

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT	
Project Name: Improve/repair an existing developed spring and associated stockwater pit.	Proposed Implementation Date: July 2017
Proponent: Larry Robertson, PO Box 21, Opheim, MT 59250 (lessee of record on State Lease #7512)	
Type and Purpose of Action: The applicant proposes to repair an existing stockwater pump at a developed natural spring and dig out/improve an existing stockwater pit associated with the pump and spring. Heavy equipment would be used to remove silt and vegetation that has built up in the pit.	
Location: NW4 Section 10, Township 36N, Range 41E	County: Valley

I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT	
1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.	Mr. Robertson contacted the Glasgow Unit Office regarding the project and then submitted an Improvements Request Form. I then personally contacted Mr. Robertson to clarify what the project would entail and what impacts he expected the project would have on the State land and his lease.
2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:	The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) has sole jurisdiction over the land surface within the area of impact. The project will need to be approved by DNRC staff in the Glasgow Unit office.
3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:	Action Alternative: Grant permission to the proponent to repair/improve the existing stockwater pump and pit. No Action Alternative: Deny permission to the proponent to repair/improve the existing stockwater pump and pit.

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
RESOURCE	POTENTIAL IMPACTS
4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY,	The area of impact contains a complex

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

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

of silty loam soils, with moderate slopes of 2-9%. This soil is not fragile or unstable. No unusual geographic features are present and no special reclamation considerations are necessary.

Action Alternative: There will be some soil compaction with heavy equipment operation during digging out of the pit, but disturbances will be kept to a minimum as the pit is immediately adjacent to an agricultural field that will be used for access to the area. The area to be dug out will be underwater most of the time after completion of the project.

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?

There are no important water resources present within the area of impact. The only water resource in the immediate area is the developed spring itself, which the project aims to improve.

Action Alternative: The proposed project will increase water availability to livestock and wildlife in the area.

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)?

This project is not influenced by any air quality regulations or zones. No pollutants will be produced.

Action Alternative: This type of project on the School Trust land will have no impact on air quality.

No Action Alternative: Under this

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

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 current vegetative community consists primarily of native and non-native grasses and forbs. There are no rare plant species present.

Action Alternative: Temporary trampling of the vegetation in the immediate area will occur. In the long run, plant growth and vigor would be positively impacted by having a more stable water source in the area.

No Action Alternative: Under this 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?

The School Trust land provides habitat for upland birds and deer. There is low potential for recreation on this tract, due to there being no legal access to the public.

Action Alternative: The project will result in a more stable, consistent source of water for wildlife in the area. The pit is small and does not provide habitat for fish species.

No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there will be no impacts to the possible use of the School Trust land as wildlife habitat.

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?

The area of impact does not contain fragile or critical habitat. There are five species of concern that may use the area seasonally: Baird's Sparrow, Ferruginous hawk, Bobolink, Loggerhead shrike, and McCown's Longspur.

Action Alternative: The area will be accessed through farmland that is disturbed frequently and provides little habitat, so equipment used in the project will have little impact. The area immediately surrounding the

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

pit will see increased quality of habitat due to a more stable water source.

No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there will be no impacts to the environmental resources.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?

The area of impact contains no historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

Action Alternative: The project will have no impact on historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

No Action Alternative: There will be no impact to historical or archaeological sites under this alternative.

11. AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from populated or scenic areas? Will there be excessive noise or light?

The pit and pump are already in place, and are simply being improved. The proposed work is to be done on School Trust land that is not accessible by the public and is not visible from the nearest county road.

Action Alternative: No impact to the aesthetics of the School Trust land are expected.

No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there will be no impacts to aesthetics associated with the School Trust land.

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?

Environmental resources in the area are not specifically limited and are not affected by the proposed project. No nearby activities will affect the project.

Action Alternative: The proposed project will place no demands on any environmental resources in the area.

No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there will be no demands

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
	placed on environmental resources of land, water, air or energy.
13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?	<p>There are currently no other studies, plans or projects on this tract of School Trust land.</p> <p>Action Alternative: This project will not impact any other plans or studies that DNRC has on this School Trust land.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there will be no impacts to the plans or studies that DNRC has on this School Trust land.</p>

III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION	
RESOURCE	POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?	<p>The operation and movement of heavy equipment and vehicles has inherent risks whether on School Trust land or not.</p> <p>Action Alternative: Digging out the stockwater pit would require the use of heavy equipment such as a backhoe.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there will be no impacts to human health or safety.</p>
15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	<p>The area of impact is classified as grazing acreage and is grazed seasonally by cattle.</p> <p>Action Alternative: The stockwater improvement will increase the availability of water to livestock grazing on the School Trust land.</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 impacts 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 impacts 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: There would be no additional demand for governmental services.</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>There are no special management plans in effect on the School Trust land. It is managed for typical agricultural activities (livestock grazing).</p> <p>Action Alternative: The project has cleared DNRC management plans.</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>This tract has little potential for recreation. No wilderness areas or additional public lands are accessed through this tract.</p> <p>Action Alternative: No changes to public land access or recreational potential are expected.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to the recreational values associated with the School Trust land under this alternative.</p>

<p>21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?</p>	<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>
<p>22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?</p>	<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>
<p>23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?</p>	<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>
<p>24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:</p>	<p>Functioning stockwater developments are necessary to get livestock water and help with management of grazing distribution within pastures.</p> <p>Action Alternative: The repair and improvement of the stockwater developments on this tract will add value to the tract and allow for better management of the livestock grazing on the tract.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to the social and economic circumstances under this alternative.</p>

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

<p>IV. FINDING</p>	
<p>25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:</p>	<p>Action Alternative</p>

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:	No negative impacts are anticipated.
27. Need for Further Environmental Analysis: <input type="checkbox"/> EIS <input type="checkbox"/> More Detailed EA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Further Analysis	

EA Checklist Approved By: Matthew Poole Glasgow Unit Manager
Name Title

s/Matthew Poole\s Date: August 4, 2017
Signature