

## CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

<b>Project Name:</b>	Doug McCrae/Greenleaf Land and Livestock Stockwater Pipeline
<b>Proposed Implementation Date:</b>	2016
<b>Proponent:</b>	Doug McCrae
<b>Location:</b>	T1N-R41E-Sec 16
<b>County:</b>	Rosebud

### I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Doug McCrae has requested a land use license amendment to LUL #1011 from the DNRC for the purpose of placing and maintaining a stock water pipeline across state owned T1N-R41E-Sec 16. The pipeline will stem from an existing pipeline located in the same section and cross to deeded land in T1N-R41E-Sec 16. This pipeline should create more reliable water sources for livestock and wildlife, while creating better grazing distribution within the scope of the project.

### 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 has completed the application for a land use license amendment to LUL #1011. A field review of the site was completed on February 23, 2016.

**2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:**  
None

**3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:**  
Alternative A- Issue a land use license amendment for the proposed stock water pipeline.  
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- Some soil disturbance will occur in the area of the pipeline. This disturbance should be minimal in nature. The soils at this site are a thin silty, shallow complex, and are stable. The proposed pipeline would be installed using a rip trench method. All soil disturbances will be reclaimed to specifications set forth by the DNRC Eastern Land Office staff.  
Alternative B- No Impact.

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**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- The well feeding the pipeline will draw from available water resources; this well is not located on trust land. Effects to ground water supply should be minimal. The project should not result in any degradation of water quality.

Alternative B- No Impact

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**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- Pollutants and particulates may be increased during the construction of the project. After the completion of the project pollutant and particulate levels should return to normal.

Alternative B- No Impact

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**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- There may be disruption to some of the vegetation currently growing at the site. Species present on the site include Western Wheatgrass (*Agropyron smithii*), Blue Grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*), Green Needlegrass (*Stipa viridula*) Needle and Thread (*Stipa comata*), Prairie Junegrass (*Koleria, pyramdata*), Bluebunch Wheatgrass (*Agropyron spicata*), Little Bluestem (*Schizarium scoparium*). The proposed pipeline would follow an existing two track trail. Vegetation disturbance should be minimal and recover naturally.

Alternative B- No Impact

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**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- There may be minimal disruption to the wildlife that inhabit the area. Disturbance may occur while the construction is being completed. After construction is complete and the area is reclaimed there should be minimal impact. This project will also create more reliable water sources for wildlife in the area.

Alternative B- No Impact

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**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 shows one sensitive species Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrsaetos*) noted within the scope of the project. This proposed project should not have significant impacts to this species. The project is located within Greater Sage Grouse General Habitat, but is approximately 16.5 miles from the closest noted active lek. This project would be in compliance with EO-012-15. The proponent has submitted this project to the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program and has received comments and recommendations back (Project #1454617217852). These comments and recommendations are in line with the project plan of development.

Alternative B- No Impact

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**10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:**

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

Alternative A- As proposed, the stockwater pipeline route bisects archaeological site 24RB265. The site consists of a thin scattering of chipped stone debitage on a ridge top. The DNRC archaeologist conducted subsurface testing of the resource within the pipeline area of potential effect. A linear series of four, 30 cm square shovel tests were excavated and the sediments were screened through ¼ inch wire mesh. Bedrock was encountered at approximately 15 cm below the present ground surface in all four shovel tests. Only a single gray porcellanite flake was recovered at 0-10 cm below present ground surface in shovel test 3. No other cultural remains were recovered. The property is recommended as ineligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. As such, proposed stockwater pipeline installation work 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.

Alternative B- No Impact

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**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- This will temporarily change the appearance of the landscape. But the addition of reclamation efforts should restore the site aesthetics to pre construction levels. Noise levels may be increased during the project but will return to normal after the completion.

Alternative B- No Impact

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**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 impact expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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**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.*

None

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

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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 safety risks for laborers but the potential risk is minimal with proper safety efforts.

Alternative B- No Impact

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**15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:**

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

Alternative A- It would have a positive effect on Agricultural Activities and Production.

Alternative B- No Impact

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**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- No impact expected.

Alternative B- No Impact

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**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- No significant impact

Alternative B- No Impact

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**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- No significant impact

Alternative B- No Impact

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**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- No Impact

Alternative B- No Impact

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**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- No impact expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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**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

Alternative B- No Impact

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**22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:**

*Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.*

Alternative A- No Significant Impact

Alternative B- No Impact

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**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

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**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- Allowing this project would generate revenue for the school trust in the amount of \$25.00 amendment fee, and an additional price of \$100.00 for the land use license amendment adding the additional .4 miles of stock water pipeline to LUL #1011.

Alternative B- No Impact

<b>EA Checklist Prepared By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Scott Aye	<b>Date:</b> 3-24-2016
	<b>Title:</b> Land Use Specialist	

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**V. FINDING**

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**25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:**

Alternative A

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**26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:**

The granting of the requested stock water pipeline Land Use License amendment on this tract of state owned trust lands for the purpose of improving grazing distribution and wildlife habitat should not result in nor cause significant environmental impacts. The proposed action satisfies the trusts fiduciary mandate with a land use license fee of \$100.00 and ensures the long term productivity of the land. An environmental assessment checklist is the appropriate level of analysis for the proposed action

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**27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

EIS       More Detailed EA       No Further Analysis

<b>EA Checklist Approved By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Chris Pileski	
	<b>Title:</b> Eastern Land Office; Area Manager	
<b>Signature:</b> /s/ Chris Pileski		<b>Date:</b> 3-25-2016

