

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	WBI Pipeline Replacement Project
Proposed Implementation Date:	2019
Proponent:	WBI Energy Transmission Inc
Location:	T8N-59E-Sec 36
County:	Fallon County

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

WBI Energy Transmission Inc has requested a Land Use License (LUL) from the DNRC Eastern Land for the purpose of creating a temporary workspace for the replacement of a pipeline and the dewatering of test water near the end of the pipeline project on the above-mentioned tract of State Trust Land. This will ensure the functionality of the pipeline and that it will continue to generate economic activity within the local community.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

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

WBI Energy Transmission Inc has submitted an application for an LUL for the access and utilization of a temporary workspace 125 feet in width at pipeline tie-in location and corridor 75 feet in width along trenching for an upcoming pipeline replacement project and dewatering of test water near the end of the pipeline project. The total area affected will be 5.85 acres.

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

None

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A- Grant the proponent an LUL for a temporary workspace for replacement of an existing easemented natural gas pipeline.

Alternative B- No Action.

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.

Alternative A- Disturbance of the soil will occur through the trenching and burying of this line, but effects should be minimal with proper reclamation. There should be no lasting adverse effects to the soil quality, stability or moisture. Soil structures are not fragile or unstable.

Alternative B-No Impact

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 Impacts expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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- Pollutants and Particulates may be increased during the construction of the project. After the completion of the project pollutant and particulate levels should return to normal. Increase in pollutants during construction should be almost negligible. Minimal impacts expected.

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- Where the construction and maintenance takes place there may be disturbance to the vegetation cover. Vegetation is comprised mainly of Western Wheatgrass (*Agropyron smithii*), Green Needle Grass (*Stipa comata*), Alkali sacaton (*Sporobulus airoides*), Crested Wheatgrass (*Agropyron spicatum*) and Blue Grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*) and various forbs and shrubs.

Alternative B- No Impact

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- There should be very minimal effect on any animal habitats within the boundaries of the project construction. The proponent would reseed the area with a native seed mix as directed by the Eastern Land Office. The line would be buried and covered.

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program Database shows two sensitive species that have been observed in the general project areas: the sharp-tailed grouse (*Tympanuchus phasianellus*) and the greater sage grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) While these species may be present, no impact is expected due to this project. This project is located within sage grouse general habitat; as this is the replacement of an existing line, this project is exempted from EO-12-2015 as a maintenance activity on an existing approved pipeline facility.

Alternative B- No Impact

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

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

Alternative A-A Class III inventory was conducted of the area of potential effect (APE). A copy of the inventory report is on file with the DNRC and the Montana SHPO. No cultural or paleontological resources are in the APE. The project will have No Effect to Antiquities as defined in the Montana State Antiquities Act. 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 B- No Impact

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- Any aesthetic degradation should only be temporary until the site recovers following completion of the project. The site will be reseeded to a native plant community, and should recover in two to three growing seasons.

Alternative B- No Impact

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 Impacts expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

None

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

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

Alternative A- There may be risks to human health and safety in the construction of the project, but this should be done by qualified professionals. Safety concerns become minimal for work done in this fashion.

Alternative B- No Impact

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

Alternative A- It should have a positive effect on Industrial and Commercial Activities and Production and a neutral effect on Agricultural Activities and Production. Minimal impacts expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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- This project has the potential to create jobs with further development possibilities. Minimal impacts expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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 Impacts expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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 Impact expected

Alternative B- No impact expected

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 Impacts expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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 Impacts expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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 Impacts expected

Alternative B- No Impact

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

Alternative A- No Impacts expected

Alternative B- No Impact

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

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

Alternative A- No Impacts expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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 Alternative A- This may provide income for the trust in the form of a Land Use License. The LUL fee will be set at \$500.00/acre for acreage used in the project, for a total of \$2925.00 (5.85ac x \$500.00).

Alternative B- No Impact

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Seth Urick	Date: 11-06-2019
	Title: Land Use Specialist	

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Alternative A

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

The granting of the requested LUL on this tract of state owned trust lands for a temporary workspace for replacement of an existing pipeline should not result in nor cause significant environmental impacts. The predicted environmental impacts have been identified and mitigation measures addressed in the EA checklist. The predicted impacts will be adequately mitigated through the construction plans. An environmental assessment checklist is the appropriate level of analysis for the proposed action. The proposed LUL fee would satisfy the trust fiduciary mandate.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

EIS

More Detailed EA

No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Scott Aye Title: Lands Program Manager
Signature: 	Date: 11-6-2019