

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Hucke Land and Livestock Calving Pasture Use
Proposed Implementation Date:	Spring 2019
Proponent:	Hucke Land and Livestock
Location:	22N 11E 27 N of Railroad, W of Highway
County:	Chouteau
Trust:	Common

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The purpose of this proposed land use license is to provide for use of state land as a spring calving pasture for Hucke Land and Livestock. This sacrifice area would include several small pastures that surround the Hucke's home. The use of these pastures for calving is necessary to Hucke's operation because their home is surrounded by state trust land and they do not have deeded land near enough to use for calving pasture.

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 Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)
Northeastern Land Office (NELO)
Proponent: Hucke Land and Livestock
Surface Lessees: William and Freida Muir

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

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

The proponent is responsible for acquiring all required permits for the proposed project. The proponent is responsible for settling all surface damages with the surface lessees.

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 use several pastures on state land as a sacrifice area for calving.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action) – Under this alternative, the Department does grant to use several pastures on state land as a sacrifice area for calving.

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 pastures that would be used for this sacrifice area may be affected some by compaction. The surface texture of these soils are mostly some sort of loam but there are some clay loams that could be affected though they are a small portion of the pastures. The clay loams could be especially vulnerable to compaction due to heavy livestock use, the other soils would be moderately susceptible.

Summary by Map Unit — Chouteau County Area, Montana (MT615)		Summary by Map Unit — Chouteau County Area, Montana (MT615)			
Map unit symbol	Map unit name	Rating	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI	
2B	Marcott-Bigsandy complex, 0 to 4 percent slopes	Silty clay loam	62.5	19.5%	
69C	Vida-Zahill clay loams, 2 to 8 percent slopes	Clay loam	22.9	7.2%	
75B	Farnuf loam, 0 to 4 percent slopes	Loam	13.9	4.3%	
82B	Savage silty clay loam, 0 to 4 percent slopes	Silty clay loam	95.1	29.7%	
96C	Macar loam, 4 to 8 percent slopes	Loam	1.9	0.6%	
671B	Bearpaw-Vida clay loams, 0 to 4 percent slopes	Clay loam	47.2	14.7%	
674B	Bearpaw-Waltham clay loams, 0 to 4 percent slopes	Clay loam	59.8	18.7%	
842A	Savage-Daglum complex, 0 to 2 percent slopes	Silty clay loam	16.9	5.3%	
Totals for Area of Interest			320.2	100.0%	

The soils overall are quite clayey with every soil present having some sort of clay describer in their name including smectitic and montmorillonitic. There is some shrink/swell clays in several horizons.

Summary by Map Unit — Chouteau County Area, Montana (MT615)		Summary by Map Unit — Chouteau County Area, Montana (MT615)			
Map unit symbol	Map unit name	Rating	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI	
2B	Marcott-Bigsandy complex, 0 to 4 percent slopes	Fine, mixed, superactive Aquic Haploborolls	62.5	19.5%	
69C	Vida-Zahill clay loams, 2 to 8 percent slopes	Fine-loamy, mixed, superactive Typic Argiborolls	22.9	7.2%	
75B	Farnuf loam, 0 to 4 percent slopes	Fine-loamy, mixed, superactive Typic Argiborolls	13.9	4.3%	
82B	Savage silty clay loam, 0 to 4 percent slopes	Fine, montmorillonitic Typic Argiborolls	95.1	29.7%	
96C	Macar loam, 4 to 8 percent slopes	Fine-loamy, mixed, superactive, frigid Typic Ustochrepts	1.9	0.6%	
671B	Bearpaw-Vida clay loams, 0 to 4 percent slopes	Fine, smectitic, frigid Vertic Argiustolls	47.2	14.7%	
674B	Bearpaw-Waltham clay loams, 0 to 4 percent slopes	Fine, montmorillonitic Typic Argiborolls	59.8	18.7%	
842A	Savage-Daglum complex, 0 to 2 percent slopes	Fine, montmorillonitic Typic Argiborolls	16.9	5.3%	
Totals for Area of Interest			320.2	100.0%	

Even with high amounts of clay present in the soil as well as a moderate susceptibility to surface compaction the area is mostly classified as well drained. One area is classified as somewhat poorly drained but it is furthest away from the creek so there should be plenty of area to catch excess drainage.

Summary by Map Unit — Chouteau County Area, Montana (MT615)		Summary by Map Unit — Chouteau County Area, Montana (MT615)			
Map unit symbol	Map unit name	Rating	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI	
2B	Marcott-Bigsandy complex, 0 to 4 percent slopes	Somewhat poorly drained	62.5	19.5%	
69C	Vida-Zahill clay loams, 2 to 8 percent slopes	Well drained	22.9	7.2%	
75B	Farnuf loam, 0 to 4 percent slopes	Well drained	13.9	4.3%	
82B	Savage silty clay loam, 0 to 4 percent slopes	Well drained	95.1	29.7%	
96C	Macar loam, 4 to 8 percent slopes	Well drained	1.9	0.6%	
671B	Bearpaw-Vida clay loams, 0 to 4 percent slopes	Well drained	47.2	14.7%	
674B	Bearpaw-Waltham clay loams, 0 to 4 percent slopes	Well drained	59.8	18.7%	
842A	Savage-Daglum complex, 0 to 2 percent slopes	Moderately well drained	16.9	5.3%	
Totals for Area of Interest			320.2	100.0%	

Summary by Rating Value		Summary by Rating Value			
Rating	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI			
Slight	320.2	100.0%			
Totals for Area of Interest	320.2	100.0%			

Overall because of the well drained classifications and the slight erosion hazard there is not a high probability of major soil compaction or excess runoff even though the soils contain high amounts of clays in some horizons. There should be no cumulative effects to geology, soil quality, stability or moisture.

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.

A small intermittent stream runs through the pasture. The stream flows into Mud Springs Coulee several miles away. This stream does not have consistent water and is little used by cattle because it is very saline. There is a possibility of some cattle manure running off into the stream causing eutrophication, however because of the well-drained soils and inconsistent water in the stream there should be no surface water pollution. Also due to the biodegradable nature of all the waste associated with calving there should be no problem with groundwater contamination as it will be broken down and used by plants.

No cumulative effects to the water resources are 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.

The only change to air quality will be the scents associated with livestock production that are already common to the area.

No cumulative effects to air quality are 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.

If re-seeding is necessary the proponent will acquire certified, weed free seed and refer to the Plant Materials Tech Note No. MT-46 (Rev. 4) dated September 2013 for seeding rates.

There are some noxious weeds present on the tract. Mostly Canada thistle and some whitetop concentrated along the old railroad bed. This license has the potential to spread some noxious weeds through livestock hides and eating seeds that come out in manure. The current lessee already has a weed management plan in place to take care of the noxious weeds present and will continue to control them, therefore weeds should spread no further.

No rare plants or cover types are present.
No long term cumulative effects to vegetation are anticipated.

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 area is not considered critical wildlife habitat. This area is already being used heavily by cattle and there is little brush or cover for wildlife. Because of this the habitat is already degraded and there is little wildlife present.

The aquatic habitat that is present is naturally poor due to high salinity. The aquatic areas are also very shallow and intermittent.

No cumulative effects are 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.

There are two animal species of concern in the area, they are the Loggerhead Shrike and the Burrowing owl. Burrowing Owls should not be affected because they rely on the burrows of prairie dogs and ground squirrels for their nests. Because there are no signs of ground squirrels or prairie dogs towns on this tract there will likely be no burrowing owls.

The Loggerhead Shrike should likewise not be affected. Because this is a very small area and the shrike is quite mobile only temporary displacement should occur. Shrike nesting is not likely to be affected because they like to nest in thorny bushes or thick brush which this area does not have.

Species of Concern										
2 Species										
Filtered by the following criteria:										
Tourism = 022611E (Based on mapped Species Occurrences)										
SCIENTIFIC NAME	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	USFWS (METS/ECC1)	USFWS (SUSP)	RUR (SUSP)	FWP (SUSP)	% OF GLOBAL BREEDING RANGE IN AT	% OF AT THAT IS BREEDING RANGE	HABITAT
<i>Atalapha cultrifolia</i>	Ovidae	04	315	METS/ECC1	SUSP	Sensitive - Known on Forests (SG)	Sensitive - Suspected on Forests (SFC)	5%	85%	Grassland
<i>Burrowing Owl</i>	Ovidae	04	315	METS/ECC1	SUSP	Sensitive - Known on Forests (SG)	Sensitive - Suspected on Forests (SFC)	5%	85%	Grassland
<i>Loggerhead Shrike</i>	Laniidae	04	315	METS/ECC1, ECC17	SUSP	Sensitive	Sensitive	4%	100%	Shrubland

There are no plant species of concern in the area.

Species of Concern										
0 Species										
Filtered by the following criteria:										
Tourism = 022611E (Based on mapped Species Occurrences)										

There are no known unique, endangered, fragile or limited environmental resources on this site.

No cumulative effects to habitat are anticipated.

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.

There was one previously recorded stone ring on the tract but has not been confirmed either by the field evaluator last summer or by the DNRC archaeologist.

No effects on historical, archaeological, or paleontological resources 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 activities associate with this license will include the normal ranching activities seen commonly in the area and will not be a detriment to the scenery.

No direct or cumulative effects to aesthetics 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.

No demands on limited resources are required for this project.

No direct or cumulative effects 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 tracts listed in this EA Checklist.

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.

The only dangers to human health and safety are those normally associated with ranch work. This risks are the responsibility of the proponent to mitigate.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

This project will allow a profitable local farmer to continue operating their cow calf operation and contributing to the local economy.

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 project will not create any new jobs. These positions are already held by employees of the proponent. No cumulative effects to the employment market are 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.

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

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 not be any increases in traffic or traffic patterns if this project is approved.

There will be no direct or cumulative effects on government 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.

There are no zoning or other agency management plans affecting this project.

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.

There will be no direct or cumulative effects on recreation or wilderness activities.

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 proposed project does not include any changes to housing or developments. Population and housing will not be affected.

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

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 project will not have any cumulative economic or social effect.

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Alternative B (the Proposed Action) – Under this alternative, the Department does grant an easement for an underground telecommunication cable.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

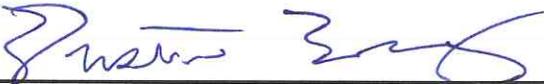
I have evaluated the potential environment effects and have determined that no negative long-term environmental impacts will result from the proposed activity.

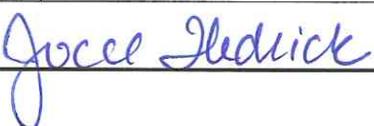
27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

EIS

More Detailed EA

No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Dustin Lenz Title: Land Use Specialist
Signature: 	Date: 15 April 2019

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Jocee Hedrick Title: Unit Manager, Northeastern Land Office
Signature: 	Date: 4/15/19



Measurement



Acres

Measurement Result

234.3 Acres

Clear

Press CTRL to enable panning

