

Environmental Assessment Checklist

Project Name: Green Diamond Oh Snap AP
Proposed Implementation Date: May, 2026
Proponent: Green Diamond Timberlands (Rayson Logging), Plains Unit, NWLO, Lazier Creek
County: Sanders
HRA #: Green Diamond MHRA 2605
Expiration Date: May, 2028 Authorization to conduct AP is valid for 2 years from the date of approval or for such period as may be specified by the Department.(77-5-307 and 302) (ARM 36.11.310)

Type and Purpose of Action

Description of Proposed Alternative Practice Action:

Green Diamond Timberlands LLC is proposing an Alternative Practice for the Oh Snap Timber Salvage. The project is located 25 miles NNE of Thompson Falls, MT (refer to Attachment’s vicinity map A-1 and project map A-2) and includes the following sections:

Landowner/ <u>Contractor</u>	HRA#	Legal Description	Total Acres Affected	Stream class
Green Diamond/Rayson Logging	Green Diamond MHRA	S17, T25N, R27W	6 Acres	Class 2

Objectives of the project include:

- Green Diamond/Rayson Logging is requesting an Alternative Practice to Operate Equipment in the SMZ to salvage blowdown of an unnamed Class 2 Stream in the vicinity of Lazier Creek. Trees blown across the stream would be fully suspended and swung away from the stream (see attached map). Total linear extent along the stream is 2550 feet. This Alternative Practice would allow the aforementioned activity to occur in the the SMZ under Rule 4 and 5, Montana Guide to the Streamside Zone Law and Rules 2006 (ARM 36.11.304 & 305).
- According to MCA 77-5-301 through 307, DNRC is authorized to administer and enforce the provisions of the SMZ Law. This Law was developed to protect the public interest of

water quality and quantity within forested areas; provide for standards, oversights and penalties to ensure forest practices conserve the integrity of SMZ's; provide voluntary guidelines for wildlife management within SMZ's; and allow operators necessary flexibility to use practices appropriate to site-specific conditions in the SMZ. ARM 36.11.301 through 313 further specify the design of SMZ boundaries, allowable activities, and prohibitions within the SMZ, penalties and other related provisions.

- According to MCA 77-5-304 and ARM 36.11.310, DNRC *may* approve alternative practices that are different from practices required by the SMZ Law only if such practices would be otherwise lawful and continue to conserve or not significantly diminish the integrity and function of the SMZ. The proximity of the trees to homes, cabins, roads, and recreation areas has created safety issues that will require treatments outside of the allowances of the SMZ law.
- Allowances of this request would include:
 1. *The travel of skidders and excavators/loaders through portions of the Streamside Management Zone, an exception to Rule 4 (36.111.304) Operation of Equipment in the Montana Guide to the Streamside Management Zone Law and Rule 2006 book.*
 2. *It would allow equipment operation inside the 50-foot SMZ buffer to facilitate swinging trees away from stream but no closer than 15 feet to the OHWM.*
 3. *Logs would be fully suspended and lifted out of the stream course, or severed at the OHWM and removed.*

Mitigation measures associated with this AP would include: (example)

1. *Ground conditions would be dry to less than 20% moisture content.*
2. *Grass seeding ALL disturbed areas within 1 week at the end of use.*
3. *No operations would encroach closer than 15 feet to the OHWM..*
4. *Skid trails would be closed upon completion of operations.*
5. *All logging slash would be removed from stream course concurrent with logging.*
6. *Equipment would enter perpendicular to the stream and travel straight in and straight out. No turning of equipment in the SMZ. Trails would be spaced 25-50' feet apart.*

Proposed activities include:

Rule	Action	Quantity	
	Proposed Alternative Practices		
3	Broadcast burning		acres
4	Operation of Equipment in SMZ	2550	feet
5	Clearcutting/Retention	6	acres
6	Road construction		feet
7	Hazardous Materials		feet
8	Side Casting of Material		feet
9	Depositing Slash		feet
	Total Treatment Acres	6	Acres
Duration of Activities:		2 weeks	
Implementation Period:		2 years from approval.	

The MT-DNRC's implementation of the Streamside Management Zone (SMZ) law and rules protects and maintains the functions of a SMZ. The six functions of an SMZ, as identified in the SMZ law (77-5-301[1] MCA), are:

- Acts as an effective sediment filter to maintain water quality.
- Provides shade to regulate stream temperature.
- Supports diverse and productive aquatic and terrestrial riparian habitats.
- Protects the stream channel and banks.
- Provide large woody debris that is eventually recruited into a stream to maintain riffles, pools, and other elements of channel structure.
- Promotes floodplain stability.

Project Development

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

No-Action Alternative: No action would occur. Downed trees would remain in the SMZ.

Action Alternative : Equipment would be allowed to enter SMZ to remove blowdown.

It would allow equipment operation inside the 50-foot SMZ buffer to facilitate swinging trees away from stream, but no closer than 15 feet to the OHWM. Equipment would travel straight in and out of the SMZ.

Logs would be fully suspended and lifted out of the stream course, or severed at the OHWM and removed. No turning of equipment in the SMZ. Trails would be spaced 25-50' feet apart.

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: All blown over trees that are merchantable and feasible to remove would be harvested.

Vegetation Existing Conditions: The stand is comprised of mixed conifers (ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, lodgepole pine, Engelmann spruce, grand fir). No species of concern are listed for the AP area on the Montana Natural Heritage site.

Vegetation Mitigations: Any disturbed areas in the SMZ would be grass seeded to limit establishment of noxious weeds. Primarily hounds tongue and Russian sotted knapweed.

SOIL DISTURBANCE AND PRODUCTIVITY:

Soil Disturbance and Productivity Existing Conditions: The site is dominated by Waldbillig gravelly ashy silt loam. This is a moist and well drained site with gentle slopes less than 30% slope.

Soil Disturbance and Productivity	Impact												Can Impact Be Mitigated?
	Direct				Secondary				Cumulative				
	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	
No-Action													
Physical Disturbance (Compaction and Displacement)	x				x				x				
Erosion	x				x				x				
Slope Stability	x				x				x				
Action													
Physical Disturbance (Compaction and Displacement)		X				X				X			Y
Erosion		X				X				X			Y
Slope Stability		X				X				X			Y

Soil Mitigations: Activity would occur during dry conditions to limit impacts. Grass seeding would occur to limit sedimentation potential to stream. Equipment would travel straight in and out to limit disturbance from turning machinery. No machines allowed closer than 15 feet of the OHWM.

WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY:

Water Quality and Quantity Existing Conditions: The stream is an intermittent Class 2 stream that does not contribute flow to any other bodies of water.

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

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

Water Quality & Quantity Mitigations: No equipment would operate within 15 feet of the stream course. Any trees fallen over the stream would be fully suspended and lifted out or severed beyond the OHWM and removed. Any slash created by the proposed activity would be removed concurrent with logging.

FISHERIES:

Fisheries Existing Conditions: No fish are present in the stream. The stream does not connect to any other body of water.

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):

Comments: No Fish Present

WILDLIFE:

No-Action: No Activity would occur.

Action Alternative (see Wildlife table below):

Wildlife	Impact												Can Impact be Mitigated?
	Direct				Secondary				Cumulative				
	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	
Threatened and Endangered Species													
Grizzly Bear <i>(Ursus arctos)</i> Habitat: Recovery areas, security from human activity		X				X				X			Y
Sensitive Species													

Wildlife	Impact												Can Impact be Mitigated?	
	Direct				Secondary				Cumulative					
	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High		
Fisher <i>(Martes pennanti)</i> Habitat: Dense mature to old forest less than 6,000 feet in elevation and riparian		X				X					X			Y

Comments: Grizzly Bear and Fisher are the only known species of concern in the AP area. Given the small project area and short duration, no impacts are anticipated.

AIR QUALITY:

Air Quality	Impact												Can Impact Be Mitigated?	
	Direct				Secondary				Cumulative					
	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High		
No-Action														
Smoke	X				X				X					
Dust	X				X				X					
Action														
Smoke		X				X				X				Y
Dust		X				X				X				Y

Comments: Project would involve minor amounts of slash burning. Slash from the whole logging operation will be treated during the fall open burn period. No appreciable impacts anticipated.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES / AESTHETICS / DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:

None Present or identified.

Impacts on the Human Population

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

Comments: No impacts anticipated on the Human Population

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: Service Forester
Date: 05/11/2026

Finding

Alternative Selected

Action Alternative

Significance of Potential Impacts

Low

Need for Further Environmental Analysis

EIS

More Detailed EA

No Further Analysis

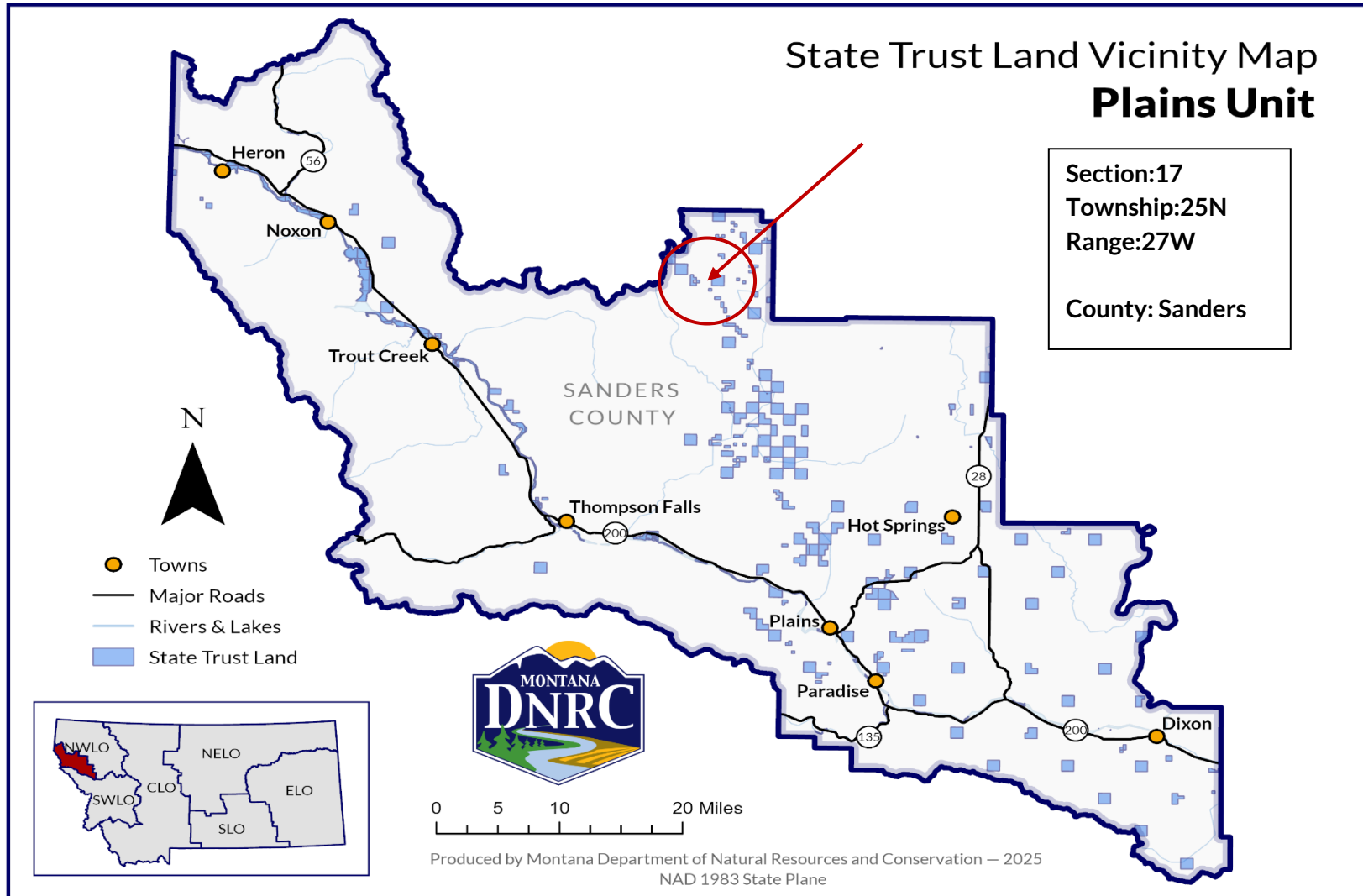
Environmental Assessment Checklist Approved By:

Name: Ben Holland
Title: Plains Unit Manager (Acting)
Date: Month Day, Year
Signature: /s/ Name

Attachment A - Maps

A-1: Project Vicinity Map

OH SNAP AP VICINITY MAP



A-2: Alternative Practice Project Map

Oh Snap AP



5/11/2026, 11:37:21 AM

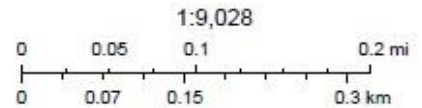
mtshade_WebMercator

High : 255 - Low : 0
 Private Land Fill

PublicLands

Montana State Trust Lands

- OwnerParcel
- Conservation Easements
- PLSS First Division
- Section
- PLSS Township
- Counties



Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Montana State Library, Vantor

ArcGIS Web AppBuilder

Vantor | The data were made possible by a public/private partnership including the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, several state agencies, local governments, The Montana Power Company,