

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	LUL-309-2400050
Proposed Implementation Date:	05/07/2024-05/09/2024
Proponent:	Meateater, Inc.
Location:	Multiple Sections (Common Schools Trust): Section 16, Township 1 South, Range 17 East; Section 36, Township 1 South, Range 17 East; Section 36, Township 2 South, Range 19 East; Section 16, Township 3 South, Range 20 East
County:	Sweet Grass County and Stillwater County

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

MeatEater, Inc. is applying for a Land Use License on multiple parcels of state sections in Sweet Grass and Stillwater counties for the purpose of filming and photographing an episode of 'MeatEater Hunts,' a YouTube Series under the MeatEater Brand and hunting practices, specifically Turkey hunting within Hunting District 515 & Hunting District 575. The proposed license will be for two days and will have a crew of no more than four people.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project. List number of individuals contacted, number of responses received, and newspapers in which notices were placed and for how long. Briefly summarize issues received from the public.

No formal public scoping was performed by DNRC for this proposed project. The nature of the license is to film and photograph hunting processes on multiple state sections. Proponent will follow all hunting and safety regulations and rules.

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

Examples: cost-share agreement with U.S. Forest Service, 124 Permit, 3A Authorization, Air Quality Major Open Burning Permit.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks: Turkey hunting tags.

3. ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT:

Describe alternatives considered and, if applicable, provide brief description of how the alternatives were developed. List alternatives that were considered but eliminated from further analysis and why.

Proposed Alternative: Issue the land use license for MeatEater, Inc. to grant permission for a crew of four to film while hunting on state sections in Hunting District 515 & 575.

No Action Alternative: Deny the land use license for MeatEater, Inc. to grant permission for a crew of four film while hunting on state sections in Hunting District 515 & 575.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to soils.

The crew will be hiking on state section lands and no motor vehicles will be permitted under the license. The main areas the crew will traverse consist of valley grasslands and mixedgrass prairie. MeatEater, Inc. is not intending on overnight camping on the state sections. Due to the small number of people and the minor amount of time on land, there will be minimal impact to any geological features and soil.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to water resources.

Some of the state sections listed in the license have creeks and water sources on them. The crew may be hunting near or having to traverse water sources. They will be doing this on foot and with the small number of occupants associated with the license, minimal degradation to any water source will occur.

6. AIR QUALITY:

What pollutants or particulate would be produced (i.e. particulate matter from road use or harvesting, slash pile burning, prescribed burning, etc)? Identify the Airshed and Impact Zone (if any) according to the Montana/Idaho Airshed Group. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to air quality.

MeatEater, Inc. will be walking across state sections with equipment that includes standard video recording equipment and hunting gear, none of which will have impact on air quality. With the nominal number of people on the crew, noise pollution will be absent.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to vegetation.

The crew will be in state sections short term (not to exceed two days and no overnight camping). There is one species that is of concern in the general area is the Slim-pod Venus'-looking-glass. Because of the crew moving through sections following game trails, impact on any vegetative growth, including species of concern is going to be minimal. There will be no long-term effect of the vegetation in the area.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:

Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

A variety of big game (antelope, deer, and elk), small mammals, raptors, songbirds and turkeys may traverse the subject sections. The proponent has/will obtain all hunting permits needed for antelope hunting. The proposed project activities have limited effect on the surrounding wildlife. Due to the short project duration and minimal change to the environment, no significant adverse impacts will occur to terrestrial, avian and aquatic life and habitats as a result of implementing the proposed alternative.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program database indicated one Special Status Species: Bald Eagle. Due to the nature of the proposed action, filming hunting practices, it is not expected to have a significant long-term effect on any of the species identified on or around the area. MeatEater, Inc. has obtained all licenses involved with the hunting practice. It will be stipulated that no avian nest areas will be disturbed during the filming and the hunt. In addition, some of the State parcels are located within Sage Grouse General Habitat, but no consultation with the Sage Grouse program was conducted due to the lack of ground disturbing activity proposed by the Land Use License. Due to the nature of the proposed action, there should be no adverse impacts to Sage Grouse.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

Identify and determine direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

No historical or archaeological findings in the area. The proposed action will have no impact.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to aesthetics.

The proposed action will have no significant impact on the aesthetics of the land environment.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to environmental resources.

No significant adverse impacts to environmental resources of land, water, air or energy are expected to occur as a result of implementing the proposed alternative.

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 known studies or future actions planned for these Trust Land parcels.

<p style="text-align: center;">IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION</p>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>RESOURCES</i> potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.• Explain <i>POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS</i> following each resource heading.• Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present. |
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14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

No significant adverse impacts to human health and safety would occur as a result of implementing the proposed alternative.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

No significant adverse impacts to industrial, commercial and agricultural activities and production would occur as a result of implementing the proposed alternative.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:

Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to the employment market.

The proposed action will have no significant impact on the quantity and distribution of employment.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:

Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

The proposed action will have no adverse impact on tax revenue.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services

The implementation of the proposed alternative will not generate any additional demands on governmental 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.

Implementation of the proposed alternative will not conflict with any locally adopted plans.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

The proposed license is not expected to have a long-term adverse impact on recreational use of Trust Lands. The proponent of the license must obtain private access to any land locked parcel and comply with any markings or signs of instruction.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:

Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to population and housing.

No significant adverse impacts to density and distribution of population and housing would occur as a result of implementing the proposed alternative.

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 proposed alternative.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

The proposed alternative will not have a significant adverse impact on cultural uniqueness or diversity.

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

The Common Schools Trust Permanent Fund will benefit by getting a one-time fee of \$500 from MeatEater, Inc. for the license. If the filming crew will extend their days for filming and photography, each additional add will be \$250/day based on the DNRC Fee Schedule

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Michelle Yeager	Date: 4/18/2024
	Title: Acting Area Planner	

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

The proposed alternative has been selected and it is recommended the license be granted for MeatEater, Inc. to film hunting practices on state sections in Hunting District 515 & 575 on the following sections of State Land:

- Section 16, Township 1 South, Range 17 East;
- Section 36, Township 1 South, Range 17 East;
- Section 36, Township 2 South, Range 19 East;
- Section 16, Township 3 South, Range 20 East

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

The potential for significant adverse impacts to the Trust lands listed above are minimal due to the nature of the proposed action which would entail issuing a license to allow a film crew to follow and document an antelope hunt. The license includes all State Land within Hunting District 515 & 575, but this is only to cover the Licensee


due to the exact location of the hunt not being determined yet. There are no natural features that could produce adverse impacts or species of concern occupying the parcels that are expected to be impacted by implementing the proposed action.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

EIS

More Detailed EA

No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Joe Holzwarth Title: Southern Land Office Area Manager
Signature: 	Date: 4/22/24