

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT	
Project Name: Improve an existing fence on School Trust land.	Proposed Implementation Date: Summer 2017
Proponent: John Richardson, Richardson East Ranch, Inc. PO Box 505 Peerless, MT 59253 (lessee of State lease #400)	
Type and Purpose of Action: The applicant proposes to improve (repair/replace) one mile of existing fence along the northern boundary of State lease #400. The fence consists of steel posts with 4 barbed wires. Posts and wires will be replaced as needed.	
Location: Section 27, Township 37N, Range 44E	County: Daniels

I. 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 (lessee of record on the tract) plans to replace the fence on the northern border of the tract after acquiring the lease on this State land. The proponent contacted Glasgow Unit Office personnel about the project and it was agreed that the improvements would benefit the lessee and use of the resources on the State land.
2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:	DNRC manages the surface of these lands and no other agencies have jurisdiction over the project. No additional permits needed.
3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:	Action Alternative: Grant permission to the applicant to improve the existing fence on School Trust land. No Action Alternative: Deny permission to the applicant to improve the existing fence on School Trust land.

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
RESOURCE	POTENTIAL IMPACTS

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are fragile, compatible or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations?

The area of impact contains sandy loams with moderate slopes of 2-15% that are not unusual, fragile or unstable.

Action Alternative: The fence to be repaired/replaced is already in place and no impact will occur.

No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there will be no changes to soils on the School Trust land.

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?

No important surface or groundwater resources are present within the area of impact. No water quality standards impact the project.

Action Alternative: The proposed fence repair/replacement will have no impact on the quality, quantity and distribution of water.

No Action Alternative: Under this alternative, there will be no impacts to water quality, quantity and distribution.

6. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?

Action Alternative: The proposed fence project will have no impact on air quality, nor is it influenced by air quality regulations.

No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there will be no impacts to air quality.

7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?

The area of impact is primarily grazing land that consists mostly of non-native grasses. It is also the edge of a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) field, with non-native grasses and shrubs present.

Action Alternative: No permanent alteration of the vegetative community is expected to occur.

No Action Alternative: Under this

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
	alternative there will be no impacts to the plant communities on the School Trust land.
8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?	<p>The area of impact provides excellent habitat for upland birds and mule deer.</p> <p>Action Alternative: The existing fence has already been a part of the area for many years, so no impacts to wildlife habitat will occur.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there will be no impacts to the possible use of the School Trust land as wildlife habitat.</p>
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?	<p>Immediately adjacent to the area of impact is CRP acreage that is important nesting habitat for upland game birds and other species. No wetlands or sensitive habitats are within the area of impact. Three species of special concern may be seasonally present in the area, and they include: Baird's sparrow, Sprague's pipit, Chestnut-collared Longspur.</p> <p>Action Alternative: The fence has already been in place for many years, and no changes to the general habitat in the area will occur.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there will be no impacts to the environmental resources.</p>
10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?	<p>Action Alternative: The area of impact contains no archaeological or paleontological resources.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impact to historical or archaeological sites under this alternative.</p>
11. AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from populated	The area of impact is not heavily used by the public and will not be seen by many people.

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
or scenic areas? Will there be excessive noise or light?	<p>Action Alternative: No changes to the aesthetics of the land will occur.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there will be no impacts to aesthetics associated with the School Trust land.</p>
<p>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?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The proposed project would place no additional demands on any environmental resources in the area.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there will be no additional demands placed on environmental resources of land, water, air or energy.</p>
<p>13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: This project will benefit the lessee and Glasgow Unit staff, by providing better control over distribution of livestock in the future.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there will be no impacts to the plans or studies that Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation has on the School Trust land.</p>

III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION	
RESOURCE	POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
<p>14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The proposed project will not add to human health and safety risks in the area.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there will be no impacts to human health or safety.</p>
<p>15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The improved fence will add value to the tract and allow for greater control of livestock on both sides of the fence.</p>

	<p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there will be no impacts to agricultural activities on the School Trust land.</p>
<p>16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The project will not create nor impact any jobs in the area.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impact to quantity and distribution of employment under this alternative.</p>
<p>17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The project will have no impacts on the local and state tax base and tax revenues.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impact to the local and state tax base under this alternative.</p>
<p>18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The project will not create an additional demand for government services, nor will it impact traffic along existing roads.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there will be no additional demand for government services.</p>
<p>19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The project has already cleared State (GUO) management plans before implementation.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this type of alternative there will be no impacts on locally adopted environmental plans and goals.</p>
<p>20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract?</p>	<p>There is little potential for recreation within the tract due to being fairly remote and far from legal public access points.</p> <p>Action Alternative: This fencing project will not impact the recreation potential of the land.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to the recreational values</p>

	associated with the School Trust land under this alternative.
21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?	<p>Action Alternative: The project will not impact the density and distribution of population and housing.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to the density and distribution of population and housing.</p>
22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	<p>Action Alternative: The project will not disrupt the traditional lifestyles of the local community.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to the social structures under this alternative.</p>
23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	<p>Action Alternative: The project will not impact the cultural uniqueness and diversity of this rural area.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to the cultural uniqueness and diversity under this alternative.</p>
24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:	<p>Action Alternative: The improvement of this fence would add value and allow for greater control of livestock grazing use and should improve the lessee's/applicant's ability to manage the State lease in the future.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to the economic circumstances under this alternative.</p>

EA Checklist Prepared By: s/Jack Medicott\s Date: 08/04/2017
Jack Medicott Land Use Specialist

IV. FINDING	
25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:	Action Alternative
26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:	No negative impacts are anticipated.

