CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND RECLASSIFICATION CAPABILITY INVENTORY

Project Name: Miller Break	Proposed Implementation Date: Spring 2016
Proponent: Dale Miller Inc. Description of Project: Break 31+- acres of classified grazing to include in currently farmed acres.	
Type of Reclassification: **FROM:** ☐X **Grazing** ☐☐ **Timber** ☐☐ **Ag** ☐☐ **Other** **TO:** ☐ ☐ **Grazing** ☐☐ **Timber** ☐X **Ag** ☐☐ **Other** **ACRES: 31 +-** **TRUST(s): Common Schools**	
Location: T33N-R11E Sec 36	County: Hill

I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT	
1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.	FWP has been scoped on the project. Concerns were potential for use of this parcel by grassland bird priority species such as Sprague's Pipit.
2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:	FSA/NRCS have completed an HEL analysis.
3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:	Leave as grazing. Convert to Ag.

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS N = Not Present or No Impact will occur. Y = Impacts may occur (explain below)
	LAND CAPABILITY CHARACTERISTICS
4. GEOLOGY, SOILS AND MINERALS: Are fragile, compactible or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations? *Are there any mineral characteristics and how would reclassification impact development?* *If any lands are proprosed for breaking, what are the soil types & capability classes, texture, "T"*	[N] 9.2 acres of the proposed project are class 4 soils. The proponent uses Chemical Fallow farming techniques which will mitigate any potential soil loss on these acres. This mitigation falls within the Break Guidelines. The remaining acres are class 3 soils which won't require any mitigation. Proponent wishes to cash lease the project area along

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
factor, Wind Erodibility Group (WEG), and slopes? What crops will be grown and what are their potential yields? Will there be any mitigation measures implemented to address identified soil limitations?	with all other ag acres on the tract. Hard wheat varieties and pulse crops will be planted on a rotation. Expect 30-40 bushel winter wheat on a fallow rotation.
5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION: Are important surface or groundwater resources present? Is there potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality?	[N]
6. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?	[N]
7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present? *What is the existing vegetation?*	[Y] Current grassland will be converted to small grain species. There are no rare plants or cover types present. Current vegetation is primarily Blue Grama, Needle and Thread, and Crested Wheat Grass.
8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish? *What wildlife resources use or occupy the area?*	[N] Observed one Hungarian Partridge, ground squirrel holes, badger holes.
9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Sensitive Species or Species of special concern?	[Y] The Montana Heritage Program lists the Loggerhead Shrike and the Plains Hog Nosed Snake as Species of Concern that may occupy this township, it does not list the Sprague's Pipit in this township. A larger tract of native grass exists directly south for relocation. The project area is approximately four miles from the nearest identified Sage Grouse Habitat.
10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: *Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?*	[N] A Class III intensity level cultural and paleontological resources inventory was conducted of the area of potential effect on state land. Despite a detailed examination, no cultural or fossil resources were identified and no additional archaeological or paleontological investigative work is recommended. The proposed project will have *No Effect* to *Antiquities* as defined under the Montana State Antiquities Act. A formal report of findings has been prepared and is on file with the DNRC and the Montana State Historic Preservation Officer.
11. AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from	[N]

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
populated or scenic areas? Will there be excessive noise or light? *Are there notable aesthetic features on the tract?*	
12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY: Will the project use resources that are limited in the area? *Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project?*	[N] All lands adjacent to this tract north of railroad tracks are currently farmed.
13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?	[N]

III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION	
RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS & CAPABILITY CHARACTERISTICS
14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?	[N]
15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	[N]
16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.	[N]
17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?	[N]
18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed?	[N]
19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: *Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?*	[N]
20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? *Is the land legally accessible and is there recreational potential within the tract?*	[N]
21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND	[N]

HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?	
22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	[N]
23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	[N]
24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:	[N]

Document Prepared By: Monte McNally Date 2/17/16

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED: THE ALTERNATIVE TO CONVERT THE 31 ACRES TO Ag. Land.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS: Minimal negative impacts expected. Potential County average small grain production equals positive impacts for the School Trust.

27. Need for Further Environmental Analysis:

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

Barney A. Smith — Name

Farmington Unit Manager — Title

Signature

2/17/16 — Date

V. RECLASSIFICATION RECOMMENDATION AND APPROVAL

28. Land Office Recommendation, including Highest and Best Use:

Break for agricultural production 2-17-16 CR

29. Recommendation by Bureau Chief:

Reasons for Recommendation:

Bureau Chief Signature | Date

30. Final Decision on Reclassification by Trust Land Management Division Administrator:

☐ Approve

☐ Deny

Signature | Date

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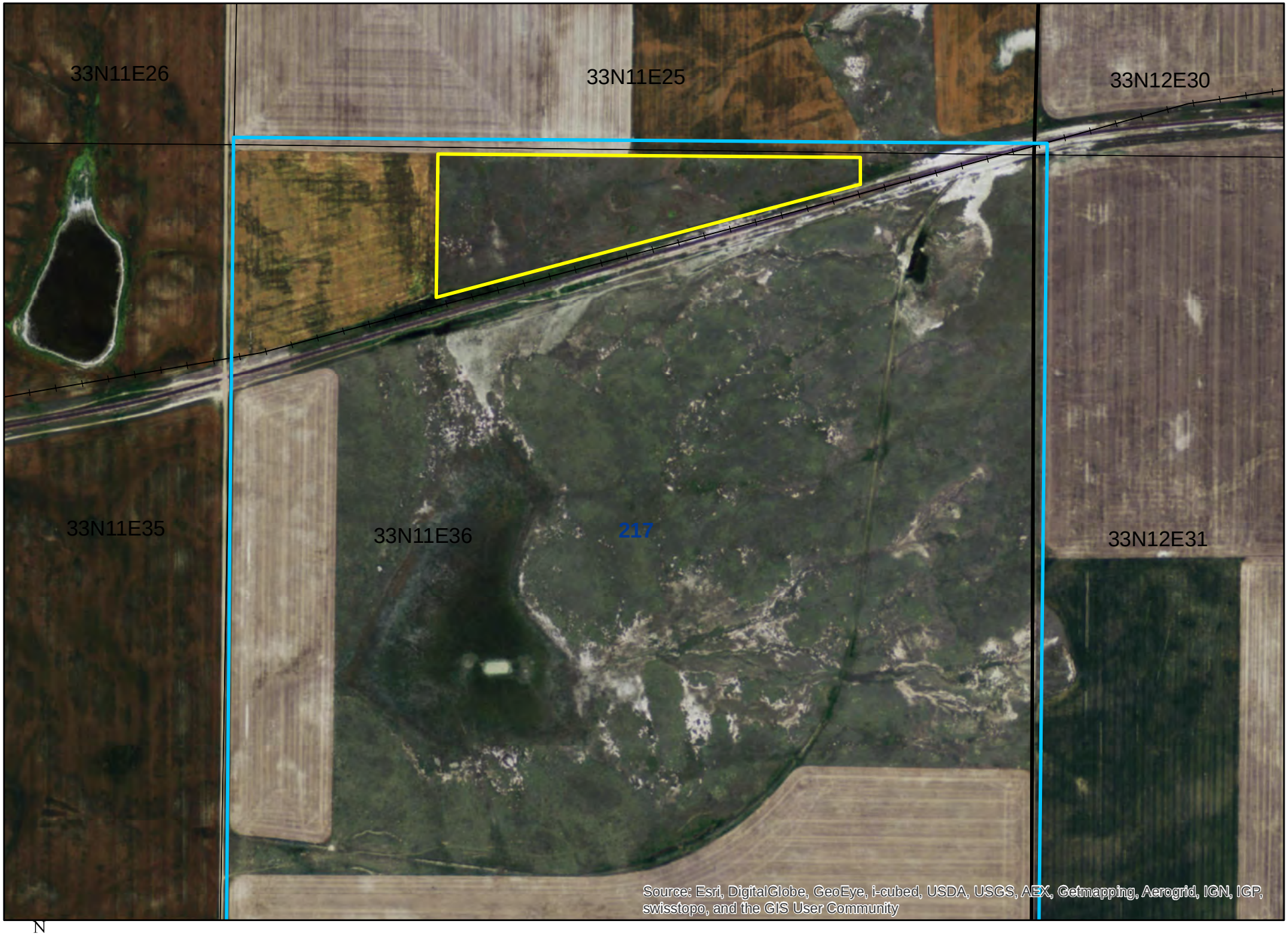
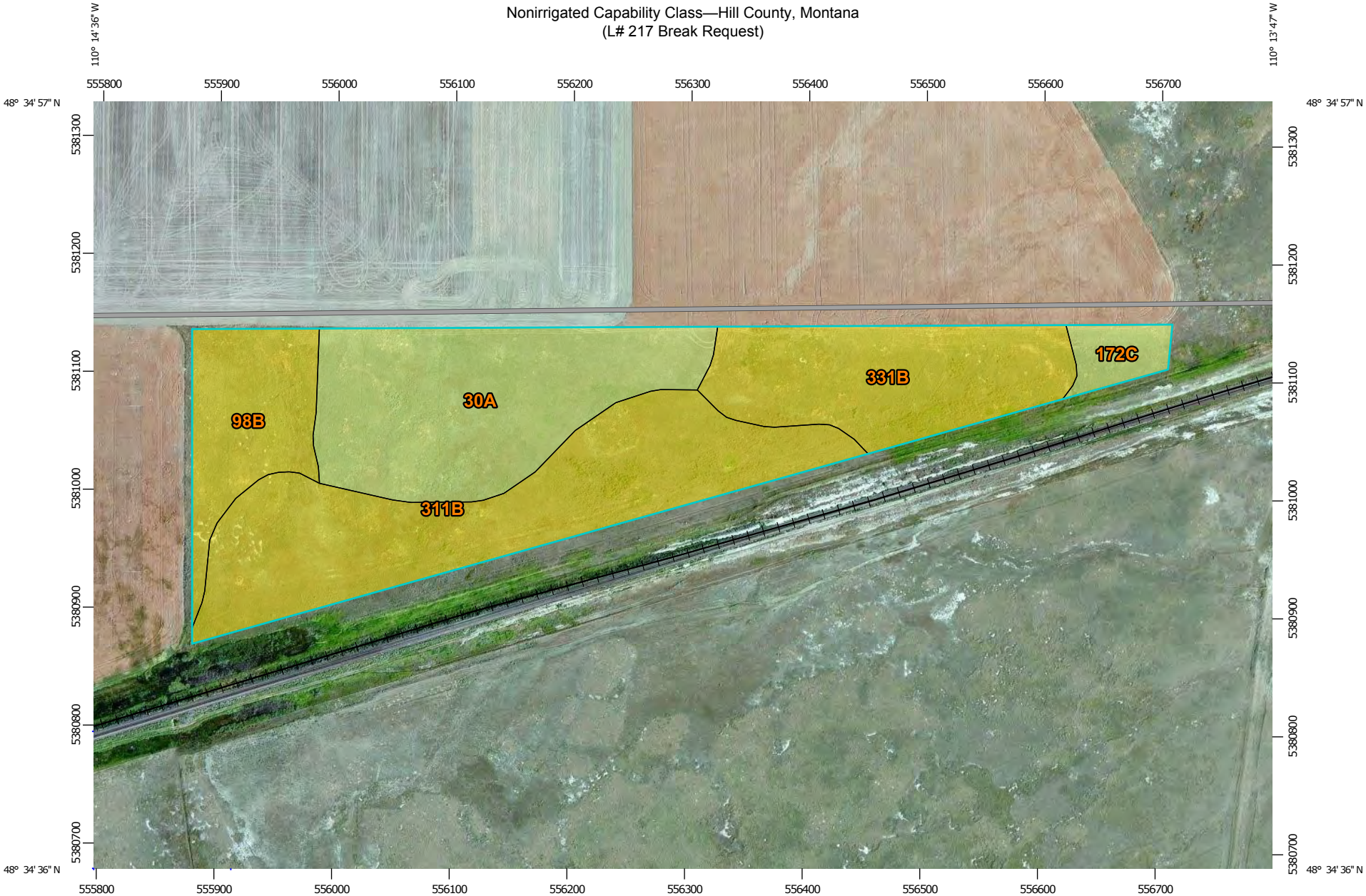
Miller Break



N

Nonirrigated Capability Class—Hill County, Montana
(L# 217 Break Request)



Map Scale: 1:4,580 if printed on A landscape (11" x 8.5") sheet.

N

Meters: 0 50 100 200 300

Feet: 0 200 400 800 1200

Map projection: Web Mercator Corner coordinates: WGS84 Edge tics: UTM Zone 12N WGS84

Nonirrigated Capability Class

Nonirrigated Capability Class— Summary by Map Unit — Hill County, Montana (MT041)				
Map unit symbol	**Map unit name**	**Rating**	**Acres in AOI**	**Percent of AOI**
30A	Marvan clay, 0 to 2 percent slopes	4	9.2	29.2%
98B	Kremlin loam, 0 to 4 percent slopes	3	3.9	12.4%
172C	Delpoint complex, 2 to 8 percent slopes	4	1.0	3.2%
311B	Ferd-Creed-Gerdrum complex, 0 to 4 percent slopes	3	10.9	34.6%
331B	Phillips-Elloam complex, 0 to 4 percent slopes	3	6.5	20.6%
Totals for Area of Interest			**31.4**	**100.0%**

Nonirrigated Yields for Spring and Winter Wheat (MT)

The average yields per acre that can be expected of spring wheat and winter wheat under a high level of management are shown in this table. The yield figures were generated by the Montana Crop Yield Model. In any given year, yields may be higher or lower than those indicated in the table because of variations in rainfall and other climatic factors.

Report—Nonirrigated Yields for Spring and Winter Wheat (MT)

[Yields are those that can be expected under a high level of management. They are for nonirrigated areas. These yields were generated using the Montana Crop Yield Model and are stored as an interpretation result. Absence of a yield indicates that the soil is not suited to growing spring wheat or winter wheat]

Nonirrigated Yields for Spring and Winter Wheat (MT)–Hill County, Montana					
Map symbol and soil name	Pct. of map unit	Spring wheat (MT)		Winter wheat (MT)	
		Rating class and limiting features	Value	Rating class and limiting features	Value
30A—Marvan clay, 0 to 2 percent slopes					
Marvan	85	Spring wheat	23	Winter wheat	26
98B—Kremlin loam, 0 to 4 percent slopes					
Kremlin	85	Spring wheat	36	Winter wheat	41
172C—Delpoint complex, 2 to 8 percent slopes					
Delpoint	50	Spring wheat	25	Winter wheat	28
Delpoint, calcareous	35	Spring wheat	23	Winter wheat	26
311B—Ferd-Creed-Gerdrum complex, 0 to 4 percent slopes					
Ferd	35	Spring wheat	34	Winter wheat	38
Creed	25	Spring wheat	21	Winter wheat	23
Gerdrum	25	Spring wheat	0	Winter wheat	0
331B—Phillips-Elloam complex, 0 to 4 percent slopes					
Phillips	60	Spring wheat	34	Winter wheat	38
Elloam	25	Spring wheat	7	Winter wheat	8

Data Source Information

Soil Survey Area: Hill County, Montana
Survey Area Data: Version 15, Sep 28, 2015

Eastern Edge of Project looking due West

Currently Farmed Deeded Land to the North of Project