

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Mohar Historic RoW
Proposed Implementation Date:	Spring of 2020
Proponent:	Terry and Brenda Mohar
Location:	Sections 2 & 3, Township 33N Range 24E
County:	Blaine County

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Application for a historic easement across a two-track trail that grants access to farm/ranch lands. A two-track trail goes along the borders of two separate state leases and grants access to private lands owned by Terry and Brenda Mohar. The length of the two-track trail extends approximately 0.23mi to the north between sections 2 and 3 of 33N 24E, then the road goes west approximately 1.0mi between section 3 and Section 34 of 34N 24E, of which is Privately owned by the Mohar's.

Two separate applications for the two different sections have been submitted, due to the proximity and type of application one environmental assessment will be used for both applications.

- Two-track trail on 33N 24E S3
- Two-track trail on 33N 24E S2

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

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

Montana DNRC, Havre Field Office, Ryan Call - Land Use Specialist
Terry and Brenda Mohar. 17960 Turner RD Hogeland, Montana
State Land Lessee Duane M, Skoyen. L#8661. 1280 Boldt RD Chinook, Montana
State Land Lessee Glenn Scott Friede L#7003. 1040 N Fork RD Chinook, Montana

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

There are no other licenses or government agencies with jurisdiction that I am aware of

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A: The alternative to grant a historic right of way for access to Farm and Ranch lands

Alternative B: The "No Action" alternative

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 - Soils across both areas consist of Phillips – Elloam complexes and Phillips – Kevin complexes ranging from 0-4% and 2-8% slopes respectively. These soils are well-suited for reclamation, have medium risk for compaction, high restoration potential, slight to moderate erosion risk, and moderately suited for natural roads.

This project is not requiring any new construction, eliminating any new soil displacement or disturbance.

Alternative B- The “No Action” alternative

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. Due to the project already having an existing road, there would be little risk of soils running off into the nearby waterways and causing an exceedance of water quality standards. No significant impact is anticipated.

Alternative B- The “No Action” alternative

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 significant impact expected.

Alternative B- The “No Action” alternative

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- There is no evidence of rare plants or cover types in the scope of the project.

Alternative B- The “No Action” alternative

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 are several avian species of concern in this area (Section 9). Since there is no added work to be done on this project the potential to cause any disturbance is minimal. No significant impact is anticipated.

Alternative B- The “No Action” 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.

Alternative A- There are only avian species of concern of which include; Sprague's pipit, Golden Eagle, Burrowing Owl, Ferruginous Hawk, Chestnut-Collared Longspur, Greater Sage-Grouse, and the Long-billed Curlew. No nesting or habitat disturbance is expected from the proposed right of way. No significant impact is anticipated.

Alternative B- The "No Action" alternative

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

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

Alternative A- This project does not consist of any new developments. The road has been documented to have existed before 1997 and is not expected to change. No significant impact expected on any historical or archaeological sites.

Alternative B- The "No Action" alternative

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 significant impact expected.

Alternative B- The "No Action" alternative

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 significant impact expected.

Alternative B- The "No Action" alternative

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 significant impact expected.

Alternative B- The "No Action" alternative

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 significant impact expected.

Alternative B- The "No Action" alternative

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

Alternative A- No significant impact expected.

Alternative B- The "No Action" alternative

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 significant impact expected.

Alternative B- The "No Action" alternative

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 significant impact expected.

Alternative B- The "No Action" alternative

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 significant impact expected.

Alternative B- The "No Action" alternative

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 significant impact expected.

Alternative B- The "No Action" alternative

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 significant impact expected.

Alternative B- The “No Action” alternative

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 significant impact expected.

Alternative B- The “No Action” alternative

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

Alternative A- No significant impact expected.

Alternative B- The “No Action” alternative

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

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

Alternative A- No significant impact expected.

Alternative B- The “No Action” alternative

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- The proposed project spans approximately 1.23 miles, as outlined by the State Land Historic Easement Guidelines, such an easement would cost \$100 for each section crossed or the fair market value of the entire acreage encumbered by the proposed right of way. The cost of the easement would be at \$200 and benefits the Common Schools Trust.

Alternative B- The “No Action” alternative

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Ryan Call Title: Havre- Land Use Specialist
Signature	 Date May 11, 2020

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED: Alternative B

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

The granting of the requested RoW on these tracts of state-owned trust lands should not result in nor cause significant negative environmental impacts. The proposed action satisfies the trusts fiduciary mandate and ensures the long-term productivity of the land. An environmental assessment checklist is the appropriate level of analysis for the proposed action.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

- EIS
 More Detailed EA
 No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Jocee Hedrick Title: Lewistown Unit Manager
Signature	 Date May 12, 2020