

## Environmental Assessment Checklist

**Project Name: Glacier Nordic Club Trail Grooming**  
**Proposed Implementation Date: December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017**  
**Proponent: Kalispell Unit, Northwest Land Office, Montana DNRC**  
**County: Flathead**

### Type and Purpose of Action

**Description of Proposed Action:**

The Kalispell Unit of the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) is proposing the **Glacier Nordic Club Trail Grooming** project. The project is located 3 miles NE of Whitefish, MT (refer to Attachments vicinity map A-1 and site map A-2) and includes the following section: Section 16, Township 31 North, Range 21.

Beneficiary	Legal Description	Total Acres
Common Schools	<b>T31N, R21W, Sec.16</b>	<b>520</b>
Public Buildings		
MSU 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grant		
MSU Morrill		
Eastern College-MSU/Western College-U of M		
Montana Tech		
University of Montana		
School for the Deaf and Blind		
Pine Hills School		
Veterans Home		
Public Land Trust		
Capitol Buildings		

Objectives of the project include:

- To allow Glacier Nordic Club (GNC) to groom existing roads for groomed Nordic ski trails.

Proposed activities include: Use of snowmobiles to groom roads for Nordic skiing trails.

<b>Duration of Activities:</b>	4 Months
<b>Implementation Period:</b>	December 1 <sup>st</sup> -March 31 <sup>st</sup>

The lands involved in this proposed project are held in trust by the State of Montana. (Enabling Act of February 22, 1889; 1972 Montana Constitution, Article X, Section 11). The Board of Land

Commissioners and the DNRC are required by law to administer these trust lands to produce the largest measure of reasonable and legitimate return over the long run for the beneficiary institutions (Section 77-1-202, MCA).

The DNRC would manage lands involved in this project in accordance with:

- The State Forest Land Management Plan (DNRC 1996),
- Administrative Rules for Forest Management (ARM 36.11.401 through 471),
- and all other applicable state and federal laws.

---

## Project Development

---

### SCOPING:

- DATE:
  - June 22<sup>nd</sup> –July 15<sup>th</sup> 2017
- PUBLIC SCOPED:
  - Adjacent landowners.
- AGENCIES SCOPED:
  - Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks; USFS
- COMMENTS RECEIVED:
  - How many: 7
  - Concerns:
    1. There is concern about trespass on Haskill Creek Road because of limited parking and signage on F.H. Stoltze Land where the southerly proposed trailhead is located.
    2. Concern that forest Management activities would be disrupted on the road where GNC would be grooming.
    3. Concern over existing illegal motorized use and the possibility that GNC proposal could increase illegal motorized use.
  - Results (how were concerns addressed): Numbers Above Correspond to Those Below
    1. The trespassing issue was addressed at a meeting with all affected parties at the Stoltze office on 9/11/2017. After the meeting GNC has decided not to groom to the parking area on Stoltze land to the South until after the parking area in question has been enlarged and appropriate signage has been installed.
    2. GNC activities would be a secondary use with forest management taking precedence over any GNC activities.
    3. The DNRC has taken all feasible action to stop motorized use. This has included installing gates and posting “motorized use restriction signs”.

DNRC specialists were consulted, including: Marc Vessar and Chris Forristal

Internal and external issues and concerns were incorporated into project planning and design and will be implemented in associated contracts.

## **OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS**

**NEEDED:** *(Conservation Easements, Army Corps of Engineers, road use permits, etc.)*

- **United States Fish & Wildlife Service-** DNRC is managing the habitats of threatened and endangered species on this project by implementing the Montana DNRC Forested Trust Lands HCP and the associated Incidental Take Permit that was issued by the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) in February of 2012 under Section 10 of the Endangered Species Act. The HCP identifies specific conservation strategies for managing the habitats of grizzly bear, Canada lynx, and three fish species: bull trout, westslope cutthroat trout, and Columbia redband trout. This project complies with the HCP. The HCP can be found at [www.dnrc.mt.gov/HCP](http://www.dnrc.mt.gov/HCP).
- **Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)-** DNRC is classified as a major open burner by DEQ and is issued a permit from DEQ to conduct burning activities on state lands managed by DNRC. As a major open-burning permit holder, DNRC agrees to comply with the limitations and conditions of the permit.
- **Montana/Idaho Airshed Group-** The DNRC is a member of the Montana/Idaho Airshed Group which was formed to minimize or prevent smoke impacts while using fire to accomplish land management objectives and/or fuel hazard reduction (Montana/Idaho Airshed Group 2006). The Group determines the delineation of airsheds and impact zones throughout Idaho and Montana. Airsheds describe those geographical areas that have similar atmospheric conditions, while impact zones describe any area in Montana or Idaho that the Group deems smoke sensitive and/or having an existing air quality problem (Montana/Idaho Airshed Group 2006). As a member of the Airshed Group, DNRC agrees to burn only on days approved for good smoke dispersion as determined by the Smoke Management Unit.

## **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:**

**No-Action Alternative:** No trail grooming would be allowed.

**Action Alternative:** Approximately 1.5 miles of existing road would be groomed for use as a Nordic ski trail.

---

## **Impacts on the Physical Environment**

---

Evaluation of the impacts on the No-Action and Action Alternatives including **direct, secondary, and cumulative** impacts on the Physical Environment.

## **VEGETATION:**

**Vegetation Existing Conditions:** The road that GNC is proposing to groom winds through one stand type according to the DNRC Stand Level Inventory (SLI). This stand was last logged in the late 1990's. The current stand is moderately stocked, with multiple canopy layers. It is comprised mostly of western larch and Douglas-fir with average size being 14 inches in diameter and 75 feet tall.

Vegetation	Impact												Can Impact Be Mitigated?	Comment Number
	Direct				Secondary				Cumulative					
	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High		
<b>No-Action</b>														
Noxious Weeds	X				X				X					
Rare Plants	X				X				X					
Vegetative community	X				X				X					
Old Growth	X				X				X					
<b>Action</b>														
Noxious Weeds	X				X				X					
Rare Plants	X				X				X					
Vegetative community	X				X				X					
Old Growth	X				X				X					

*Comments:*

1. All activities would take place in winter, which would result in no to very minimal impact.

**SOIL DISTURBANCE AND PRODUCTIVITY:**

**Soil Disturbance and Productivity Existing Conditions:**

The proposed grooming would occur on an existing open road through the DNRC-managed parcel. Landtypes along the route are listed as 23-8 and 26C-8 in the *Soil Survey of Flathead National Forest Area, Montana* (Martinson and Basko 1998). Both landtypes have a moderate sediment hazard on roads.

Because the roads proposed for grooming are existing, the impacts from compaction are currently high and these areas have already been removed from timber production. No unstable slopes are generally found in these landtypes.

Soil Disturbance and Productivity	Impact												Can Impact Be Mitigated?	Comment Number
	Direct				Secondary				Cumulative					
	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High		
<b>No-Action</b>														
Physical Disturbance (Compaction and Displacement)	X				X							X	N	S1
Erosion	X				X					X			N	S2
Slope Stability	X				X				X					
<b>Action</b>														
Physical Disturbance (Compaction and Displacement)	X				X							X	N	S1
Erosion	X				X					X			N	S2

Soil Disturbance and Productivity	Impact												Can Impact Be Mitigated?	Comment Number
	Direct				Secondary				Cumulative					
	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High		
Slope Stability	X				X				X					

*Comments:*

S1: Neither the action nor the no action alternative would alter the current compaction on the existing roads. All existing road prisms have been compacted to provide a durable, desirable driving surface. While the proposed grooming would not be expected to alter the impact, the cumulative impact from compaction is and would remain high, which is the desirable condition for a road.

S2: Neither the action nor the no action alternative would alter the erosion on the existing roads. All roads have been designed to minimize erosion by rolling the grade, surfacing with gravel and providing surface drainage. Although the maintenance is periodically performed on these roads, some erosion of the driving surface is evident.

*Soil Mitigations:*

**WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY:**

The rationale used to determine the level of a cumulative effects analysis is directly related to the proposal's change from the current level of activity. Because this proposal only exchanges easement rights and does not specifically change management or current levels of use, impacts to beneficial uses would be limited. Therefore, due to the low risk for additional adverse cumulative impacts, a level one cumulative effects analysis is appropriate.

**Water Quality and Quantity Existing Conditions:**

The project area on DNRC managed land is entirely within the Haskill Creek watershed. Haskill Creek is a municipal water supply for the city of Whitefish, however the intake is more than a mile above the boundary of the state parcel. Haskill Creek below the state parcel has had multiple stream restoration projects to reduce sediment in the stream; additionally, best management practices have been implemented on all roads within the state parcel to minimize the risk of sediment delivery to streams.

The proposed route for grooming is on a road that has been designed to meet BMPs. No stream crossings have been identified on this road.

Water Quality & Quantity	Impact												Can Impact Be Mitigated?	Comment Number
	Direct				Secondary				Cumulative					
	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High		
<b>No-Action</b>														
Water Quality	X				X					X				
Water Quantity	X				X					X				
<b>Action</b>														

Water Quality & Quantity	Impact												Can Impact Be Mitigated?	Comment Number	
	Direct				Secondary				Cumulative						
	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High			
Water Quality	X				X					X					
Water Quantity	X				X					X					

Comments:

Water Quality & Quantity Mitigations:

**FISHERIES:**

**Fisheries Existing Conditions:**

**No-Action:**

No direct or indirect impacts would occur to affected fish species or affected fisheries resources beyond those described in Fisheries Existing Conditions. Cumulative effects (other related past and present factors; other future, related actions; and any impacts described in Fisheries Existing Conditions) would continue to occur.

**Action Alternative (see Fisheries table below):**

Fisheries	Impact												Can Impact Be Mitigated?	Comment Number	
	Direct				Secondary				Cumulative						
	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High			
<b>No-Action</b>															
Sediment	X				X						X				F1
Flow Regimes	X				X					X					F1
Woody Debris	X				X					X					F2
Stream Shading	X				X					X					F2
Stream Temperature	X				X					X					F2
Connectivity	X				X					X					F3
Populations	X				X					X					F3
<b>Action</b>															
Sediment	X				X						X				
Flow Regimes	X				X					X					
Woody Debris	X				X					X					
Stream Shading	X				X					X					
Stream Temperature	X				X					X					
Connectivity	X				X					X					
Populations	X				X					X					

Comments: No fish bearing streams would be affected by this proposal.

F1- Existing conditions in the watershed are a result of past and present such as road construction, residential construction, recreation, agriculture and silviculture management. A

approved Water Quality Improvement Plan has been approved by EPA to reduce the impacts of fine sediment. No measurable direct, secondary or cumulative impacts—positive or negative—would occur as a result of this project.

F2- Land use changes and management alters runoff and flow regimes as well as stream shading, woody debris recruitment and potentially stream temperature. No impacts—positive or negative—would occur as a result of this project.

F3- Fish presence consists of hybridized westslope cutthroat trout and non-native brook trout. Some partial barriers exist within the watershed, however none are on the DNRC managed parcel or would be affected (positively or negatively) by this project.

*Fisheries Mitigations:* none

**WILDLIFE:**

**No-Action:**

**Action Alternative (see Wildlife table below):**

Wildlife	Impact												Can Impact be Mitigated?	Comment Number
	Direct				Secondary				Cumulative					
	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High		
<b>Threatened and Endangered Species</b>														
<b>Grizzly bear</b> <i>(Ursus arctos)</i> Habitat: Recovery areas, security from human activity		X			X				X					1.
<b>Canada lynx</b> <i>(Felix lynx)</i> Habitat: Subalpine fir habitat types, dense sapling, old forest, deep snow zone		X				X				X				2.
<b>Wolverine</b> <i>(Gulo gulo)</i>	X				X				X					3.
<b>Sensitive Species</b>														
<b>Bald eagle</b> <i>(Haliaeetus leucocephalus)</i> Habitat: Late-successional forest within 1 mile of open water	X				X				X					3.

Glacier Nordic Club Trail Grooming  
Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

Wildlife	Impact												Can Impact be Mitigated?	Comment Number		
	Direct				Secondary				Cumulative							
	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High				
<b>Black-backed woodpecker</b> <i>(Picooides arcticus)</i> Habitat: Mature to old burned or beetle-infested forest	X				X					X						3.
<b>Coeur d'Alene salamander</b> <i>(Plethodon idahoensis)</i> Habitat: Waterfall spray zones, talus near cascading streams	X				X					X						3.
<b>Columbian sharp-tailed grouse</b> <i>(Tympanuchus Phasianellus columbianus)</i> Habitat: Grassland, shrubland, riparian, agriculture	X				X					X						3.
<b>Common loon</b> <i>(Gavia immer)</i> Habitat: Cold mountain lakes, nest in emergent vegetation	X				X					X						3.
<b>Fisher</b> <i>(Martes pennanti)</i> Habitat: Dense mature to old forest less than 6,000 feet in elevation and riparian		X				X				X						4.
<b>Flammulated owl</b> <i>(Otus flammeolus)</i> Habitat: Late-successional ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir forest	X				X					X						3.
<b>Gray Wolf</b> <i>(Canis lupus)</i> Habitat: Ample big game populations, security from human activities		X				X				X						5.
<b>Harlequin duck</b>	X				X					X						3.



Glacier Nordic Club Trail Grooming  
Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

Wildlife	Impact												Can Impact be Mitigated?	Comment Number
	Direct				Secondary				Cumulative					
	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High		
<i>(Histrionicus histrionicus)</i> Habitat: White-water streams, boulder and cobble substrates														
<b>Northern bog lemming</b> <i>(Synaptomys borealis)</i> Habitat: Sphagnum meadows, bogs, fens with thick moss mats	X				X				X					3.
<b>Peregrine falcon</b> <i>(Falco peregrinus)</i> Habitat: Cliff features near open foraging areas and/or wetlands	X				X				X					3.
<b>Pileated woodpecker</b> <i>(Dryocopus pileatus)</i> Habitat: Late-successional ponderosa pine and larch-fir forest	X				X				X					6.
<b>Townsend's big-eared bat</b> <i>(Plecotus townsendii)</i> Habitat: Caves, caverns, old mines	X				X				X					3.
<b>Big Game Species</b>														
<b>Elk</b>		X			X				X					7.
<b>Whitetail</b>		X			X				X					7.
<b>Mule Deer</b>		X			X				X					7.
<b>Moose</b>		X			X				X					7.

*Comments:*

1. The project area lies within grizzly bear non-recovery occupied habitat associated with the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem (NCDE). Despite occupied home sites adjacent to the project area and moderate amounts of recreational use, grizzly bears have been observed within the project area and periodic use of the area by bears would be expected. Hiding cover for bears would not be appreciably affected by the proposed trail grooming. Trail maintenance activities occurring during the non-denning season would take less than one week to complete

and no new permanent roads would be constructed. These short-duration trail maintenance activities could temporarily displace any grizzly bears that may be in the vicinity of the project area, however bears in the area are likely tolerant to some human disturbance due to existing levels of recreation. Public motorized access during and following the proposed activities would remain restricted, however some unauthorized motorized use of the road during the non-denning season has been observed by adjacent landowners. Daily motorized snow grooming would primarily take place during the denning season and not likely occur prior to the start of the denning period (November 15); thus minimizing the impacts of this activity on bears. However, any bears not denning by November 15<sup>th</sup> could be disturbed or displaced by motorized grooming or non-motorized recreational use. Skiers in this area bring dogs on the trails, which increases the likelihood of human-bear conflicts. Parts of the existing Nordic trail system are used by hikers and mountain bikers during the non-denning season; additional recreation attention brought to this area could increase non-denning recreational use and potentially displace any bears in the immediate vicinity of trails. Because of the proximity of occupied home sites and existing recreational use, any bears frequenting the project area are likely habituated to some human presence and activity. Additional mitigation measures that would be applied include spring motorized activity restrictions from April 1 to June 15, contractor firearm restrictions and food storage restrictions. Given the small scale of the activity, short duration of annual maintenance activities, timing of most or all activities during the denning season, and associated mitigations that would be in place, low adverse direct/secondary and no cumulative effects to grizzly bears associated with this project would be anticipated.

2. The project area contains suitable Canada lynx habitat. Although lynx could occasionally be present in the project area, extended use of the area by lynx would not be expected due to adjacent home sites and existing recreational activities. Additionally, this area receives lower snow loads and has less contiguous suitable habitat than Forest Service lands directly to the north. Of the 1.5 miles of trail to be groomed, all (100%) would occur in habitat currently suitable for use by lynx. Lynx habitat attributes would not be appreciably affected by daily trail grooming; however should any lynx be in the vicinity they could be displaced by human activities occurring on the trails. The presence of dogs with trail users would likely expand the area of potential lynx displacement adjacent to the trail. The proposed Action would not be expected to appreciably affect lynx habitat use at the scale of a lynx home range. Thus, the potential for adverse direct and secondary effects to lynx would be low and negligible cumulative effects would be anticipated.

3. This species was evaluated and it was determined that the project area lies outside of the normal distribution for the species, and/or suitable habitat was not found to be present.

4. Potential fisher habitat occurs within the project area. Given adjacent home sites and existing recreational activities, appreciable use of the project area by fishers would not be expected. Additionally, fishers have not been observed within 7 miles of the project area in 50 years (MNHP 2017). However, should any fishers be present they could be temporarily displaced by the proposed activities in the vicinity of the project area. Suitable fisher habitat would not be appreciably affected by trail grooming or maintenance. Of the 1.5 miles of trail grooming proposed, all (100%) would occur in habitat currently suitable for use by fishers. No new roads

would be built that could increase access for trappers and fisher trapping in this area is no longer permitted by Montana FWP. Given the existing activities present, habitat and minimal likelihood of fishers in the area, low adverse direct or secondary effects would be expected and negligible cumulative effects would be anticipated.

5. Wolves could potentially use the project area, however extended use of the area by wolves is unlikely due to surrounding home sites and year-round recreational use by humans. Disturbance associated with human activities near den and rendezvous locations can adversely affect wolves. If den or rendezvous sites are encountered during operations or if they are identified by DFWP timing restrictions would be developed and applied (*ARM 33.11.430(1)(a)(b)*). Thus, low adverse direct, secondary, or cumulative effects to wolves would be anticipated as a result of the Action Alternative.

6. Pileated woodpecker habitat is present in the project area and use by pileated woodpeckers is likely. Pileated woodpeckers are generally tolerant of moderate amounts of human disturbance, although short-term trail maintenance activities could temporarily displace birds should any be in the immediate vicinity. Overall, negligible direct, secondary or cumulative effects to pileated woodpeckers would be expected.

7. The project area falls within the distribution of moose, elk, mule deer, and white-tailed deer and year-round use by these species is possible. Hiding and thermal cover habitat would not be appreciably affected by the proposed activities. However, short-term displacement of big game in the vicinity of trails would be expected. Dogs accompanying recreationalists on the trails would likely increase the amount of disturbance (and subsequent displacement) experienced by big game in the area. However, no changes in winter range use by any of these species that could appreciably affect big game populations would be anticipated. Because of existing recreational traffic and surrounding home sites, deer in the project area are likely habituated to some human disturbance. Public motorized access would remain restricted during and after the proposed activities. Given the scale of the proposed activities, short duration of the construction activity and associated mitigations that would be in place, minor adverse direct and indirect effects to elk and deer would be anticipated and negligible cumulative effects would occur.

*Wildlife Mitigations:*

- If a threatened or endangered species is encountered, consult a DNRC biologist and develop additional mitigations that are consistent with the administrative rules for managing threatened and endangered species (*ARM 36.11.428 through 36.11.435*). Similarly, if undocumented nesting raptors or wolf dens are encountered within ½ mile of the Project Area contact a DNRC biologist.
- Prohibit contractors and purchasers conducting contract operations from carrying firearms while on duty as per *ARM 36.11.444(2)* and *GB-PR2 (USFWS AND DNRC 2010, Vol. II p. 2-5)*.
- Contractors will adhere to food storage and sanitation requirements as per *GB-PR3 (USFWS AND DNRC 2010, Vol. II p. 2-6)*.
- Minimize disturbance to grizzly bears by limited trail maintenance activities during the non-denning season; encourage activities to occur after November 15 and before March 31 to the maximum extent practicable.

- Should any grizzly bears be observed in the area, post additional signs to warn recreational users.
- Manage road closures and restrictions to exclude unauthorized motorized use during and after trail-related activities.

**AIR QUALITY:**

Air Quality	Impact												Can Impact Be Mitigated?	Comment Number
	Direct				Secondary				Cumulative					
	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High		
<b>No-Action</b>														
Smoke	X				X				X					
Dust	X				X				X					
<b>Action</b>														
Smoke	X				X				X					
Dust	X				X				X					

*Comments:* No dust or smoke impacts are anticipated due to the timing and nature of use.  
*Air Quality Mitigations:*

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES / AESTHETICS / DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:**

Will Alternative result in potential impacts to:	Impact												Can Impact Be Mitigated?	Comment Number
	Direct				Secondary				Cumulative					
	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High		
<b>No-Action</b>														
Historical or Archaeological Sites	X				X				X					
Aesthetics	X				X				X					
Demands on Environmental Resources of Land, Water, or Energy	X				X				X					
<b>Action</b>														
Historical or Archaeological Sites	X				X				X					
Aesthetics	X				X				X					
Demands on Environmental Resources of Land, Water, or Energy	X				X				X					

*Comments:* None Anticipated

*Mitigations:*

**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.*



State Forest Land Management Plan: final environmental impact statement (and appendixes).

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation Forested State Trust Lands  
Habitat Conservation Plan: Final EIS

Haskill Basin Timber Sale EA 1995.

### Impacts on the Human Population



Evaluation of the impacts on the proposed action including **direct, secondary, and cumulative** impacts on the Human Population.

Will Alternative result in potential impacts to:	Impact												Can Impact Be Mitigated?	Comment Number
	Direct				Secondary				Cumulative					
	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High		
<b>No-Action</b>														
Health and Human Safety	X				X				X					
Industrial, Commercial and Agricultural Activities and Production	X				X				X					
Quantity and Distribution of Employment	X				X				X					
Local Tax Base and Tax Revenues	X				X				X					
Demand for Government Services	X				X				X					
Access To and Quality of Recreational and Wilderness Activities	X				X				X					
Density and Distribution of population and housing	X				X				X					
Social Structures and Mores	X				X				X					
Cultural Uniqueness and Diversity	X				X				X					
<b>Action</b>														

Will Alternative result in potential impacts to:	Impact												Can Impact Be Mitigated?	Comment Number	
	Direct				Secondary				Cumulative						
	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High			
Health and Human Safety	X				X				X						
Industrial, Commercial and Agricultural Activities and Production	X				X				X						
Quantity and Distribution of Employment	X				X				X						
Local Tax Base and Tax Revenues	X				X				X						
Demand for Government Services	X				X				X						
Access To and Quality of Recreational and Wilderness Activities			X			X					X				1
Density and Distribution of population and housing	X				X				X						
Social Structures and Mores	X				X				X						
Cultural Uniqueness and Diversity	X				X				X						

*Comments:* 1. The GNC trail would improve the direct, secondary, and cumulative effects of access to and quality of recreation in the area.

**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.*

- The Montana DNRC Forested State Trust Lands Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) (DNRC 2010). The HCP dictates timing, season, and allowed activities on designated parcels. The HCP affects this project in relation to threatened or endangered species and timing of activities primarily.

**Other Appropriate Social and Economic Circumstances:**

Costs, revenues and estimates of return are estimates intended for relative comparison of alternatives. They are not intended to be used as absolute estimates of return.

**No Action:** The No Action alternative would not generate any return to the trust at this time.

**Action:** The trail expansion would generate additional revenue for the Common School Trust. The estimated return to the trust for the trail and parking area would be \$300.00 annually, based on an estimated charge of \$200 /mile of trail (1.5 miles X \$200 = \$300). Costs, revenues, and

estimates of return are estimates intended for relative comparison of alternatives, they are not intended to be used as absolute estimates of return.

## References

DNRC 1996. State forest land management plan: final environmental impact statement (and appendixes). Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Forest Management Bureau, Missoula, Montana.

DNRC. 2010. Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation Forested State Trust Lands Habitat Conservation Plan: Final EIS, Volume II, Forest Management Bureau, Missoula, Montana.

MNHP. 2017. Natural Heritage Map Viewer. Montana Natural Heritage Program. Retrieved on November 3, 2017, from <http://mtnhp.org/MapView/>

USFWS. 1993. Grizzly bear recovery plan. Missoula, Montana. 181 pp.

USFWS and DNRC. 2010. Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation Forested Trust Lands Habitat Conservation Plan, Final Environmental Impact Statement, Volumes I and II. U.S. Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6, Denver, Colorado, and Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Missoula, MT. September 2010.

**Does the proposed action involve potential risks or adverse effects that 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

## Environmental Assessment Checklist Prepared By:

**Name: Nathan Cole**  
**Title: Management Forester**  
**Date: November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

---

## Finding

---

### Alternative Selected

Action Alternative

### Significance of Potential Impacts

No potential impacts are expected due to the 1.5 miles of grooming on the existing road.

**Need for Further Environmental Analysis**

EIS

More Detailed EA

No Further Analysis

**Environmental Assessment Checklist Approved By:**

**Name: Dave Poukish**

**Title: Kalispell Unit Manager**

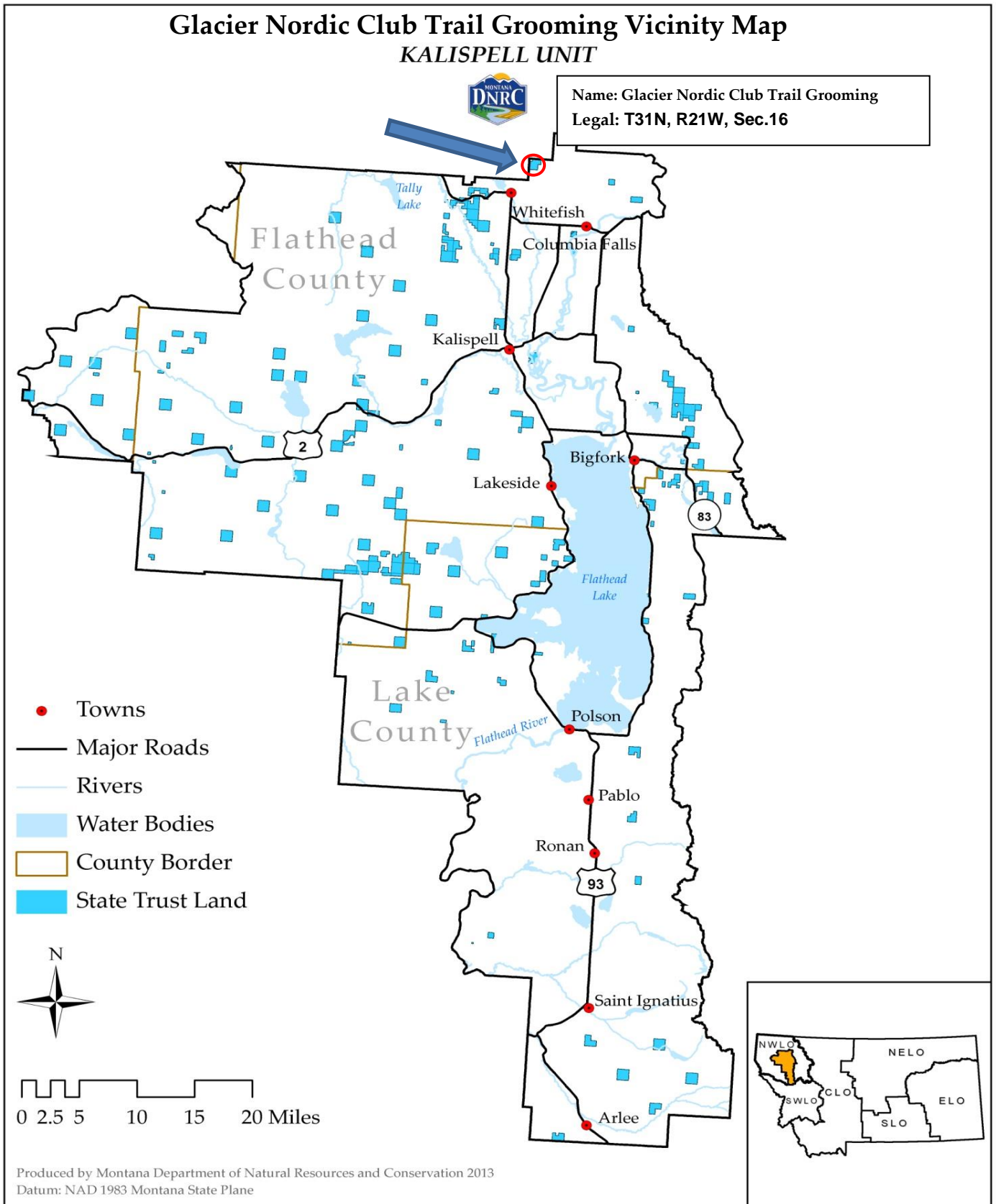
**Date: November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

**Signature: /s/ David M. Poukish**



## **Attachment A- Maps**

A-1: Vicinity Map



A-2: Site Map

