

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Tom Maxwell EQIP
Proposed Implementation Date:	Summer 2018
Proponent:	Thomas Maxwell
Location:	12N 30E 36
County:	Petroleum
Trust:	Common

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The proponent has requested implement several EQIP projects on his lease. The proponent would like to remove 1 mile of sheep fence on the east boundary and install a 3-wire barbwire fence in its place. Next, he would like to install a water pipeline (HDPE) ripped at a depth of 6' and approximately 5,348' in length. There will be two Stockwater tanks along the pipeline.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

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

Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)
Northeastern Land Office (NELO)
Montana Sage-grouse Advisory Team (MSGOT)
Tom Maxwell (Lessee)

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

The DNRC, MSGOT and NELO have jurisdiction over this proposed project.

This project requires review and authorization from MSGOT.

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

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A (No Action) – Under this alternative, the Department does not grant permission to install the new fence, pipeline and tanks.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action) – Under this alternative, the Department does grant permission to install the new fence, pipeline and tanks with the following mitigating factors:

1. Construction will occur after the Sage-grouse nesting period (March 15 to July 15).
2. All stockwater tanks will have wildlife escape ramps installed prior to use.

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.

Erosion Hazard (Off-Road, Off-Trail)

Aggregation Method: Dominant Condition
Tie-break Rule: Higher

Petroleum County, Montana
Survey Area Version and Date: 10 - 12/04/2013

Map symbol	Map unit name	Rating	Component name and % composition Rating reasons
59	Marvan silty clay, 1 to 8 percent slopes	Slight	Marvan 85% Bascovy 10% Marvan, saline 5%
62	Neldore-Abor silty clays, 4 to 15 percent slopes	Slight	Neldore 50% Abor 35% Weingart 5%
63	Neldore-Abor silty clays, 15 to 45 percent slopes	Moderate	Neldore 55% Slope/erodibility Abor 30% Slope/erodibility
100	Yawdim-Crago complex, 4 to 35 percent slopes	Moderate	Yawdim 45% Slope/erodibility Crago 40% Slope/erodibility

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- Mitigating factors such as mulching and straw waddles may be needed to keep erosion at an acceptable level. These soils are rated as moderate mostly due to slope.

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 (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

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 (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

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.

Ecological Site Name

Class: NRCS Rangeland Site
Aggregation Method: Dominant Condition
Tie-break Rule: Lower

Petroleum County, Montana
Survey Area Version and Date: 10 - 12/04/2013

Map symbol	Map unit name	Rating	Map unit percent
59	Marvan silty clay, 1 to 8 percent slopes	Clayey-Saline (CyS) RRU 58A-C 11-14" p.z.	85
62	Neldore-Abor silty clays, 4 to 15 percent slopes	Shallow Clay (SwC) RRU 58A-C 11-14" p.z.	50
63	Neldore-Abor silty clays, 15 to 45 percent slopes	Shallow Clay (SwC) RRU 58A-C 11-14" p.z.	55
100	Yawdim-Crago complex, 4 to 35 percent slopes	Shallow Clay (SwC) RRU 58A-C 11-14" p.z.	45

The will be some ground disturbance and bare ground created associated with the stockwater installation. These areas will be prone to noxious weed infestations. Frequent scouting should occur until revegetation has occurred to suppress noxious weed establishment.

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- Bare ground associated with the installation of a stockwater pipeline will revegetate with grass & shrubs in a few years. The Area of Potential Effect (APE) will remain visible for many years.

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 (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

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.

Species of Concern 6 Species Filtered by the following criteria: MT Status = Species of Concern Township = 012N030E (based on mapped Species Occurrences)										
MAMMALS (MAMMALIA)										
SCIENTIFIC NAME COMMON NAME TAXA SORT	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC) FAMILY (COMMON)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	USFWS	USFS	BLM	FWP SWAP	% OF GLOBAL BREEDING RANGE IN MT	% OF MT THAT IS BREEDING RANGE	HABITAT
<i>Cynomys ludovicianus</i> Black-tailed Prairie Dog	Sciuridae Squirrels	G4	S3		Sensitive - Known on Forests (CO)	SENSITIVE	SOCH3	15%	71%	Grasslands
Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Big Horn, Blaine, Carbon, Carter, Cascade, Chouteau, Custer, Fallon, Fergus, Garfield, Golden Valley, Hill, Jefferson, Judith Basin, Lewis and Clark, Liberty, McCone, Musselshell, Petroleum, Phillips, Powder River, Prairie, Richland, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton, Treasure, Valley, Yellowstone										
BIRDS (AVES)										
SCIENTIFIC NAME COMMON NAME TAXA SORT	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC) FAMILY (COMMON)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	USFWS	USFS	BLM	FWP SWAP	% OF GLOBAL BREEDING RANGE IN MT	% OF MT THAT IS BREEDING RANGE	HABITAT
<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i> Greater Sage-Grouse	Phasianidae Upland Game Birds	G3G4	S2		Sensitive - Known on Forests (BO) Sensitive - Suspected on Forests (CO, HLC)	SENSITIVE	SGCH2	17%	75%	Sagebrush
Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Beaverhead, Big Horn, Blaine, Broadwater, Carbon, Carter, Chouteau, Custer, DeWitt, Deer Lodge, Fallon, Fergus, Gallatin, Garfield, Golden Valley, Hill, Madison, McCone, Meagher, Musselshell, Park, Petroleum, Phillips, Powder River, Prairie, Roosevelt, Stillwater, Teton, Treasure, Valley, Yellowstone										
REPTILES (REPTILIA)										
SCIENTIFIC NAME COMMON NAME TAXA SORT	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC) FAMILY (COMMON)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	USFWS	USFS	BLM	FWP SWAP	% OF GLOBAL BREEDING RANGE IN MT	% OF MT THAT IS BREEDING RANGE	HABITAT
<i>Aplousone spinifera</i> Spriny Softshell	Trionychidae Softshell Turtles	G5	S3			SENSITIVE	SGCH3	2%	25%	Prairie rivers and larger streams
Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Big Horn, Blaine, Carbon, Cascade, Chouteau, Custer, Dawson, Fergus, Garfield, Golden Valley, Musselshell, Petroleum, Phillips, Prairie, Richland, Stillwater, Teton, Teton, Treasure, Wheatland, Wibaux, Yellowstone										
AMPHIBIANS (AMPHIBIA)										
SCIENTIFIC NAME COMMON NAME TAXA SORT	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC) FAMILY (COMMON)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	USFWS	USFS	BLM	FWP SWAP	% OF GLOBAL BREEDING RANGE IN MT	% OF MT THAT IS BREEDING RANGE	HABITAT
<i>Anaxyrus cognatus</i> Great Plains Toad	Bufoanidae True Toads	G5	S2		Sensitive - Known on Forests (CO)	SENSITIVE	SGCH2	8%	62%	Wetlands, floodplain pools
<i>Spea bombifrons</i> Plains Spadefoot	Scaphiophrynidae Spadefoots	G5	S3		Sensitive - Known on Forests (HLC) Sensitive - Suspected on Forests (CO)	SENSITIVE	SOCH3	12%	73%	Wetlands, floodplain pools
Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Beaverhead, Big Horn, Blaine, Broadwater, Carbon, Carter, Cascade, Chouteau, Custer, Dawson, Fergus, Gallatin, Garfield, Golden Valley, Hill, Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, Madison, McCone, Meagher, Musselshell, Petroleum, Phillips, Powder River, Prairie, Roosevelt, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton, Treasure, Valley, Yellowstone										

This project is in Sage-grouse core area. The project will need to be submitted to the Montana Sage-grouse Advisory Team for project authorization.

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- Wildlife should benefit from the removal of the current sheep fence.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

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

A Class I (literature review) level review was conducted by the DNRC staff archaeologist for the area of potential effect (APE). This entailed inspection of project maps, DNRC's sites/site leads database, land use records, General Land Office Survey Plats, and control cards. The Class I search revealed that *Antiquities* have not been identified in the APE. No additional archaeological investigative work will be conducted in response to this proposed development. However, if previously unknown cultural or paleontological materials are identified during project related activities, all work will cease until a professional assessment of such resources can be made.

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

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 (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

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 Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

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.

Alternative A (No Action)-No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

- *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.*

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

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 Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

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 Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

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 Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

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 Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

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 Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

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 Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

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

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

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 (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Brandon Sandau Title: Land Use Specialist
Signature:	Date: March 21, 2018

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Alternative B (the Proposed Action) – Under this alternative, the Department does grant permission to install the new fence, pipeline and tanks with the following mitigating factors:

- 1. Construction will occur after the Sage-grouse nesting period (March 15 to July 15).
- 2. All stockwater tanks will have wildlife escape ramps installed prior to use.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

No significant impacts expected.

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:	Name: Barny D. Smith Title: Unit Manager, Northeastern Land Office
Signature:	Date: March 21, 2018