total of four screens because visitors shoot toward the screen at very close range.

Estimated costs include:

▪ Shot Screens (4)	\$ 4,140
▪ Guy Wire	\$ 400
▪ Fittings	\$ 600
▪ 70' Telephone Poles (3)	\$ 2,850
▪ Backhoe and Crane Operator Time	\$ 1,280
▪ Volunteer Labor	\$ 1,032
▪ Total Project Budget	\$ 10,302
▪ Total Funding Requested from FWP	\$ 5,151

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	\$ 5,151

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

The YRGC Range is located on 28 acres of public land leased to the YRGC by Lincoln County. This is a private range with a membership fee of \$20 for individuals, \$30 for families, and a one-time fee of \$200 for lifetime membership. The range is open to visitors and guests of members for free. The YRGC hosts as many as 20 events each year and approximately 6 organizations use the range every year, including: FWP Hunter Education; Women on Target; Yaak Women's Club; Yaak Rod and Gun Club; and other activities sponsored by the YRGC are held at the range.

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

Because the YRGC is a nonprofit private shooting club for members, there has been no public involvement in the planning process. 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:

Jim Mayo, 22266 Yaak River Road, Troy, MT 59935. (406) 690-8534.

15. Other Pertinent Information:

The YRGC is a private nonprofit shooting club. The closest shooting range providing similar shooting opportunities is in Troy, Montana, about 40 miles from the Yaak Rod and Gun Club.

Shooting range applications require the participating governing body to approve by resolution its submission of applications for shooting range-funding assistance. Resolution Date: December 12, 2020 .

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 improve the safety of and the neighbor relationships with the YRGC Range by erecting a shot screen at the YRGC skeet range. 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 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		
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 or natural water sources within the area proposed for development. No critical wildlife habitat is located on the site and, therefore, would not be affected by the proposed project. The proposed project would have only minor and short-term impacts on wildlife and native plant species. Resident or transient wildlife may temporarily leave the area during construction but would return upon project completion.

4. The proposed project will have little to no impact on the overall abundance and diversity of plant species within the area. 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 little or no 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 areas will be reseeded.

9. This project uses no federal funds nor does it take place on state- or federally-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 not under agricultural production.

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. The project reviewed is not complex, controversial, or located in an environmentally sensitive area. The project being implemented is already on an existing range or altered area 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 YRGC's Proposed Alternative, to improve the YRGC Range safety system, 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:

- Jim Mayo, 22266 Yaak River Road, Troy, MT 59935. (406) 690-8534.

- MT Fish Wildlife and Parks

EA prepared by:

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

Date Completed:

June 9, 2021

Describe public involvement, if any:

This draft EA will be advertised on FWP's web site and through a legal ad in the *Daily Inter Lake, Kalispell, Montana* announcing a public comment period.