

## CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

<b>Project Name:</b>	Triple K Farms Stockwater Project
<b>Proposed Implementation Date:</b>	Summer 2018
<b>Proponent:</b>	Triple K Farms
<b>Location:</b>	30N 21E 9,16,15,14,13,22,23,24,25
<b>County:</b>	Blaine
<b>Trust:</b>	Common

### I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The proponent has request to install an extensive stockwater system including pipelines, stock tanks and a storage tank. See map attached for details on infrastructure location details. Purpose of the project is to establish more reliable water in the grazing units. Current water availability is dependent on pits, pot holes and reservoirs scattered around.

### 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)  
Triple K Farms (Lessee)

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

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

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 stockwater system.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)** – Under this alternative, the Department does grant to install the stockwater system.

### 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.

Rating	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
Slight	2.0	95.7%
Moderate	0.1	3.9%
Severe	0.0	0.5%
<b>Totals for Area of Interest</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

There is one area of concern with regards to off road erosion. The impact on State land is minimal with most of the hill being located on deeded. Mitigating factors such as mulching and straw waddles may be needed to keep erosion at an acceptable level.

**Alternative A (No Action)**- No effect anticipated.

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

#### 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.

Current Stockwater is limited to pits, reservoirs and pot holes.

**Alternative A (No Action)**- No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)**- The addition of off-site water should increase water quality for these seasonal wetlands. Pits and reservoirs should see a reduction in erosion and an increase in water quality as well.

#### 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.

Summary by Map Unit — Blaine County and Part of Phillips County Area, Montana (MT608)				
Map unit symbol	Map unit name	Rating	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
16	Bearpaw-Vida clay loams, 0 to 4 percent slopes	R052XY740MT	0.1	4.3%
17	Bearpaw-Vida clay loams, 2 to 8 percent slopes	R052XY740MT	1.6	76.5%
39	Dimmick clay	R052XC225MT	0.0	0.3%
136	Vida-Zahill clay loams, 8 to 15 percent slopes	R046XC508MT	0.3	14.6%
150	Zahill-Zahl clay loams, 15 to 60 percent slopes	R052XY739MT	0.0	0.5%
151	Zahill-Vida clay loams, 8 to 25 percent slopes	R052XY739MT	0.1	3.9%
<b>Totals for Area of Interest</b>			<b>2.1</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

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. Addition of tanks may increase forage availability and distribution. Increased utilization may increase around the areas of the stocktanks.

**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.*

Currently cattle utilize seasonal wetlands, pits and reservoirs for water.

**Alternative A (No Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** Seasonal wetlands may benefit from offsite water with a reduced cattle presence for drinking water. Less erosion and less plant damage may increase wetland health and habitat for wildlife.

**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.*

SCIENTIFIC NAME (COMMON NAME TAXA SORT)	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC) FAMILY (COMMON)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	USFWS USF1	USFWS USF2	BLM SPECIAL STATUS	FWS DWAP	% OF GLOBAL BREEDING RANGE IN MT	% OF MT THAT IS BREEDING RANGE	HABITAT
<i>Mustela nigripes</i> Black-footed Ferret	Mustelidae Weasels	G1	S1	LE/EN	ENCAMPING, EXPERIMENTAL/ OCCASIONAL OR FOREST (EC)		SGEN	12%	1%	Grasslands
Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: <a href="#">Big Horn</a> , <a href="#">Broadwater</a> , <a href="#">Custer</a> , <a href="#">Dewey</a> , <a href="#">Fergus</a> , <a href="#">Golden</a> , <a href="#">Hill</a> , <a href="#">Judith</a> , <a href="#">Lake</a> , <a href="#">Musselshell</a> , <a href="#">Park</a> , <a href="#">Phillips</a> , <a href="#">Powder</a> , <a href="#">Richmond</a> , <a href="#">Rosebud</a> , <a href="#">Teton</a> , <a href="#">Yellowstone</a>										
<i>Arctophaga lagotis</i> Prairie Dog	Arctophagidae Pits	G2B	S3B	MBTA, BCC1, BCC17		SENSITIVE	SGCH	16%	67%	Grasslands
Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: <a href="#">Beaumont</a> , <a href="#">Blaine</a> , <a href="#">Broadwater</a> , <a href="#">Custer</a> , <a href="#">Dewey</a> , <a href="#">Fergus</a> , <a href="#">Golden</a> , <a href="#">Hill</a> , <a href="#">Judith</a> , <a href="#">Lake</a> , <a href="#">Musselshell</a> , <a href="#">Park</a> , <a href="#">Phillips</a> , <a href="#">Powder</a> , <a href="#">Richmond</a> , <a href="#">Rosebud</a> , <a href="#">Teton</a> , <a href="#">Yellowstone</a>										
<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i> Greater Sage-Grouse	Phasianidae Upland Game Birds	G2C4	S2			Sensitive - Known on Forests (K) Sensitive - Suspected on Forests (S, H, C)	SGCH	17%	78%	Sagebrush
Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: <a href="#">Beaumont</a> , <a href="#">Blaine</a> , <a href="#">Broadwater</a> , <a href="#">Custer</a> , <a href="#">Dewey</a> , <a href="#">Fergus</a> , <a href="#">Golden</a> , <a href="#">Hill</a> , <a href="#">Judith</a> , <a href="#">Lake</a> , <a href="#">Musselshell</a> , <a href="#">Park</a> , <a href="#">Phillips</a> , <a href="#">Powder</a> , <a href="#">Richmond</a> , <a href="#">Rosebud</a> , <a href="#">Teton</a> , <a href="#">Yellowstone</a>										
<i>Numenius americanus</i> Long-billed Curlew	Scolopacidae Sandpeeps	G5	S3B	MBTA, BCC1, BCC17, BCC17		SENSITIVE	SGCH	16%	100%	Grasslands
Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: <a href="#">Beaumont</a> , <a href="#">Blaine</a> , <a href="#">Broadwater</a> , <a href="#">Custer</a> , <a href="#">Dewey</a> , <a href="#">Fergus</a> , <a href="#">Golden</a> , <a href="#">Hill</a> , <a href="#">Judith</a> , <a href="#">Lake</a> , <a href="#">Musselshell</a> , <a href="#">Park</a> , <a href="#">Phillips</a> , <a href="#">Powder</a> , <a href="#">Richmond</a> , <a href="#">Rosebud</a> , <a href="#">Teton</a> , <a href="#">Yellowstone</a>										
<i>Sayornis breweri</i> Brewer's Sparrow	Passerellidae New World Sparrows	G5	S3B	MBTA, BCC1, BCC17		SENSITIVE	SGCH	12%	100%	Sagebrush
Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: <a href="#">Beaumont</a> , <a href="#">Blaine</a> , <a href="#">Broadwater</a> , <a href="#">Custer</a> , <a href="#">Dewey</a> , <a href="#">Fergus</a> , <a href="#">Golden</a> , <a href="#">Hill</a> , <a href="#">Judith</a> , <a href="#">Lake</a> , <a href="#">Musselshell</a> , <a href="#">Park</a> , <a href="#">Phillips</a> , <a href="#">Powder</a> , <a href="#">Richmond</a> , <a href="#">Rosebud</a> , <a href="#">Teton</a> , <a href="#">Yellowstone</a>										
State Rank Reason: <a href="#">Custer</a> , <a href="#">Dewey</a> , <a href="#">Fergus</a> , <a href="#">Golden</a> , <a href="#">Hill</a> , <a href="#">Judith</a> , <a href="#">Lake</a> , <a href="#">Musselshell</a> , <a href="#">Park</a> , <a href="#">Phillips</a> , <a href="#">Powder</a> , <a href="#">Richmond</a> , <a href="#">Rosebud</a> , <a href="#">Teton</a> , <a href="#">Yellowstone</a>										

There are no prairie dog towns located in the APE.

**Alternative A (No Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** Temporary displacement may occur during installation of the Stockwater system for SOC's that are potentially in the area. No population effect is anticipated.

**10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:**

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

There are numerous cultural sites around the proposed pipeline route. Sites include stone circles and cairns. All registered sites will be avoided and 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.

<b>EA Checklist Prepared By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Brandon Sandau <b>Title:</b> Land Use Specialist
<b>Signature:</b> 	<b>Date:</b> March 16, 2018

**V. FINDING**

**25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:**

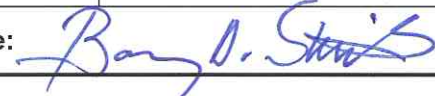
**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)** – Under this alternative, the Department does grant to install the stockwater system.

**26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:**

No significant impacts expected.

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

EIS     
 More Detailed EA     
 **XXX** No Further Analysis

<b>EA Checklist Approved By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Barny D. Smith <b>Title:</b> Unit Manager, Northeastern Land Office
<b>Signature:</b> 	<b>Date:</b> March 16, 2018

# Triple K Farms Proposed Pipeline and Tanks

