Environmental Assessment Checklist

Project Name: Hansen AP
Proposed Implementation Date:10/2024
Proponent: Lynn Hansen
County: Sanders
HRA #:45-B-49410
Expiration Date: 12/2024

Type and Purpose of Action

Description of Proposed Alternative Practice Action:

Lynn Hansen is proposing an Alternative Practice. The project is located 16 miles North of Plains MT(refer to Attachment's vicinity map A-**1** and project map A-**2**) and includes the following sections:**T22N R27W S12**.

Objectives of the project include:

- Lynn Hansen is requesting an Alternative Practice to enter the SMZ with a mini-excavator to remove two slash piles.

- 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 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.

- Allowances of this request would include:

1. *The travel of equipment 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.*

Mitigation measures associated with this AP would include:

1. *Ground conditions would be dry to less than 20% moisture content.*
2. *Grass seeding ALL disturbed areas within SMZ, completed within 1 week at the end of use.*

Proposed activities include:

Rule	Action	Quantity
	Proposed Alternative Practices	
1	Broadcast burning	
2	Operation of Equipment in SMZ	150 feet
3	Clearcutting	
4	Road construction	
5	Hazardous Materials	
6	Side Casting of Material	
7	Depositing Slash	

Duration of Activities:	2 Days
Implementation Period:	10/2024-11/2024

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.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

No-Action Alternative: Brush piles would be burnt on site, reducing vegetation filtration capacity.

Action Alternative: The action alternative would allow Hansen to enter the SMZ to remove slash piles near stream. No equipment would be allowed closer than 15 feet of stream.

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: Forest type is categorized as a Rocky Mountain Mesic Montane Mixed Conifer Forest. The Site is dominated Douglas-fir, Engellman Spruce, Western Larch and Lodgepole pine. Site is fully stocked.

Insects and Diseases: Fir Engraver is causing mortality in some of the grand fir. Indian paint fungus is also present. In addition, root rot is also evident on the site.

Vegetation Mitigations: The action alternative requires dry conditions to protect vegetation in the SMZ. No equipment operation within 15 feet of stream.

SOIL DISTURBANCE AND PRODUCTIVITY:

Soil Disturbance and Productivity Existing Conditions: The soil on this site is a gravelly sandy loam that is moderately well draining.

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: Soil conditions would be dry (less than 20% moisture content). No equipment operation within 15 feet of stream.

WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY:

Water Quality and Quantity Existing Conditions: Proposed action would take place along a Class 1 stream segment (Mudd Creek).

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**				
Action													
Water Quality		**X**				**X**				**X**			**Y**

Water Quality & Quantity Mitigations:. Grass seeding all trails in SMZ would occur. No equipment operation within 15 feet of stream.

FISHERIES:

Mudd Creek is a Class 1 fish bearing stream. Action Alternative 1 will likely have no impact onFisheries.

WILDLIFE:

No impacts anticipated. Action Alternative 1 will likely have no impact on any threatened or endangered species.

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**			**Y**
Dust		**X**				**X**				**X**			**Y**
Action													
Smoke		**X**				**X**				**X**			**Y**
Dust		**X**				**X**				**X**			**Y**

Comments: Both Action and Non-Action alternative would result in minimal slash burning.

Air Quality Mitigations: No significant impacts are anticipated.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES / AESTHETICS / DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:

Will Alternative result in potential impacts to:	Impact												Can Impact Be Mitigated?
	Direct				Secondary				Cumulative				
	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	No	Low	Mod	High	
No-Action													
Historical or Archaeological Sites	**X**				**X**				**X**				
Aesthetics	**X**				**X**				**X**				
Action													
Historical or Archaeological Sites	**X**				**X**				**X**				
Aesthetics	**X**				**X**				**X**				

Comments: No historic or Archeological sites identified. Aesthetics would not be affected, site is barely visible from public road.

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.*

None

Impacts on the Human Population

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

None Anticipated

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.*

None

Finding

Alternative Selected

The Action Alternative is selected for implementation. It will remove logging slash from SMZ while not removing existing vegetation.

Significance of Potential Impacts

Potential impacts will be minor by following the mitigations.

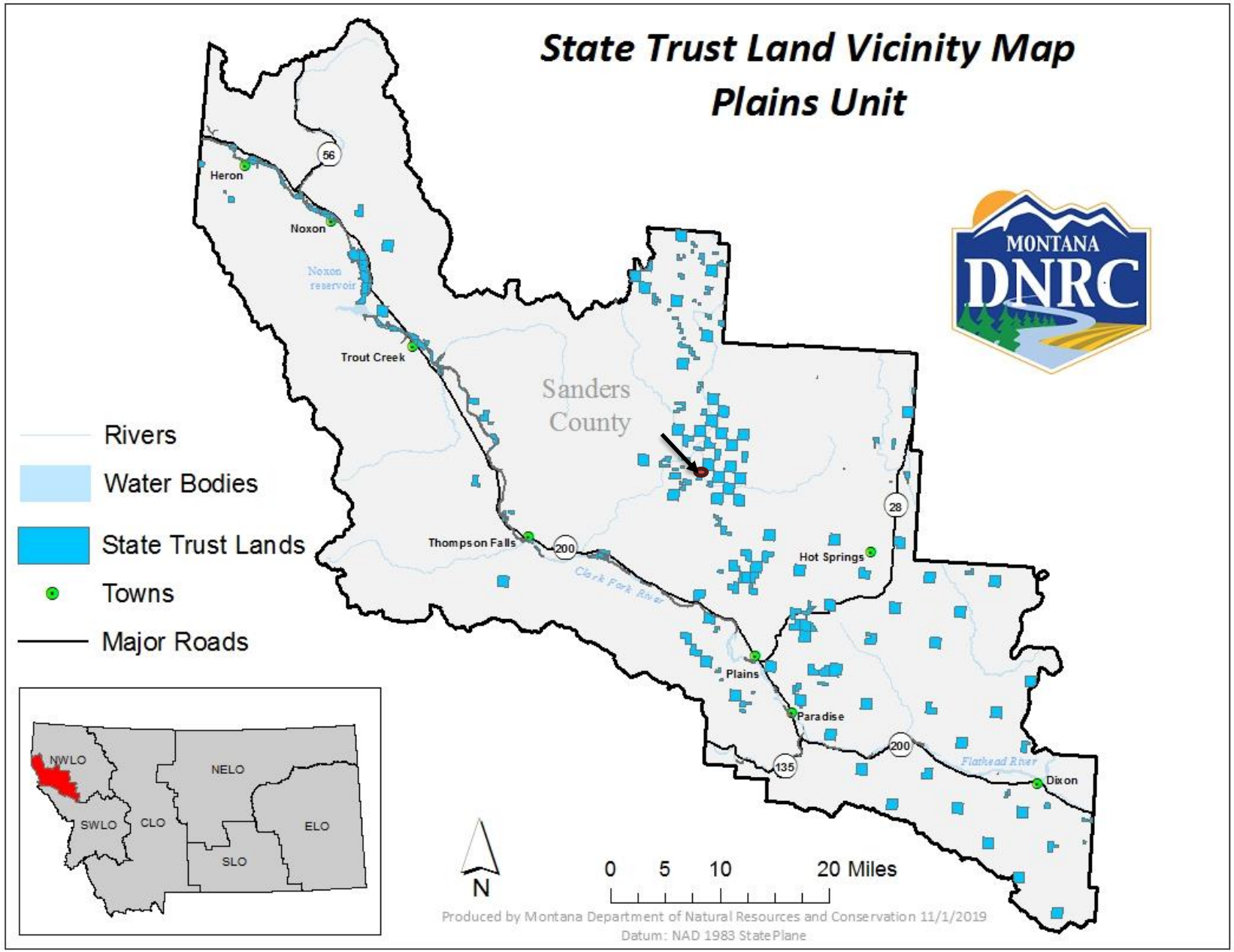
Need for Further Environmental Analysis

[ ]	EIS	[ ]	More Detailed EA	[X]	No Further Analysis

Environmental Assessment Checklist Approved By:

Name: Ty Colombo
Title: Forest Management Supervisor
Date: 09/23/2024
Signature: /s/ Ty Colombo

A-1: Timber Sale Vicinity Map



A-2: Alternative Practice Project Map

A-2 Hansen AP

8/12/2024, 2:39:40 PM

Parcels mtshade_WebMercator
PublicLands
Private Land Fill
Montana State Trust Lands
OwnerParcel
Conservation Easements
Roads_cadastral
CITY-COUNTY
USFS
PLSS First Division
Section
PLSS Township
Counties

High : 255 - Low : 0

1:2,257

0 0.01 0.03 0.05 mi
0 0.02 0.04 0.08 km

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ArcGIS Web AppBuilder

Maxar, Microsoft | 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, Montana/Dakota Utilities, and Burlington Northern Sante Fe