

## CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

<b>Project Name:</b>	Easement applications to use an existing road to access the Ear Mountain Wildlife Management Area.
<b>Proposed Implementation Date:</b>	Winter 2017
<b>Proponent:</b>	Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, (FWP), PO Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620
<b>Location:</b>	NE4NE4, Section 16, T24N, R8W-0.64 Acres
<b>County:</b>	Teton
<b>Trust:</b>	Common Schools (CS)

### I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The proponent has applied for an easement across state land to use an existing road for ingress and egress to and from the real estate described as the Ear Mountain Wildlife Management Area for access purposes. The existing road cross approximately 1,368.33' of state land or 0.64 acres of state land. The proposed easement will be 20' wide on the existing road.

### II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

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

DNRC-Surface Owner  
Gollehon Ranch LLC-Surface Lessee, Lease #8577  
FWP -Proponent and Adjacent Land Owner

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

DNRC is not aware of any other agencies with jurisdiction or other permits needed to complete this project.

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**3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:**

Alternative A (No Action) – Deny the proponent the requested easement.

Alternative B (the Proposed action) –Grant the proponent the requested easement.

### 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.*

Soils and geology in this area are generally suitable for road use. The proponent will use an existing road and no road improvements will occur. The existing road surface is covered with existing surface gravel. No grading or graveling of the existing road will occur.

No cumulative effects to the soils are anticipated.

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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.*

No important surface or groundwater resources will be impacted by the proposed easement as the road is existing and no road improvements will occur.

Other water quality and/or quantity issues will not be impacted by the proposed action.

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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.*

The proposed easement will consist of no disturbance to soils, so no cumulative effects to air quality are anticipated.

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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.*

The vegetation within the proposed project area consists primarily of native rangeland grasses, forbs, and shrubs. An existing road will be used and no road construction will take place, so no impact to the existing vegetation will occur.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted for T24N, R8W: There were nine species of concern and one potential species of concern noted on the NRIS survey: Flowering Plants (Dicots)-Macoun's Gentian, Bractless Hedge-hyssop, Autumn Willow, and Austin's Knotweed. Flowering Plants (Monocots)-Beaked Spikerush, Tufted Club-rush, and Round-leaved Orchis. Bryophytes-Cinclidium Moss, Scorpidium Moss, and Meesia Moss. These species were not identified in the proposed easement area.

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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.*

The proposal does not include any land use change which would yield changes to the wildlife habitat. The proposed action will not impact wildlife forage, cover, or traveling corridors. Nor will this action change the juxtaposition of wildlife forage, water, or hiding and thermal cover. The proposed action will not have long-term negative effects on existing wildlife species and/or wildlife habitat.

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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.*

The parcel is located in the NCD grizzly bear recovery zone. Grizzly bears will not be impacted by the easement as it is an existing road. Threatened or endangered species, sensitive habitat types, or other species of special concern or potential species of concern will not be impacted by proposal.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted for T24N, R8W. There were twenty-five animal species of concern, zero potential species of concern, and zero special status species noted on the NRIS survey: Mammals-Grizzly Bear, Wolverine, Canada Lynx, Fisher, and Preble's Shrew. Birds-Sprague's Pipit, Golden Eagle, American Bittern, Chestnut-collared Longspur, Long-billed Curlew, Horned Grebe, Veery, Evening Grosbeak, Bobolink, Alder Flycatcher, Cassin's Finch, Clark's Nutcracker, McCown's Longspur, Brewer's Sparrow, Northern Goshawk, Peregrine Falcon, Gray-crowned Rosy-finch, Boreal Chickadee, and Pacific Wren. Fish-Westslope Cutthroat Trout. This particular tract of grazing land does not contain many, if any of these species. Threatened or endangered species, sensitive habitat types, or other species of special concern or potential species of concern will not be impacted by easement application on the existing road.

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**10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:**

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

No historical, archaeological, or paleontological resources were identified along the existing road. No road improvements will take place to the existing road, so no cultural resources will be impacted by this proposed easement.

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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.*

The state land does not provide any unique scenic qualities not also provided on adjacent private lands. The proposed easements will use an existing road, so there would be no change to the aesthetics in either alternative.

No direct or cumulative effects to aesthetics are anticipated.

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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.*

The demand on environmental resources such as land, water, air, or energy will not be affected by the proposed action. The proposed action will not consume resources that are limited in the area. There are no other projects in the area that will affect the proposed action.

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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.*

There are no other projects or plans being considered on the tracts listed on this EA.

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

*Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.*

The proposed easements will not impact human health or safety in the area.

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

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

The proponent will use an existing road and no road improvements will occur. The use of this existing road will not add to or alter agricultural activities or production on the lease.

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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.*

The proposed action will not create any jobs as the road is existing and no road improvements will take place.

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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.*

There are no direct or cumulative effects to taxes or revenue for the proposed project.

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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*

There will be no direct or cumulative effects on government services.

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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.*

The proposed action is in compliance with State and County laws. No other management plans are in effect for the area.

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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.*

This tract of state land generally has a high recreational value. The tract is legally accessible. The proposed action is not expected to impact general recreational activities on this state tract.

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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*

The proposal does not include any changes to housing or developments.

No direct or cumulative effects to population or housing are anticipated.

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**22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:**

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

There are no native, unique or traditional lifestyles or communities in the vicinity that would be impacted by the proposal.

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**23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:**

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

The proposed action will not impact the cultural uniqueness or diversity of the area.

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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.*

This project will benefit the school trust in terms of the \$50.00 fee generated from the easement application for a total of \$50.00. The easement on the Common Schools trust land will affect 0.64 acres X \$1,750.00/acre for a total of \$1,120.00. This is an existing road and no road improvements will occur, so no cumulative economic or social effects are likely to occur.

<b>EA Checklist Prepared By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Tony Nickol	<b>Date:</b> January 23, 2017
	<b>Title:</b> Land Use Specialist, Conrad Unit, Central Land Office	

**V. FINDING**

**25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:**


Alternative B (the Proposed action) –Grant the applicant the requested easement.

**26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:**

The main objective of this easement is to provide Montana FWP and the general public with secured access across state land to the Ear Mountain Wildlife Management Area. This route / road has been used by FWP and the public for many decades and issuing the easement will officially legitimize the access. No changes to the existing road or road construction are necessary. Significant impacts are not anticipated as a result of issuing these easements.

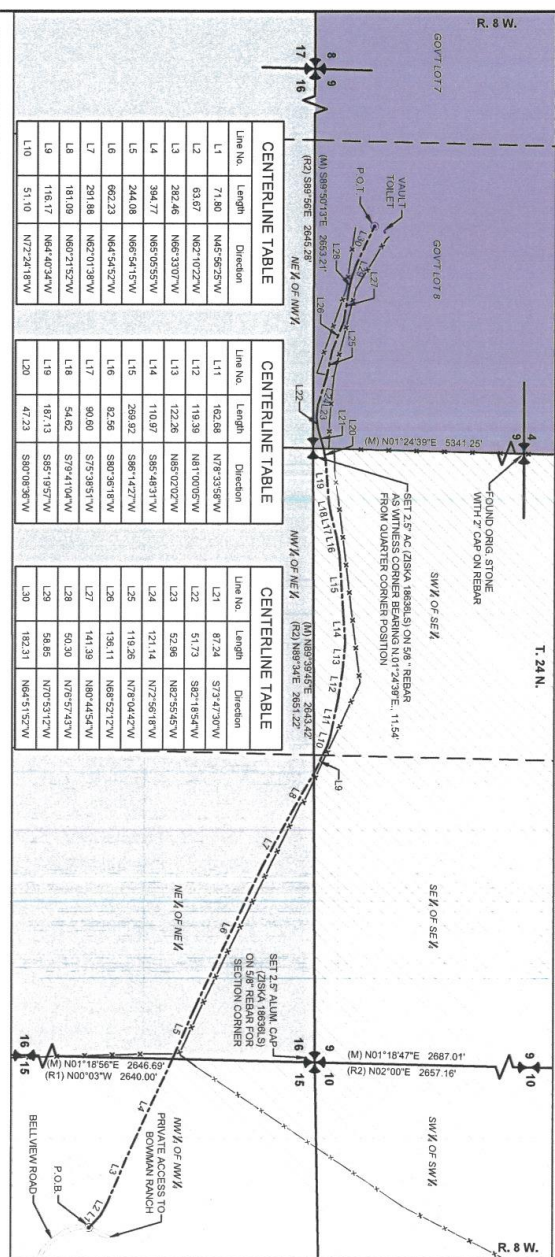
**27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

EIS                       More Detailed EA                       No Further Analysis

<b>EA Checklist Approved By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Erik Eneboe <b>Title:</b> Conrad Unit Manager, CLO
<b>Signature:</b> 	<b>Date:</b> February 9, 2017

# MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS EAR MOUNTAIN WMA ACCESS EASEMENT RIGHT-OF-WAY PLAT

SECTION 15, NE 1/4 OF NE 1/4 & NW 1/4 OF NE 1/4 OF SECTION 9, NW 1/4 OF NW 1/4 OF  
 TOWNSHIP 24 NORTH, RANGE 8 WEST, P.1.M.M.,  
 TETON COUNTY, MONTANA



Line No.	Length	Direction
L1	71.80	N45°59'25"W
L2	63.67	N62°10'27"W
L3	282.46	N66°33'07"W
L4	394.77	N65°05'55"W
L5	244.08	N65°54'15"W
L6	602.23	N64°54'57"W
L7	291.88	N62°01'33"W
L8	191.09	N60°21'52"W
L9	116.17	N64°40'34"W
L10	511.0	N72°24'18"W

Line No.	Length	Direction
L11	62.68	N75°33'58"W
L12	119.38	N81°00'05"W
L13	122.26	N85°02'02"W
L14	110.67	S85°48'31"W
L15	209.92	S89°14'27"W
L16	82.96	S89°38'18"W
L17	90.60	S75°39'51"W
L18	54.62	S79°41'04"W
L19	187.13	S85°19'57"W
L20	47.23	S89°08'38"W

Line No.	Length	Direction
L21	87.24	S73°47'30"W
L22	51.73	S82°18'54"W
L23	52.98	N82°55'45"W
L24	121.14	N72°58'18"W
L25	119.26	N87°04'42"W
L26	138.11	N89°59'12"W
L27	141.39	N88°04'54"W
L28	50.30	N79°57'43"W
L29	58.85	N79°53'12"W
L30	162.31	N64°51'52"W

### LEGAL DESCRIPTION CENTERLINE OF ACCESS EASEMENT RIGHT-OF-WAY

**ACCESS LENGTHS**  
 SECTION 9 (BARBRA L. BOWMAN, LLC) - 1144.63' (65.7 RODS)  
 SECTION 9 (WITMPP) - 1001.29' (60.7 RODS)  
 SECTION 15 (BARBRA L. BOWMAN, LLC) - 812.70' (49.3 RODS)  
 SECTION 16 (MT DMC STATE TRUST LANDS) - 1379.26' (83.8 RODS)  
 TOTAL ACCESS LENGTH - 4607.90' (279.3 RODS)

RESERVED FOR LEGAL DESCRIPTION

### LEGEND

- POINT OF BEGINNING CORNER 2 1/2" GALV BRASS CAP ON 2" DIA. IRON ROD
- FOUND ORIGINAL STONE & SET 2 1/2" ALUM. CAP OR IRON ROD
- FOUND ORIGINAL STONE & SET 2 1/2" ALUM. CAP OR IRON ROD
- CALCULATED POSITION (NOTHING SET)
- MONTANA STATE FISH & GAME PROPERTY
- MONTANA DMC STATE TRUST LANDS
- BARBRA L. BOWMAN LLC PROPERTY
- SECTION LINE
- INTERIOR SECTION LINE
- EXISTING FENCE
- POINT OF BEGINNING
- POINT OF BEGINNING
- MEASURED (THIS SURVEY)
- RECORD (OLD NOTES AND PLAT DATED 1989)
- RECORD (OLD NOTES AND PLAT DATED 1922)

### NOTES

1. TETON COUNTY ROAD INDEX SHOWS BELLEVUE ROAD TERMINATING IN THE VICINITY OF THE PRIVATE RANCH OF THE EAR MOUNTAIN WMA. THE EAR MOUNTAIN WMA WAS SURVEYED COMMENCING FROM THIS POINT AND REMAINING AT THE WMA PARKING LOT IN THE SE 1/4 OF SECTION 9 OF SAID TOWNSHIP.
2. ON FILE FOR THE BOUNDARIES OF BOUNDARY EVIDENCE RECOVERED AND MONUMENTS SET DURING THE COURSE OF THIS SURVEY.
3. FOR DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF BOUNDARY EVIDENCE RECOVERED AND MONUMENTS SET DURING THE COURSE OF THIS SURVEY, REFER TO THE CORNER RECORDS FILED AT THE TETON COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER.

### PURPOSE

IDENTIFY THE LOCATION OF PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE EAR MOUNTAIN WMA ACROSS PRIVATE AND STATE LANDS

SURVEY IS NOT VALID UNLESS SEAL CONTAINS THE SIGNATURE OF THE PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYOR

**CERTIFICATE OF SURVEYOR**

LOCATED  
 MONTANA

JAKE K. ZISKA, PLS

SECTION	TWP.	RGE.
1/4	24N	8W
9	24N	8W
14	24N	8W
15	24N	8W
16	24N	8W

**MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS  
 EAR MOUNTAIN WMA  
 ACCESS EASEMENT  
 RIGHT-OF-WAY PLAT**

WVC ENGINEERING  
 1273 MADE STREET SUITE F  
 HELENA, MT 59601  
 HELLEN M. WOOD  
 REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYOR  
 LICENSE NO. 10000  
 OCTOBER 2012-2014

SHEET 1 OF 1

**BASIS OF BEARING**  
 GEODETIC NORTH  
 N.T.S. OF U.S. SCALUTION  
 NAD83(2011) HORIZONTAL DATUM  
 PROJECT ORIGIN LOCATION  
 1  
 LONGITUDE: -111°28'23.7897"  
 GROUND SCALE FACTOR: 1.00028628  
 HORIZONTAL DISTANCES IN UNITS OF INTERNATIONAL FEET.  
 DATE OF SURVEY  
 OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2016

