CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	James Judisch Jr. has requested to build a 4 barbed wire wood post fence along the two-track trail located in Leases # 2140, #5646, and #9187.
Proposed Implementation Date:	Spring 2012
Proponent:	James Judisch Jr., HC74 Box 17, Ledger, MT 59456
Location:	NE4NW4, Section 21, T30N, R1E NE4NE4, Section 20, T30N, R1E W2SW4, SW4NW4, Section 16, T30N, R1E
County:	Toole
Trust:	Common Schools (CS) and Capitol Buildings (CB)

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The proponent has requested to build approximately 1.15 miles of 4 barbed wire wood post fence along the two-track trail in the above listed sections. The fence will cross state owned rangeland in the three sections that are listed above. This fence will allow the proponent to utilize deeded, BOR, and state grazing land for fall grazing by preventing livestock from entering the steep areas. There is currently an old fence on a portion of the tracts which will be removed. The new fence will connect a fence on deeded and state land in Section 21 to a fence on BOR land in Section 16.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

DNRC-Surface
James Judisch Jr. -Surface Lessee, Lease #2140, #5646, and #9187.
James Judisch Jr. -Proponent

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

DNRC is not aware of any other agencies with jurisdiction or other permits needed to complete this project

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A (No Action) – Deny the requested fence project.

Alternative B (the Proposed action) –Approve the requested fence project.

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 any cumulative impacts to soils.

The soil types are generally suitable for the placement of the fence along the two-track trail in the above listed sections. The topography is gently rolling and suitable for the placement of the fence.

No cumulative effects to the soils are anticipated.

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 cumulative effects to water resources.

No important surface or groundwater resources will be impacted by the proposed fencing project.

Other water quality and/or quantity issues will not be impacted by the proposed action.

6. AIR QUALITY:
What pollutants or particulate would be produced? Identify air quality regulations or zones (e.g. Class I air shed) the project would influence. Identify cumulative effects to air quality.

The proposed fencing project will consist of only minimal disturbance to soils, so no cumulative effects to air quality are anticipated.

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 cumulative effects to vegetation.

Vegetation will be minimally impacted as approximately 1.15 miles of fence will be built. Noxious and annual weeds within the proposed construction area are not a concern. Cumulative impacts on the vegetative resources are not expected due to the small amount of soil disturbance caused by placing a fence post.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted and there were no plant species of concern noted or potential species of concern noted on the NRIS survey.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:
Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

The 4 barbed wire wood fence construction will be built to a total height of 42" and at least 19" from the ground. This will allow for adequate movements of wildlife found in the area. The proposal does not include any land use change which would yield changes to the wildlife habitat. The proposed action will not impact wildlife forage, cover, or traveling corridors. Nor will this action change the juxtaposition of wildlife forage, water, or hiding and thermal cover. The proposed action will not have long-term negative effects on existing wildlife species and/or wildlife habitat.

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 cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

There are no threatened or endangered species, sensitive habitat types, or other species of special concern associated with the proposed project area.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted. There was one animal species of concern and two potential species of concern noted on the NRIS survey: Fish-Lake Trout, Brook Stickleback, and Burbot. These particular tracts of native rangeland do not contain any of these species.

Threatened or endangered species, sensitive habitat types, or other species of special concern or potential species of concern will not be impacted by the proposed fencing project.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:
Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

There no historical, archaeological or paleontological resources noted in the proposed project area. Cultural resources will not be impacted by this proposed project as only a limited amount of soil disturbance in the placement of the fence posts.

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 cumulative effects to aesthetics.

The state land does not provide any unique scenic qualities not also provided on adjacent private lands. The proposed project will consist of replacing an existing fence and placing new fence along a two-track trail, so there would be no change to the aesthetics in either alternative.

No direct or cumulative effects to aesthetics are anticipated.

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 cumulative effects to environmental resources.

The demand on environmental resources such as land, water, air, or energy will not be affected by the proposed action. The proposed action will not consume resources that are limited in the area. There are no other projects in the area that will affect the proposed action.

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.

There are no other projects or plans being considered on the tracts listed on this EA.

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 proposed easement will not impact human health or safety in the area.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:
Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

This fence will allow the proponent to utilize deeded, BOR, and state grazing land to the as there currently is either an old fence or no fence. This will generally improve James Judisch Jr.'s ranching opportunities.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:
Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to the employment market.

The proposed action will not significantly affect long-term employment in the surrounding communities.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:
Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

There are no direct or cumulative effects to taxes or revenue for the proposed project.

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 cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services

There will be no direct or cumulative effects on 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.

The proposed action is in compliance with State and County laws. No other management plans are in effect for the 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 cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

These tracts of state land generally have low recreational value for hunting. These tracts are not legally accessible to the public. The proposed action is not expected to impact general recreational activities on this state land.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:
Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify cumulative effects to population and housing

The proposal does not include any changes to housing or developments.

No direct or cumulative effects to population or housing are anticipated.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:
Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

There are no native, unique or traditional lifestyles or communities in the vicinity that would be impacted by the proposal.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:
How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

The proposed action will not impact the cultural uniqueness or diversity of the area.

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 cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.

This fence will allow the proponent to utilize deeded, BOR, and state grazing land to as there currently is either an old fence or no fence along the two-track trail. The project will not affect the long-term viability of grazing on the tract, so no cumulative economic or social effects are likely to occur. This project is authorized under the lease improvement request form.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	**Name:**	Tony Nickol	**Date:**	April 2, 2012
	Title:	Land Use Specialist, Conrad Unit, Central Land Office		

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Alternative B (the Proposed action) –Approve the requested fence project.

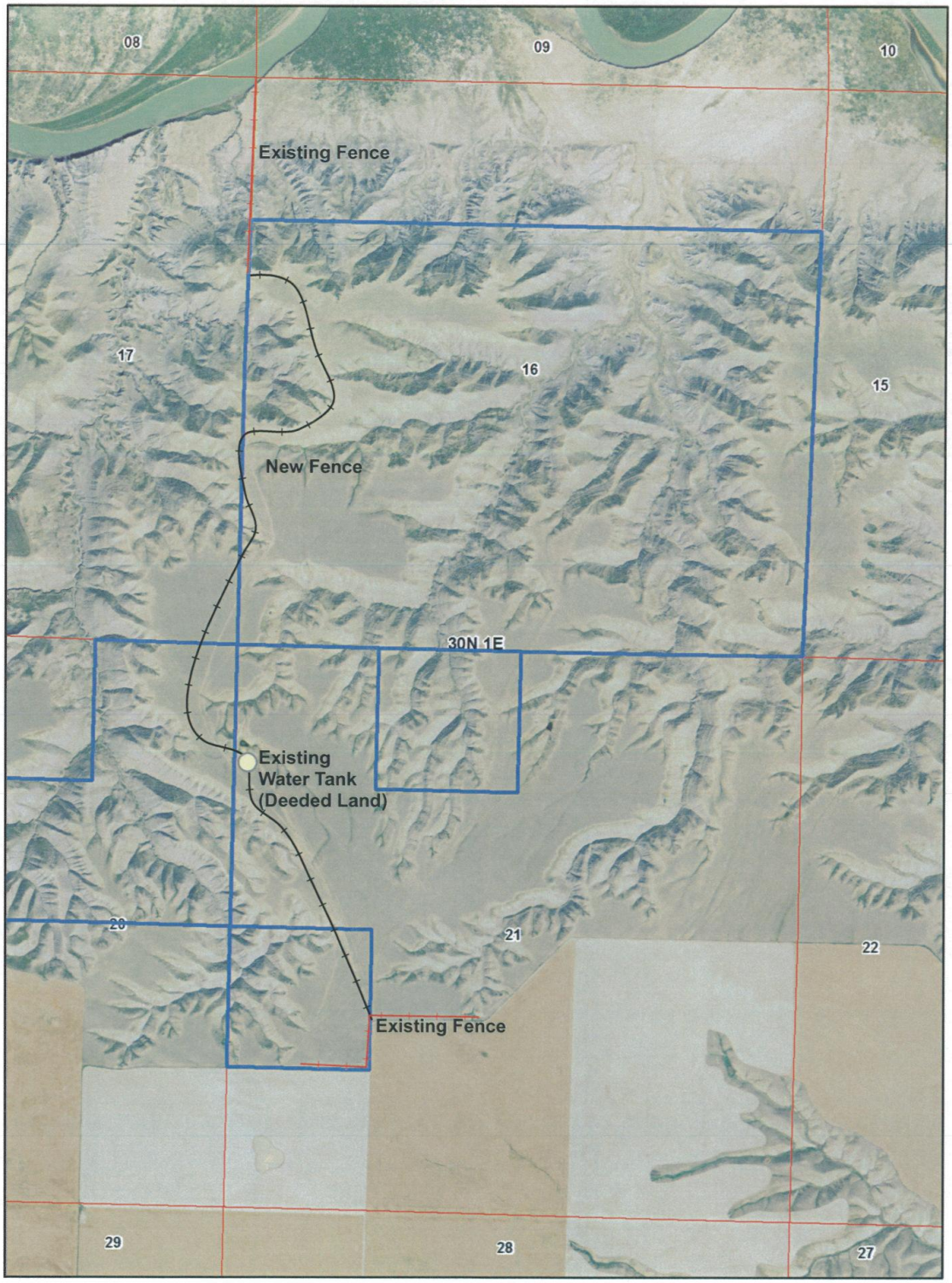
26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

Fence is a standard livestock fence, typical of the area, and specification will allow for adequate movements of wildlife found in the area. Negative environmental impacts are not expected.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

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

EA Checklist Approved By:	**Name:** Erik Eneboe **Title:** Conrad Unit Manager, CLO	
Signature:		**Date**: April 3, 2012


08
09
10
Existing Fence
17
16
15
New Fence
30N 1E
Existing
Water Tank
(Deeded Land)
20
21
22
Existing Fence
29
28
27