

## CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

<b>Project Name:</b>	NaturEner USA Bat Detection Study Land Use License		
<b>Proposed Implementation Date:</b>	Summer 2015		
<b>Proponent:</b>	NaturEner USA, 394 Pacific Avenue, Suite 300, San Francisco, CA 94111 NaturEner USA, 669 Rim Road, Kevin, MT 59454		
<b>Location &amp; Trust:</b>	Rim Rock Wind Facility in Toole & Glacier Counties		
		<u>Lease</u>	<u>Trust</u>
		<b>#</b>	
Sec. 24 T36N R04W	SWSW	3655	Common Schools
	S2SE4	4555	Common Schools
	NE4NW4,		
	NW4SW4	6640	Capitol Buildings
Sec. 33 T36N R03W	ALL	5844	Capitol Buildings
Sec. 16 T35N R04W	ALL	6865	Common Schools
Sec. 14 T35N R05W	NE4	7169	Common Schools
	NW4	6482	Common Schools
Sec. 11 T35N R05W	W2	429	Common Schools
Sec. 16 T35N R05 W	ALL	7170	Common Schools
State land Legal Descriptions near Glacier Wind Facility in Toole and Glacier Counties:			
Sec. 36 T33N R05W	ALL	2806	Common Schools
Sec. 16 T32N R04W	ALL	2805	Common Schools
Sec. 36 T32N R04W	ALL	4627	Common Schools
<b>County:</b>	Glacier and Toole		

### I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The proponent has applied for a Land Use License (LUL) for general access on state land using any existing roads and/or on foot for a bat detection study. The objective of the study is to get a better representation of bat activity in the area, particularly around the Glacier and Rim Rock wind facilities. This field method is completely non-invasive and will not be disturbing wildlife. The basic methods to the survey are listed below. Technicians will be driving on existing roads. Technicians will park on roads and walk in to each location cross country and deploy an Anabat SD2 bat detector. A detector microphone 10 feet up on a piece of PVC conduit will be mounted to the ground. The conduit will be centered over a piece of rebar and be tied down with some stakes (to keep the wind from blowing it over). See that attached illustration. This setup will be deployed for 4 weeks and will be accessed a total of 3 times. 1 time to deploy the gear (day 0), 2 weeks later to grab the memory card and put in a new battery, (day 14) and a 3rd time to retrieve the gear (day 28). At any one time 3-5 detectors will be placed on state land and moved around to other locations for the duration of the study.

### II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

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

NaturEner, DNRC, Surface Lessee's

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

None

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**3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:**

**Proposed Alternative:** Issue the LUL for general access on state land using existing road and/or foot for a bat detection study.

**No Action Alternative:** Deny the LUL.

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**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.*
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**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.*

Soils on the tracts are well vegetated and stable. Motorized travel will be limited to existing roads and all other travel will be walking. No soil disturbing activities are planned. No impacts to the soil resources will occur.

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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.*

No direct or cumulative impacts to water quality are anticipated as a result of the proposal.

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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.*

Air quality is currently good. Impacts to air quality may result from a variety of activities including road use, agricultural burning, wildfires, industrial development, vehicle emissions or heating system emissions among others.

No lasting impacts to air quality would be expected.

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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.*

No ground disturbing activities will occur. No direct or cumulative effects are expected to occur to vegetation as a result of the proposal due to the scope of the project affecting State Land.

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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.*

This tract is used by a variety of wildlife including mule deer, white-tailed deer, red fox, coyotes, numerous species of small mammals, various raptors, song birds, upland game birds, and numerous non-game bird species. No habitat disturbing activities or destructive wildlife sampling methods will occur.

No direct or cumulative effects on wildlife species are expected to occur.

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**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.*

Occasional use by Bald Eagles, Golden Eagles and Peregrine Falcons may occur on the state land due to it's proximity to the Kevin Rim.

The Natural Heritage Program sited two species that may be of a concern in that area, the Golden Eagle and Ferruginous Hawk.

No habitat disturbing activities or destructive wildlife sampling methods will occur.

No direct or cumulative impact to Threatened, Endangered or unique wildlife are anticipated as a result of the proposal.

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**10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:**

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

There are several known historical or archaeological sites in the area. No ground disturbing activities will occur as a result of this project. No historical or archaeological sites will be impacted.

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**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 proposed action will change the aesthetics in the area. .

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**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.*

None.

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**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

- *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.

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#### 14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

*Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.*

No impacts are expected.

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#### 15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

No impact to agricultural production are expected. State Surface Lessee's will be contacted prior to access.

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#### 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 proposal would have no affect on quantity and distribution of employment.

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#### 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.*

This proposal would potentially have no effect on tax revenues.

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#### 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*

Exploration should have no effect on government services.

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#### 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.*

The tracts are currently not zoned.

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#### 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.*

No change to recreational access.

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#### 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 population density or distribution changes would be expected.

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**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.

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**23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:**

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

The exploration would not be expected to directly or cumulatively impact cultural uniqueness or diversity.

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**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 Land Use License will be issued for the duration of the study for a one-time fee of \$200.00.

<b>EA Checklist Prepared By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Erik Eneboe	<b>Date:</b> 4/21/15
	<b>Title:</b> Conrad Unit Manager	

## V. FINDING

### 25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

**Proposed Alternative:** Issue the LUL for general access on state land using existing road and/or foot for a bat detection study.

### 26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

No significant impacts are expected. No ground disturbing activities on state land will occur. Access will be limited to existing roads and walking.

### 27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

EIS

More Detailed EA

No Further Analysis

<b>EA Checklist Approved By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Tony Nickol
	<b>Title:</b> Land Use Specialist, Conrad Unit, CLO
<b>Signature:</b> /S/ Tony Nickol	
<b>Date:</b> April 21, 2015	

