

# U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management

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## CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW AND APPROVAL DOI-BLM-M0100-2016-0015-CX

**Project Title:** Chase Hill Outfitters Special Recreation Use Permit renewal

**Location:** BLM-administered Lands in Hunting District 622  
See Operating Area Map  
Phillips and Valley Counties

**Applicant/Address:** Bill Brown - Chase Hill Outfitters  
43 Chase Hill Drive  
Big Sandy, MT 59520

### Project Contact:

Name: Jason Snellman  
Title: Outdoor Recreation Planner  
Office: Malta Field Office/HiLine District  
Telephone No.: (406) 654-5118

Malta Field Office  
501 South 2<sup>nd</sup> Street East  
Malta, MT 59538  
406-654-5100



## CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW AND APPROVAL

### A. Background

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: SRP #MT-090-20-28

**Description of Proposed Action:** The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), HiLine District is proposing to issue a 5-year Special Recreation Permit to Bill Brown (Chase Hill Outfitters) for the purpose of commercial recreation activities that include guided big game hunts in Hunting District 622 located in south Phillips and Valley Counties. An estimated 10 hunt days will take place between September 5 and November 29, 2015. No overnight camping is being proposed. Detailed maps and Plan of Operation listing guides and vehicles are on file at Malta Field Office.

### B. Land Use Plan Conformance

The public lands covered by this proposed action are managed according to decisions in the HiLine Resource Management Plan (RMP) approved in 2015. The proposed action is in conformance with the RMP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following land use plan objectives:

**HiLine District Office Approved Resource Management Plan, Attachment 8, pg. 3-44:** Recreation – "... The BLM will issue SRP's as appropriate for commercial, competitive, and special events subject to guidelines in BLM Handbook 2930, resource capacities, social conflict concerns, professional qualifications, public safety, and public needs. New permits will not be authorized that directly conflict with other permitted uses and existing permits will be given preference. Through plan implementation, changes in demand for permits and resulting impacts will be monitored and thresholds identified that could lead to limits in the number of permits to minimize impacts on the resources, public safety, and overall visitor satisfaction. All SRP applications and renewals will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and site-specific analysis will be done for each proposed operating area."

The BLM will maintain and/or enhance the recreational quality of BLM land and resources to ensure enjoyable recreation experiences. The BLM's Recreation 2000 guidance and the Tri-State Recreation plan incorporate the following provisions:

1. Managing visitor services including a permit system, interpretive programs, visitor contact, and efforts to improve the BLM's image with public land users; and

"The BLM will not allocate permits or specific use areas for outfitters and guides. All BLM land is available at the discretion of the Area Manager as long as permittees maintain a special use permit and meet the BLM regulation requirements. Outfitters and other recreation users are required to use weed-free feed on BLM land for their livestock as a part of the district's integrated weed management program."

### C. Compliance with NEPA:

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 Departmental Manual (DM) 11.9.

516 DM 11.9 (H) Recreation Management:

Issuance of Special Recreation Permits for day use or overnight use up to 14 consecutive nights; that impacts no more than 3 staging area acres; and/or for recreational travel along roads, trails, or in areas authorized in a land use plan. This CX cannot be used for commercial boating permits along Wild and Scenic Rivers. This CX cannot be used for the establishment or issuance of Special Recreation Permits for “Special Area” management (43 CFR 2932.5).

The proposed action has been reviewed and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 43 CFR 46.215 apply. This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having significant effects on the environment.

There is no potential for significant impacts because all vehicular access will follow established roads and trails. Retention and renewal of the SRP will be contingent upon compliance with BLM regulations and HiLine District SRP stipulations.

**D: Signature**

I considered this review and determined that the proposed action is in conformance with the applicable land use plan(s) and is categorically excluded from further environmental analysis. It is my decision to issue a special recreation use permit to Bill Brown (Chase Hill Outfitters) with the stipulation listed below.

1. Permittee will conform to all requirements and stipulations for Form 2930-1 Application for Special Recreation Permit, Form 2930-2 Special Recreation Permit, and Stipulations for Commercial Outfitter Permits (HiLine District-revised March 2016). A signed and dated copy of each will become part of the permittee’s permanent file.
2. Permitted BLM administered lands include those within Hunting District 622. This permit does not issue access to private, state or other public lands.
3. Permittee will conform to all BLM and State regulations pertaining to use of this permit.

Authorizing Official: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

Name: Travis Kern  
Title: Malta Field Manager (acting)



# United States Department of the Interior

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## ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

<b>Office/Area: Malta Field Office</b>	<b>EA#: DOI-BLM-M030-2016-0015-CX</b>
	<b>Date Posted: March 25, 2016</b>
<b>Title: Special Recreation Use Permit Renewal for Bill Brown – Chase Hill Outfitters</b>	<b>Date Due: April 8, 2016</b>
<b>Location: See CX</b>	<b>Phillips and Valley Counties, Montana</b>

<b>Originator Date/Initials</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Date/Initials</b>
Jason Snellman	Outdoor Recreation Planner	JS 3/29/2016

<b>Reviewer/Field Office</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Date/Initials</b>
Josh Chase/Havre	Archaeologist	Cultural, Paleontology, Native American Concerns	/s/ JJC 3/25/2016
Kathy Tribby/ Malta	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife, Migratory Birds, Special Status Species	3/29/2016 kmt
Jason Snellman/Malta	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation	JS 3/29/2016
Hal Moore/Malta	Range Management Specialist	Invasive Species	4/05/2016 HM
Josh Sorlie/Malta	Soil Scientist	Soils	3-29-2016/JS
Tom Probert/Glasgow	Hydrologist	Water, Wetland, Riparian Resources	Thomas Probert 3/25/2016

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**Environmental Coordinator**

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**Date**

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**Travis Kern**  
**Authorized Officer**

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**Date**