



MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

**Draft
Environmental Assessment**

MT WILD RAPTOR ENCLOSURES

October 26, 2020

Draft Environmental Assessment MEPA, NEPA, MCA 23-1-110 CHECKLIST

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. **Type of proposed state action:** Construction of Raptor Enclosures for MT WILD's Wildlife Center.
2. **Agency authority for the proposed action:** Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
3. **Name, address and phone number of project sponsor (if other than the agency) delete if we're sponsoring:**
4. **Anticipated Schedule:**
Estimated Commencement Date: July 2021
Estimated Completion Date: October 2021
Current Status of Project Design (% complete): 50%
5. **Location affected by proposed action (county, range and township – included map):** 2668 Broadwater Ave., Helena, MT;
6. **Project size -- estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:**

	<u>Acres</u>		<u>Acres</u>	
(a) Developed:		(d) Floodplain	<u>0</u>	
Residential	<u>.5</u>	Industrial	<u>0</u>	(e)
Productive:				
(existing shop area)		Irrigated cropland	<u>0</u>	
(b) Open Space/	<u>0</u>	Dry cropland	<u>0</u>	
Woodlands/Recreation		Forestry	<u>0</u>	
(c) Wetlands/Riparian	<u>0</u>	Rangeland	<u>0</u>	
Areas		Other	<u>0</u>	

7. **Permits, Funding & Overlapping Jurisdiction.**

(a) Permits: permits will be filed at least 2 weeks prior to project start.	
<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permits</u>
City of Helena, Building Division	Building Permit
Montana Department of Environmental Quality	Storm Water Pollution
Prevention Permit	

(b) **Funding:**
Agency Name Funding Amount

(c) **Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:**
Agency Name Type of Responsibility

7. **Narrative summary of the proposed action: (include reasons why project is necessary and benefits of the project):** The Wildlife Center needs to build a new structure to house the education and rehabilitation birds under the center's care. The project is necessary for the following reasons.
- The raptors under the center's care need new enclosures that will meet both USFWS Permitting requirements and the minimum standards set by the National Wildlife Rehabilitation Association. Currently, the enclosures are not meeting these permitting requirements.
 - The new enclosures will be built to meet each species housing requirements and allow for more natural light and air flow for the raptors increasing their welfare.
 - A portion of the structure used to house the education birds will allow for the public to view the birds and for staff and volunteers to hold more frequent live raptor education programs.
 - All funding for this project will be coming from external funding sources through securing private funding/donations.

9. **Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives:**

Alternative A: No Action

Alternative B: Proposed Action

Insert any other alternatives:

10. **Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:**
(Note any agreements or contracts that would provide control measures or define responsibilities here.)
City of Helena Approvals will be required for water and wastewater hookups and storm drain controls. A City of Helena building permit will also be required.

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CHECKLIST

(Include a statement either here or under the No Action and other alternatives to describe the impacts of those actions. The checklist typically only illuminates the Proposed Action impacts.)

Evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment.

A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. <u>LAND RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		x				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil, which would reduce productivity or fertility?			x			b.
c. Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		x				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?		x				
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		x				

b. Soil disruption, displacement and compaction will occur within the footprint of the building. Temporary soil disruption will occur within the construction limits but will be rehabilitated and revegetated.

2. <u>AIR</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (Also see 13 (c).)			x			a
b. Creation of objectionable odors?			x			b
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		x				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		x				
e. For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge, which will conflict with federal or state air quality regulations? (Also see 2a.)		x				

- a. Air quality will be temporarily degraded by construction equipment during construction.
- b. Construction equipment may temporarily emit objectionable odors during construction.

3. <u>WATER</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?		x				
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?			x			b
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of floodwater or other flows?		x				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		x				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		x				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		x				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		x				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		x				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		x				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		x				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		x				
l. For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c.)		x				
m. For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a.)		x				

- b. Increased surface runoff due to building addition will be mitigated on-site.

4. <u>VEGETATION</u> Will the proposed action result in?	IMPACT					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?			x			
b. Alteration of a plant community?		x				
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		x				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		x				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?			x			
f. For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		x				
g. Other:						

- a. Construction of building will decrease available ground area for plants. Existing ground is limited to gravel and low quality grasses.
- e. Ground disturbance during construction may increase potential for noxious weeds. Best management practices will be included in the construction contract.

5. <u>FISH/WILDLIFE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		x				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		x				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		x				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		x				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		x				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		x				
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?		x				
h. For P-R/D-J, will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f.)		x				
i. For P-R/D-J, will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d.)		x				

B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Increases in existing noise levels?			x			a
b. Exposure of people to serve or nuisance noise levels?			x			b
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		x				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		x				

a. Noise levels will increase during the construction period but will be limited to daytime working hours.

b. Noise levels may periodically reach nuisance levels during the construction period but will be limited to daytime working hours.

7. <u>LAND USE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		x				
b. Conflicted with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		x				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		x				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		x				

8. <u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?			x			a
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan, or create a need for a new plan?			x			b
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		x				
d. For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)		x				

- a. Use of heavy equipment during construction period includes inherent risk of fuel or lubricant leaks. Best management practices will be included in the construction contract.
- b. Development of a new building may require review of existing emergency response plans.

9. <u>COMMUNITY IMPACT</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		x				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		x				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		x				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?			x			d
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?		x				

D. Minor increase in activity surrounding building use may occur

10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Will the proposed action have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify:			x			a
b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?		x				
c. Will the proposed action result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		x				
d. Will the proposed action result in increased use of any energy source?			x			d
e. Define projected revenue sources						
f. Define projected maintenance costs.						

- a. Proposed facility will require connection to existing utilities including water, sewer and electricity
- d. Proposed facility will require marginal increase in electrical consumption for limited heat and light.

11. <u>AESTHETICS/RECREATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?		x				
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		x				
c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report.)		x				
d. For P-R/D-J, will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c.)		x				

12. <u>CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance?		x				
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		x				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		x				
d. For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a.)		x				

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

13. <u>SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE</u>	IMPACT					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:						
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources that create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)						
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects, which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?						
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?						
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?						
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?						
f. For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e.)						
g. For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.						

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

(This area is often used to summarize the proposed action and any cumulative effects.)

PART IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. Public involvement:

The public will be notified in the following manners to comment on this current EA, the proposed action and alternatives:

- Two public notices in each of these papers:
- One statewide press release (if applicable);
- Public notice on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks web page: <http://fwp.mt.gov>.

Copies of this environmental assessment will be distributed to the neighboring landowners and interested parties to ensure their knowledge of the proposed project.

This level of public notice and participation is appropriate for a project of this scope having limited impacts, many of which can be mitigated. (Is this a true statement for your project?)

2. Duration of comment period:

The public comment period will extend for (30) thirty days. Written comments will be accepted until 5:00 p.m., date , 2011 and can be mailed or emailed to the addresses below:

PART V. EA PREPARATION

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

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action.

2. Person(s) responsible for preparing the EA:

3. List of agencies or offices consulted during preparation of the EA:

APPENDIX A
23-1-110 MCA
PROJECT QUALIFICATION CHECKLIST

Date:

Person Reviewing:

Project Location:

Description of Proposed Work:

The following checklist is intended to be a guide for determining whether a proposed development or improvement is of enough significance to fall under 23-1-110 rules. (Please check ☐ all that apply and comment as necessary.)

- [] A. New roadway or trail built over undisturbed land?
Comments:
- [] B. New building construction (buildings <100 sf and vault latrines exempt)?
Comments:
- [] C. Any excavation of 20 c.y. or greater?
Comments:
- [] D. New parking lots built over undisturbed land or expansion of existing lot that increases parking capacity by 25% or more?
Comments:
- [] E. Any new shoreline alteration that exceeds a doublewide boat ramp or handicapped fishing station?
Comments:
- [] F. Any new construction into lakes, reservoirs, or streams?
Comments:
- [] G. Any new construction in an area with National Registry quality cultural artifacts (as determined by State Historical Preservation Office)?
Comments:

- [] H. Any new above ground utility lines?
Comments:
- [] I. Any increase or decrease in campsites of 25% or more of an existing number of campsites?
Comments:
- [] J. Proposed project significantly changes the existing features or use pattern; including effects of a series of individual projects?
Comments:

If any of the above are checked, 23-1-110 MCA rules apply to this proposed work and should be documented on the MEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST. Refer to MEPA/HB495 Cross Reference Summary for further assistance.