

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	City of Miles City Municipal Water Main/Tongue River
Proposed Implementation Date:	2016
Proponent:	City of Miles City
Location:	T8N-R47E-Sec 33/ Tongue River Riverbed
County:	Custer County

Definitions

HDD- Horizontal Directional Drilling

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The City of Miles City (Henceforth referred to as proponent) has requested a right of way easement to cross state owned portion of the Tongue Riverbed located in T8N-R47E-Sec 33 with a 20" watermain pipeline. The distance of the proposed crossing would be approximately 125.02 feet in length X 20 feet in width for a requested right of way easement total acreage of .057 acres. The surface drilling would take place approximately 200 feet east and west of the median water mark of the Tongue River. Bore sites will be located outside of the maximum channel migration zones. The implementation of HDD on the project will ensure that the pipeline is at a minimum depth of 20 feet below the riverbed of the Tongue River. This depth is below the anticipated maximum scour depth of the river.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

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

The Proponent and KLJ Engineering have submitted application for request of a right of way easement under the riverbed of the Tongue River, for the purpose of placing a 20" water main. The proposed project would consist of using an HDD bore to place the line at a minimum depth of 20 feet below the current depth of riverbed. The proponent has filed for a joint application 310 and SPA 124 permits for work in Montana Waterbodies. No equipment or structures will be placed in the riverbed.

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

Joint Application 310/SPA 124
Custer County Conservation District 310
Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks SPA 124 Permit

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A- Grant right of way easement, to the proponent to for the purpose of installing operating and maintaining a 20" water main.

Alternative B- No Action

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.

Alternative A- No fragile unstable or compactable soils have been noted within the scope of the project. The pipeline will be horizontally directionally drilled under the Tongue Riverbed to avoid any surface disturbance on state owned lands and riverbed impacts.

Alternative B- No Impact.

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.

Alternative A- Minimal impact to water quality, quantity and distribution could be expected. All construction methods will be done in a way as to minimize impacts to both ground and surface water sources. The Project would cross 1 perennial stream on state owned trust land (Tongue River located in T8N-R47E-Sec 33). HDD (Horizontal Directional Drilling) construction method would be employed for construction of the pipeline underneath of the Tongue River to prevent any streambed disturbance a minimum and nominal depth of 20 feet below the river bed would be employed. At this level the pipeline would be placed below the anticipated maximum scour depth of the river.

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- Construction could be expected to temporarily impact local ambient air-quality. This impact would be produced through fugitive dust as well as emission from construction equipment. This temporary localized impact should only take place on this tract of trust land during the drilling and pipe installation phases of the project.

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- Potential disruption to the vegetative community within the area of construction would be avoided through the utilization of horizontal directional drilling. This would avoid disturbance of any aquatic plant species which may be established in the riverbed.

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- This project may disrupt wildlife habitat for a number of species. Species which may have habitat in the area of the project may include various species of fish, amphibians, water fowl, aquatic mammals and reptiles. The utilization of horizontal directional drilling should avoid any surface impact to these species.

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program Database showed several species of concern within the general area of the project. These species include Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), Great Blue Heron (*Ardea Herodias*), Sharp-tailed Grouse (*Tympanuchus phasianellus*), Great Plains Toad (*Anaxyrus cognatus*), Northern Leopard Frog (*Lithobates pipiens*), and Sturgeon Chub (*Macrhybopsis gelida*) Impacts to these species should be avoided through use of the horizontal directional drilling technique which should not disturb the surface of the riverbed, water or habitat of these species. This proposed project is not located within Greater Sage Grouse Core, Connectivity or General Habitat.

Alternative B- No Impact

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

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

Alternative A- A search of the TLMS Database and field survey showed no historical, archeological or paleontological resources within the scope of the project.

Alternative B- 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 cumulative effects to aesthetics.

Alternative A- No impacts to aesthetics on this tract are anticipated due to the pipeline being placed beneath the riverbed. Noise levels around the sight of construction may be temporarily increased. Maximum noise levels from the construction are expected to be 75-85 decibels in the immediate area of construction. This increase should be temporary in nature and subside when construction ceases. Construction should only occur during daytime hours.

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- No limited natural resources should be required in addition to that which is stated within the proposed easement.

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

City of Miles City and Custer County Plan of Development

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

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

Alternative A- There may be potential health and safety risks associated with this project. These risks can be mitigated with proper training and on site safety protocols. The pipeline would be placed below the maximum anticipated scour depth of the Tongue River in an effort to mitigate potential pipeline breaks.

Alternative B- No Impact

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

Alternative A- This proposed project should have a long term positive effect on industrial, commercial and residential activities through improvement of wastewater infrastructure. Agriculture activities should experience neutral effects.

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- This project has the potential to create jobs with further development possibilities. The expected maximum workforce is unknown at this time.

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- Impacts unknown at this time.

Alternative B- No impact.

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

Alternative A- Traffic levels may increase slightly during the construction phase of this project. This increase should only be short term and temporary. This project should increase the overall reliability and efficiency of the municipal water infrastructure.

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- City of Miles City and Custer County Plan of Development/ Planning Boards

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- This proposed project and easement request is located within the city limits of Miles City. Impacts to recreational opportunities should be negligible and temporary.

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- No significant impact expected.

Alternative B- No Impact

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

Alternative A- This project has the potential to have a minimal and temporary disruption of native or traditional lifestyles. This disruption should cease once the construction phase is completed.

Alternative B- No Impact

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

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

Alternative A- No Significant Impact

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- This project has the potential to produce revenue for the school trust through the purchase of a right of way easement. The price of this easement will be established by the DNRC Real Estate Management Bureau.

Alternative B- Additional revenue to the trust through the sale of a right of way easement would not be realized.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Scott Aye	Date: 7-8-2016
	Title: Land Program Manager	

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Alternative A

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

The granting of the requested right of way easement across state owned trust lands for the proposed City of Miles City Water Main Project should not result in nor cause significant environmental impacts. The predicted environmental impacts have been identified and mitigation measures addressed in the environmental assessment checklist. The predicted impacts will be adequately mitigated through the construction and reclamation plans. The proposed action satisfies the trusts fiduciary mandate and ensures the long term productivity of the land. An environmental assessment checklist is the appropriate level of analysis for the proposed action

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

EIS More Detailed EA No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Chris Pileski
	Title: Eastern Land Office; Area Manager
Signature: /s/ Chris Pileski	Date: 7-8-2016