

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Stimson Lumber Company Stanley Creek Bridge Realignment Alternative Practice
Proposed Implementation Date: June 15, 2020
Proponent: Stimson Lumber Company – James Mackey
Location: section 7, T29N R33W (48°17'19.00"N 115°51'56.56"W)
County: Lincoln

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

To allow the operation of wheeled or tracked equipment in a streamside management zone. The proposed action would allow an excavator to be outside of the ordinary highwater mark but within the SMZ of a class 1 Stanley Creek. This equipment would be utilized in the realignment of the approach to the bridge crossing the creek to allow for a safe straight approach. The timing proposed would be between June 16 and October 16 of 2020. The alternative practice would allow for safe truck use. The last logging entry made using this bridge approach caused an unsafe condition when a log truck trailer fell off the bridge because the slight curve approaching the narrow bridge didn't allow for the rear most trailer axle to be following the steering axle and the bridge center line. Stimson does not want this to happen again. For approximately 100 feet on the south side of the existing Stanley Creek Bridge Stimson proposes to widen and straighten the road by hauling in gravel fill. An excavator operating in the SMZ off the road will help place and compact this fill. The fill will not enter the stream course.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:

Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project. List number of individuals contacted, number of responses received, and newspapers in which notices were placed and for how long. Briefly summarize issues received from the public.

Stimson holds an easement on this road but is not the landowner. The landowner is WLW LLC of Leander, Texas. Kootenai River Outfitters is a subsidiary of WLW and manages the land. Robert Winstrom of Kootenai River Outfitters was contacted and scoped 5/5/2020 11:30am by phone. He thought the project was reasonable, justified and had no objections. No adjacent landowners are expected to be affected by the proposal so public scoping was not deemed necessary.

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

Examples: cost-share agreement with U.S. Forest Service, 124 Permit, 3A Authorization, Air Quality Major Open Burning Permit.

None

3. ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT:

Describe alternatives considered and, if applicable, provide brief description of how the alternatives were developed. List alternatives that were considered but eliminated from further analysis and why.

No action alternative: Do not straighten approach to bridge and do not mitigate the unsafe existing condition.

Action alternative: Issue AP that allows road construction equipment to operate just off the road but within the SMZ to assist in the placement and compaction of fill hauled in to widen and straighten approach to bridge. Mitigate by placing mulch and grass seed on disturbed soil within the SMZ after realignment. This alternative is

cost effective, meets the safety needs of the proponent and landowner, and has a short term, low impact on the stream.

III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:

Consider the presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils. Identify unusual geologic features. Specify any special reclamation considerations. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to soils.

Kootenai Land Type 106; this soil type is glacial outwash terraces, however the project would involve gravel materials hauled in from offsite and placed and compacted. The area shows no issues with soil stability after road work. No impacts are expected to geology or soil quality from the proposed action.

5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:

Identify important surface or groundwater resources. Consider the potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to water resources.

A steel span bridge with turnpiked approaches that are revegetated currently exist on site. The structure is less than 10 years old. Stanley Creek is a fish bearing Class 1 perennial stream.

It would be expected for the proposed action would have a short-term turbidity impact to the stream for a brief period, however mitigation of timing of operation, mulching and grass seeding will shorten and minimize any potential impacts to water quality and the integrity of the SMZ.

There is also a low probability of a very high impact on the water quality should the no action alternative be selected, the bridge used as is and a truck falls into the creek. It was reported that during the last entry while hauling under winter conditions the trailer did fall off the bridge.

6. AIR QUALITY:

What pollutants or particulate would be produced (i.e. particulate matter from road use or harvesting, slash pile burning, prescribed burning, etc)? Identify the Airshed and Impact Zone (if any) according to the Montana/Idaho Airshed Group. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to air quality.

Normal air pollution that is associated with a standard road maintenance operation.

7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:

What changes would the action cause to vegetative communities? Consider rare plants or cover types that would be affected. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to vegetation.

The action alternative would mean the road width would increase on the approach to the bridge by approximately 4feet for 100 feet. That is an impact of approximately 50 square feet of SMZ being converted to road.

No rare, sensitive plants or cover types were observed during ground reconnaissance. Minimal vegetation disturbance would occur from this realignment.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:

Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

The site of the proposed alternative practice shows no significant use by wildlife, birds or fish.

9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:

Consider any federally listed threatened or endangered species or habitat identified in the project area. Determine effects to wetlands. Consider Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

Threatened or endangered species such as lynx and grizzly bears may migrate through the area. There were no denning sites noted on the property. The proposed SMZ crossing should not diminish habitat elements for these species. Stimson Habitat Conservation Agreement does require that road maintenance work be completed after the June 15th for Grizzly Bear security, therefore any AP authorization would begin after that date.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

Identify and determine direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

No historical, archaeological, or paleontological resources were observed during field reconnaissance nor are any known by the landowner.

11. AESTHETICS:

Determine if the project is located on a prominent topographic feature, or may be visible from populated or scenic areas. What level of noise, light or visual change would be produced? Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to aesthetics.

Normal temporary noise increase associated with road maintenance operations. Visual appearance of site and surrounding property would appear uniform across ownerships. This location is not visible from outside of this ownership.

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:

Determine the amount of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to environmental resources.

No limited resources will be used for this project. There are no other activities nearby that will affect the project.

13. 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.

No other environmental documents are known for this tract.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

The purpose of this project is to improve human safety while using this bridge approach. The existing condition has proven dangerous and the proponent desires to improve the condition. Normal health risks would be associated with a road maintenance operation for the actual realignment work though.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

The project will add a minor amount of additional work for the local road contracting industry.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:

Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to the employment market.

This project would add 1 day of additional work and income to the road contractor.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:

Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

Minor additional income tax revenue would be generated from the additional work.

18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:

Estimate increases in traffic and changes to traffic patterns. What changes would be needed to fire protection, police, schools, etc.? Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services

There would not be any affects to the local government services.

19. 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.

There is no known zoning or management planning for this area.

20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:

Identify any wilderness or recreational areas nearby or access routes through this tract. Determine the effects of the project on recreational potential within the tract. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

Kootenai River Outfitters manages this land for recreation. No disturbance during the general hunting season is important to the landowner and their clients. The easement holder (Stimson) and the landowner are cooperating on timing of the operation to meet both party's needs. This activity would have no impact to access to or quality of recreational and wilderness activities for the public.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:

Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to population and housing.

This activity would have no impact to density or distribution of population and housing.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

Logging and associated road work is an activity that would be considered a traditional lifestyle for this community and area; this activity would not disrupt social structures.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

Cultural uniqueness and diversity would not be affected.

24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:

Estimate the return to the trust. Include appropriate economic analysis. Identify potential future uses for the analysis area other than existing management. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.

There are no unique social or economic qualities on this site.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Jeremy Rank	Date: 5/5/2020
	Title: Service Forester	

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

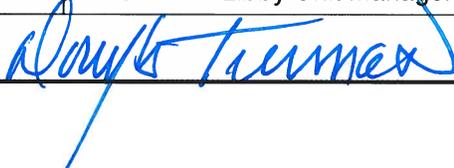
The action alternative is selected. Allow the use of equipment to operate off the road within the SMZ to place and compact fill during approach realignment. Conduct operations in dry low flow condition between June 16 and October 16, 2020. Mitigate by mulching and grass seedings new fill slope within the SMZ. Apply BMPs during operations.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

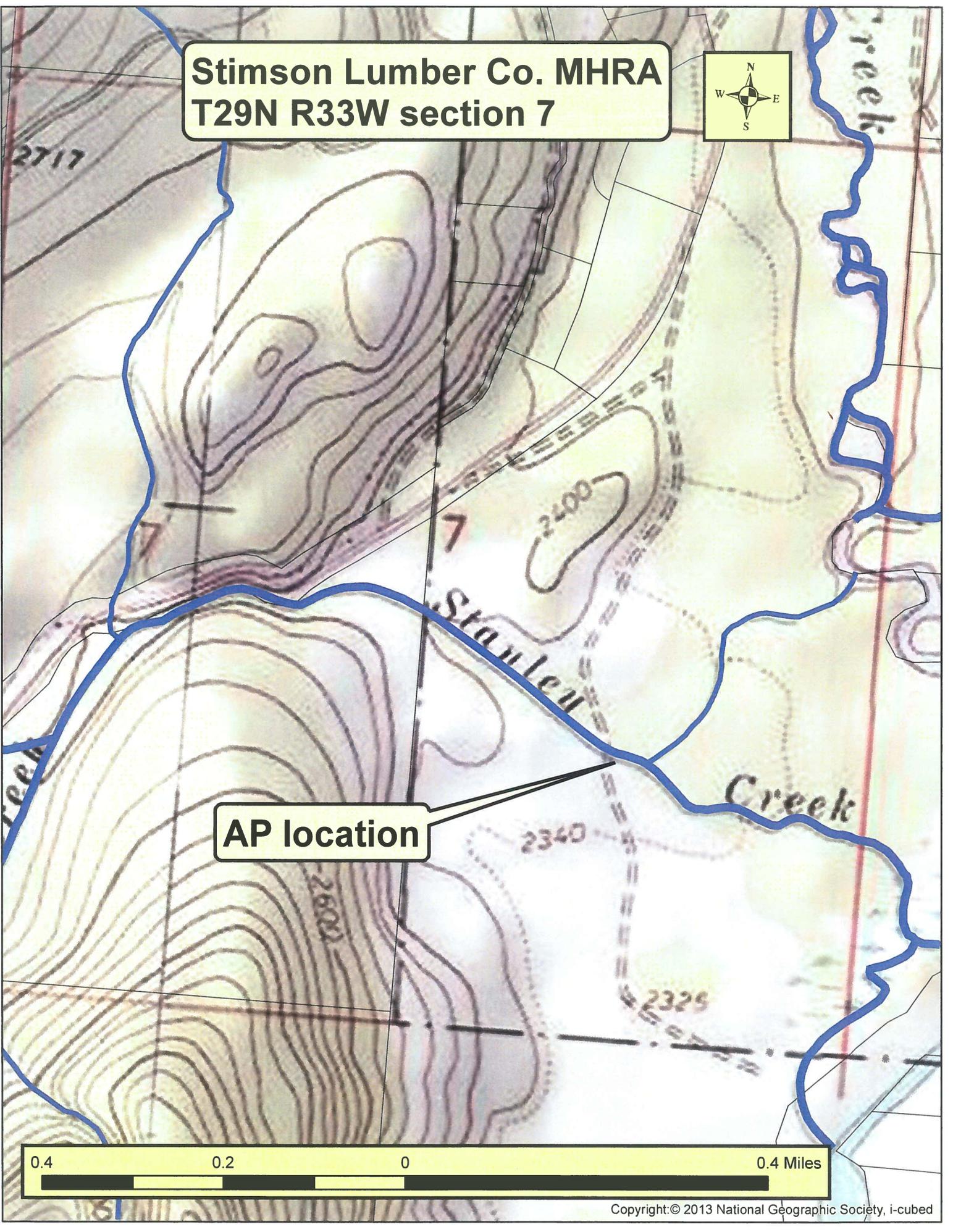
Action alternative has the potential to have impacts to the land or water resources. The design proposed minimizes these impacts.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

EIS More Detailed EA No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Douglas Turman Title: Libby Unit Manager
Signature: 	Date: 5/12/20

**Stimson Lumber Co. MHRA
T29N R33W section 7**



AP location

