

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
1420 E 6th Ave, PO Box 200701 Helena, MT 59620-0701
(406) 444-2452

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

PART 1. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

Project Title: Tree Removal and Riprap Installation in Tree Root Voids on the Miles City Levee

Application Date: 10/20/2022

Name, Address and Phone Number: Kenneth M Backes
P.O. Box 1630
Miles City, MT 59301
406-234-0925

Project Location: Miles City levee between Tongue-Yellowstone river confluence and Lewis Street on the Yellowstone River in Custer County.

Description of Project:

Remove trees from the levee starting from the toe and along the top of the levee and repair areas where trees or stumps are removed.
--

Alternatives to Proposed Action:

There are no proposed alternatives, the levee is currently providing protection to the city from high water events.

For this EA, alternatives to issuing the SPA124 Permit include:

1. Deny the permit – this alternative would leave the levee exposed to future hydraulic forces and potential failure.
2. Issue a 124 Permit for work proposed in the application. The proposed action has few perceived negative effects and improves the public safety aspects for the community.

Other groups or agencies contacted or which may have overlapping jurisdiction: US Army Corps of Engineers for a 404 permit.

PART 2. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

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 Provided
1. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources				X		
2. Terrestrial or aquatic life and/or habitats			X		X	X
3. Introduction of new species into an area				X		
4. Vegetation cover, quantity and quality				X		
5. Water quality, quantity and distribution (surface or groundwater)				X		
6. Existing water right or reservation				X		
7. Geology and soil quality, stability and moisture				X		
8. Air quality or objectional odors				X		
9. Historical and archaeological sites				X		
10. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy				X		
11. Aesthetics				X		

Comments

(A description of potentially significant, or unknown, impacts and potential alternatives for mitigation must be provided.)

Stream bank projects on the Yellowstone River downstream of Cartersville Dam at Forsyth have the potential to impact the presence of endangered pallid sturgeon or disrupt pallid sturgeon migrations. This project will be completed above the existing water line and during low flow periods which are adequate mitigation measures to prevent negative impacts to pallid sturgeon. Prohibiting stream bank projects during the spawning migration period also reduces potential impacts to spawning migrations.

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 Provided
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		
5. Human health			X			X
6. Quantity and distribution of community and personal income				X		
7. Access to and quality of recreational activities				X		
8. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals (ordinances)				X		
9. Distribution and density of population and housing				X		
10. Demands for government services			X			X
11. Industrial and/or commercial activity				X		

Comments

(A description of potentially significant, or unknown, impacts and potential alternatives for mitigation must be provided as comments.)

The Miles City levee is owned and maintained by the City of Miles City. The main goal of the levee is reducing floods and associated financial losses to local residences/businesses and public safety for the residents of Miles City. This is a basic government service demanded by the residents of Miles City.



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?

No

Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action when alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider. Include a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:

Alternatives listed and discussed above.

EA prepared by: Kenneth M Backes

Date Completed: 10/25/2022

PART 3. EA PREPARATION

Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? (YES/NO)?

No. Based on an evaluation of the primary, secondary, and cumulative impacts to the physical and human environment under the Montana Environmental Protection Act (MEPA), this environmental review found no significant impacts from the proposed project. In determining the significance of the impacts, FWP assessed the severity, duration, geographic extent, and frequency of the impact, the probability that the impact would occur or reasonable assurance that the impact would not occur, growth-inducing or growth inhibiting aspects of the impact, the importance to the state and to society of the environmental resource or value affected, and precedent that would be set as a result of the proposed action that would commit FWP to future actions; and potential conflicts with local, federal, or state laws. Therefore, an EA is the appropriate level of review and an EIS is not required.