CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Moving of Kirk School in Jackson Montana
Proposed Implementation Date:	Summer of 2015
Proponent:	Jackson School District
Location:	Section 16, Township 6 South - Range 15 West (Common Schools)
County:	Beaverhead

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The Jackson Elementary School District has applied for a Land Use License to remove the Kirk School from state land and move it to a location on private property in the Jackson area. The proposed removal will take place during the summer of 2015. This license if issued would allow access to the school and the removal from state land.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

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

Beaverhead County Museum Curator
Jackson School Board
Jackson Ranches Corporation
Linda Marsh, Beaverhead County Superintendent of Public Education
Patrick Rennie, DNRC Archeologist
Beaverhead County Commissioners
Martin Miller, Montana Natural Heritage Program

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

No other government agencies have jurisdiction, and no other permits are needed.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A: Action Alternative, Issue a license to the Jackson Elementary School District # 24 to allow them access to state land to move the Kirk School from its current location on state land on to private property.

Alternative B: No Action Alternative, Deny Jackson School District a license to move the Jackson School from state land to private property.

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.

NRCS soil survey of the area describes the soils at the proposal site as Shewag. The parent material is sandy and gravelly outwash. Soils are described as very gravelly loam, and as one gets over 10 inches underground extremely gravelly sandy loam. Land capability classification is 6e

Alternative A: Action Alternative The school will be moved during dry or frozen conditions. No heavy equipment will be used other than a backhoe to move the school and clean up the site once the work has been completed. The school will be taken down by hand and loaded onto a trailer hauled by a pickup truck. Little to no soil disturbance will occur as a result of moving the school. There may be some miner disturbance near the site of the activity including some compaction, or minor rutting from the activity. Mitigation would include smoothing and grading out any ruts that do occur.

Alternative B: No Action Alternative Under this alternative the school would remain on the site and no soil disturbance or minor compaction would occur.

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 area around the school and the County Road do not have any water sources near them.

Alternative A: Action Alternative, No surface or ground water resources would be affected by moving the school from its current location. There are no surface water sources near the site of the school. No short or long term or cumulative effects are anticipated to water quality, quantity, or distribution if the action alternative is chosen.

Alternative B: No Action Alternative, under this alternative no action would be taken and no short, or long term or cumulative effects would occur to water quality, quantity, or distribution.

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: Action Alternative, The location of the school is in a remote rural setting away from any population or residences. The action alternative would cause some dust to be emitted into the atmosphere but this would be of a small amount and for a short duration. No long term or cumulative effects to air quality would occur if the action alternative is chosen.

Alternative B: No Action Alternative, Under this alternative there would be any impacts to air quality standards.

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: Action Alternative, The action alternative would cause short term impacts to vegetative communities in the vicinity of the school although the ground around the school has been impacted from cattle

use and the vegetation near the school is spare. Further disturbance could occur if the school is moved but the area would quickly re-vegetate. No long term or cumulative effects to vegetation would occur if this alternative is chosen.

Alternative B: No Action Alternative, Under this alternative the vegetative state of the site would remain the same as its current condition. There would be no short term, long term or cumulative impacts.

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: Action Alternative, The area of this proposal is not considered critical wildlife habitat. However, this tract has the potential to provide habitat for a variety of animal species (deer, elk, songbirds, and ground squirrels), predators (coyote, fox & badger), other non-game mammals, and raptors. The proposal does not include any land use change which would yield changes to the wildlife habitat. The proposed action will not impact wildlife forage, cover, or traveling corridors. Nor will this action change the juxtaposition of wildlife forage, water, or hiding and thermal cover so no long term or cumulative impacts are anticipated if the action alternative is chosen.

Alternative B: No Action Alternative, If the no action alternative is chosen there would no changes in use from current conditions so there would be no impacts to terrestrial, avian, and aquatic life or habitats. No impacts would occur under this 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.

No specific on-site observations of Threatened or Endangered species have been recorded at this site and no important habitat for endangered species has been identified on this state land. A search of Natural Heritage data through NRIS was conducted and Wolverine Gulo gulo a sensitive species was identified to occupy an area within 10 kilometers of this state land. The state of Montana lists Wolverines as a S3 species, meaning that it is potentially at risk because of **limited** and/or **declining** numbers, range and/or habitat, even though it may be abundant in some areas.

The Montana Field Guide describes" Wolverines habitat being limited to alpine tundra and boreal and mountain forests (primarily coniferous) in the western mountains, especially large wilderness areas, however, dispersing individuals have been found far outside of usual habitats. They are usually in areas with snow on the ground in winter. Riparian areas may be important winter habitat. When inactive, Wolverines occupy dens in caves, rock crevices, under fallen trees, in thickets, or similar sites. Wolverines are primarily terrestrial but may climb trees.

In Montana, Hornocker and Hash (1981) found most Wolverine use in medium to scattered timber, while areas of dense, young timber were used least. Wolverines avoided clearcuts and burns, crossing them rapidly and directly when they were entered at all. Hash (1987) reported Wolverines in the Northern Rocky Mountain region were associated with fir, pine, and larch. Aspen stands were also used, as were cottonwoods in riparian areas. Ecotonal areas appeared to be important habitat components (Hash 1987). Hatler (1989) believed Wolverines are not dependent on any particular vegetative habitat type. Banci (1986) reported "habitat requirements appear to be large, isolated tracts of wilderness supporting a diverse prey base, rather than specific plant associations or topography." South of the boreal forest, most habitat descriptions in the literature agree with Grove's (1988) characterization of "large, mountainous, and essentially road less areas."

Alternative A: Action Alternative, The action alternative should not have any short term, long term or cumulative effects on wolverines or their habitat. The location of the school does not fit the general habitat requirements of wolverines, which are listed as boreal forest and alpine habitats. This alternative would not affect wolverines or their habitat.

Alternative B: No Action Alternative, Under this alternative all conditions would remain in their current condition and there would not be any short term, long term or cumulative effects on Wolverines

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10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:
Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

Montana DNRC Archeologist Patrick Rennie was scoped for this proposal and provided the following input; "The DNRC formally recorded the Jackson School (24BE2327) in 2013 as a heritage property. Since that recordation, it has been determined that the Beaverhead County School District owns the Jackson School. The Beaverhead County School District intends to move the school from its current location on a tract of DNRC administered state land, to private land nearby. Because the DNRC has no jurisdiction over the structure comprising site 24BE2327, the DNRC has no authority to consider effects if the property is moved to a new location."

Neither of the proposed alternatives, Action or No- Action will affect the historical value of the school. The DNRC does not own the school but is requesting that it be moved from state trust land.

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: Action Alternative, The school is located in an isolated remote area approximately 200 feet off of the Skinner Meadows County Road outside of Jackson Montana. The school has been in this location since the early 1890's so it does have some significant historical benefit and is aesthetically pleasing in that capacity. However the school will be moved to a landowner near its current location a few miles away and will be preserved and restored for the benefit of the people in the Jackson area and will remove it from state property. The long term effect to aesthetics of the area will probably be short lived.

Alternative B: No Action Alternative The school would remain at its current location and the Jackson School District would need to find another way of keeping it in place at its current location. There would not be any impacts to the aesthetics of the area under this alternative. The trust would need to be compensated for leaving it on trust lands.

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: Action Alternative, This alternative would not cause any additional demands on Environmental Resources of land, water air, or energy.

Alternative B: No Action Alternative, This alternative would not cause any additional demands on Environmental Resources of land, water air, or energy.

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: Action Alternative, The Montana DNRC, Dillon Unit is unaware of any other environmental documents or studies that are occurring on this tract. The Dillon Unit has completed a number of timber sales and MEPA documents on the states Miner Creek section (T5S - R16W, Section 36) West of Jackson MT which

is approximately 4 air miles north of this proposal. This alternative would not cause any cumulative impacts to any other analysis that is occurring.

Alternative B: No Action Alternative, Choosing this alternative would have no effects on other environmental documents pertinent to the area.

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: Action Alternative, This alternative could have the unintended consequence of the proponent being hurt or hurting the public while moving the building.

Alternative B: No Action Alternative, This alternative poses the risk of the school building falling down and hurting or killing livestock or the public or lessee.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

Neither of the proposed alternatives will affect commercial and agricultural activities and production.

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.

Neither of the proposed alternatives will change the quantity and distribution of employment in the Jackson area.

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.

Neither of the proposed alternatives will impact the local and state tax base or revenues.

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.

Neither of the proposed alternatives will impact the demand for 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.

Neither of the proposed alternatives will impact locally adopted environmental plans and goals.

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.

Neither of the proposed alternatives will change the access to and quality of recreational and 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.

Neither of the proposed alternatives will alter the density and distribution of population and housing in the town of Jackson or Beaverhead County.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:
Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

Neither of the proposed alternatives will alter social structures and mores in the town of Jackson or Beaverhead County.

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

Alternative A: Action Alternative, The Kirk school has stood in the same place on state land near the town of Jackson since the early 1890ties. The general public driving by the school doesn't realize its historical significance, but people from Jackson realize that it is a part of their history and the schools cultural uniqueness to the area. By moving the school the action alternative will alter that cultural uniqueness and diversity of the Jackson area.

Alternative B: No Action Alternative, This alternative will not alter the current cultural uniqueness and diversity 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.

Alternative A: Action Alternative, This alternative would generate $200 to the common school trust, and would remove a potential liability to the trust if someone was to be hurt while viewing the school.

Alternative B: No Action Alternative, This alternative would not generate any revenue to the trust and would still be a potential liability to the DNRC and the common school trust.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Timothy Egan	Date: 3/13/2015
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V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

DNRC does not own the structure. The owner of the structure is in agreement. They may move the structure at their discretion. The LUL will provide a means to authorize the use of the land to move the structure.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

[ ] EIS [ ] More Detailed EA [X] No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Hoyt Richards	
	Title: CLO Area Manager	
Signature: /s/		Date: 4/15/2015