CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	**Small Volume Permit S-2100-10**
Proposed Implementation Date:	Summer, 2018
Proponent:	Capstone Quarry (Brett McCoy, Owner)
Location:	Section 16, Township 9S, Range 22E, NE4NE4NW4
County:	Carbon County
Trust:	Common Schools

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The proponent is requesting a Small Volume Permit to remove sandstone from the NE4NE4NW4 of Section 16, T9S R22E. The sandstone will be sold by Capstone Quarry for decorative rock to the local public. The proposed project will impact less than 1 acre and remove approximately 10 tons of stone.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

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

The Montana Department of Resources and Conservation/ Trust Lands Management Division (DNRC/TLMD) – Southern Land Office (SLO), Minerals Management Bureau (MMB), and Capstone Quarry-Proponent of the Small Volume Permit S-2100-10.

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

No other governmental agencies have jurisdiction over this proposal.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A (No Action) – Under this alternative, the DNRC does not issue a Small Volume Permit to Capstone Quarry to remove approximately 10 tons of sandstone from Section 16, Township 9 South, Range 22 East, NE4NE4NW4.

Alternative B (Proposed Action) – Under this alternative, the DNRC does issue a Small Volume Permit to Capstone Quarry to remove approximately 10 tons of sandstone from Section 16, Township 9 South, Range 22 East, NE4NE4NW4.

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.

The soils in the proposed project area consist of sandstone and rock outcrops. There are no unusual geologic features in the proposed project area.

The proponent plans to remove surface rock only and does not plan on conducting any mining with heavy equipment. Therefore, dirt work will be minimal if any occurs at all. The proponent will use established roads to

access the site. Some of the existing roads have large ruts from erosion and the proponent plans on filling in the ruts so that they will be able to access the site safely. The proponent will be limited to accessing the site during dry and/or frozen conditions, so no significant resource damage shall occur as a result of issuing this permit.

No significant adverse impacts to the geology and soil quality, stability or moisture 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.

The proposed permit is not located near any streams or bodies of water.

No significant adverse impacts to water quality, quantity or distribution are expected from implementing 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 movement of vehicles on established roads may generate some airborne dust. These activities will minimally affect air quality for a very limited amount of time.

No significant impact to air quality is expected from implementation of the proposed action.

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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 proponent only plans to take rock from the surface of the ground. No mining is anticipated with the proposed Small Volume Permit. There should be little to no vegetation removal within the proposed permit area. Some of the existing roads have large ruts from past erosion and the proponent plans on filling in the ruts so that they will be able to access the site safely. No significant impacts are anticipated to the local vegetation community as a result of approving the proposed permit.

No significant adverse impacts to vegetative cover, quantity or quality are expected as a result of approving the proposed Small Volume Permit.

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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 proponent only plans to take rock from the surface of the ground. No mining is anticipated with the proposed Small Volume Permit. In addition, the proponent only plans to take a very small amount of surface rock (10 tons). Given the small amount of material to be removed, no significant impact is anticipated to the local terrestrial and avian community as a result of approving the proposed permit. No aquatic habitat located within the proposed permit area.

No significant adverse impacts to terrestrial, avian and aquatic life and habitats are expected to occur as a result of implementing the proposed alternative.

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.

A search of the Natural Heritage Program identified 9 Species of Concern that may occur in the proposed project area:

Species Group	Common Name	Scientific Name
Mammals	Merriam's Shrew	Sorex merriami
Mammals	White-tailed Prairie Dog	Cynomys leucurus
Birds	Golden Eagle	Aquila chrysaetos
Birds	Great Blue Heron	Ardea herodias
Birds	Greater Sage-Grouse	Centrocercus urophasianus
Birds	Loggerhead Shrike	Lanius ludovicianus
Birds	Pinyon Jay	Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus
Reptiles	Greater Short-horned Lizard	Phrynosoma hernandesi
Reptiles	Western Milksnake	Lampropeltis gentilis

A field visit was conducted on April 26th, 2018. None of the species listed above were noted during the on-site visit. The species listed above may traverse the tract but the proposed Small Volume Permit, which covers less than 1 acre, should not have any significant adverse impact to them or their habitats.

Section 16 was identified to be within General Habitat for the Greater Sage Grouse. The nearest lek was identified to the northeast of the proposed permit and is over 2 miles away from the proposed permit area. All of the guidelines outlined in the Governor's Executive Order 12-2015 will be strictly adhered to for the duration of the proposed project. Specific guidelines relating to the proposed permit include:

> ***Vegetation Removal:*** Vegetation removal as part of permitted activities will be limited to the minimum disturbance required by the project.

Due to the nature of the proposed action, it is not anticipated that this action will have any significant adverse impacts to any of the species identified on or around this parcel.

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 no cultural or paleontological resources have been identified in the APE. Because the area of potential effect on state land was partially inventoried to Class III standards, 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.

A field survey was conducted on April 26, 2018. No historical, archeological, or paleontological resources were found on the proposed project area.

A field survey was also completed in May, 2008 for Oil & Gas Development in the area. The survey did not find any historical, archeological, or paleontological resources.

No significant impacts to historical, archeological, or paleontological resources on the proposed permit area are 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.

The proponent only plans to take rock from the surface of the ground. No mining is anticipated with the proposed Small Volume Permit. In addition, the proponent only plans to take a very small amount of surface rock (10 tons). Sandstone is very abundant throughout the proposed permit area. Given the small amount of material to be removed, no significant adverse impacts are anticipated to the aesthetics of the permit area.

No significant adverse impacts are 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.

The proponent only plans to take rock from the surface of the ground. No mining is anticipated with the proposed Small Volume Permit. In addition, the proponent only plans to take a very small amount of surface rock (10 tons). Sandstone is very abundant throughout the proposed permit area. Given the small amount of material to be removed, no significant adverse impacts are anticipated to the environmental resources of land, water, air or energy.

No adverse impacts to environmental resources are 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.

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

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.

There are some human safety risks associated with the operation of equipment. The proponent and their employees accept these risks.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

No adverse impacts to industrial, commercial, and agricultural activities are 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.

The proposed action will not have a significant impact on the quantity and distribution of employment.

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.

The proposed action will not have an adverse impact on tax revenue.

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

The implementation of the proposed alternative will not generate any additional demands on governmental services.

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.

Implementation of the proposed alternative will not conflict with any locally adopted plans.

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.

The proposed permit area lies within a tract that has direct access off Highway 72. The rock removal is expected to occur in the spring/summer of 2018 prior to the start of rifle and archery hunting seasons. The approval of the proposed permit is not anticipated to have an adverse impact on the ability of the public to recreationally use this tract of Trust land.

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

No significant adverse impacts to density and distribution of population and housing would occur as a result of implementing the proposed alternative.

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.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:
How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

The proposed project will have no effect on any unique quality of the area.

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.

The proposed Small Volume Permit would return a onetime payment of $30.00/ton for a total of $300 to the Common Schools Trust.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	**Name:**	Jocee Hedrick
	Title:	Land Use Specialist
Signature:	Jocee Hedrick	**Date:** May 4, 2018

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

I have selected Alternative B (Proposed Action), and recommend that the DNRC does issue a Small Volume Permit to Capstone Quarry to remove approximately 10 tons of sandstone from Section 16, Township 9 South, Range 22 East, NE4NE4NW4.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

The potential for significant adverse impacts to the Trust lands listed above are minimal due to the nature of the proposed action which would entail removal of solid sandstone rocks from the surface of less than 1 acre of Trust land. There are no natural features that could produce adverse impacts or species of concern occupying the parcels that are expected to be impacted by implementing the proposed action.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

☐ EIS ☐ More Detailed EA ☑ No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	**Name:**	Matthew Wolcott
	Title:	Area Manager, Southern Land Office
Signature:		**Date:** 5/4/218