

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Dale Bruner Stockwater/Residential Pipeline LUL
Proposed Implementation Date:	May, 2015
Proponent:	Dale Bruner – Lessee
Location:	Section 16, Township 2 South, Range 23 East
County:	Stillwater

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Dale Bruner is proposing installation of a pipeline to transport water straight north from the existing well on the far east side of Section 16, Township 2 South, Range 23 East. The proposed pipeline will transport water to Mr. Bruner's deeded ground to the north. He plans to use the water for residential water and stock water.

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) Southern Land Office, Crow Tribal Historic Preservation Office, and Dale Bruner– Lessee of State Lease #7264, are involved in this project.

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

No other governmental agencies have jurisdiction over this proposal.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A (No Action) – The DNRC does not grant permission to Dale Bruner to install a residential/stock water pipeline.

Alternative B (the Proposed action) – The DNRC does grant permission to Dale Bruner to install a residential/stock water pipeline.

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.

There are no fragile or unstable soils present in the area of the proposed pipeline installation. The soils consist of loams to fine sandy loams. The pipeline installation site was planned to avoid unstable areas. Currently the land is being used for farming and the soil is already in a disturbed state.

No significant adverse impacts to the soils are anticipated.

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 proposed pipeline will use water from an existing well that was drilled on the subject section this past fall. Based on the current number of wells in the immediate surrounding area, there should be little to no adverse impacts to the ground water supply by using this well.

No significant adverse impacts to water quality, quantity, or distribution 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.

Dirt work may generate some airborne dust. These activities will minimally affect air quality for a very limited amount of time.

No significant adverse impacts 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.

There are no rare plants or cover types present near the proposed pipeline installation route.

The affected area is currently being used for crop production and is already in a disturbed state. The installation of the pipeline will have no adverse impacts to crop production.

No significant adverse impacts to vegetation cover 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 proposed project is in an area with little habitat potential for fish, wildlife, and birds.

No cumulative effects to fish and wildlife 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.

The Species of Concern Report from the Montana Natural Heritage Program indicates that the Black-tailed Prairie Dog (*Cynomys ludovicianus*), Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*), and a Bat Roost may occur at least a mile outside of Section 16. However, these species has not been observed on this tract.

The area for the proposed pipeline is not a recognized habitat area for Sage Grouse and the nearest active lek is more than 8 miles to the northwest of the proposed easement.

Due to the nature of the proposed action, the installation of the pipeline along the eastern section line and an existing county road, it is not expected that this action will have any significant effect on any of the species identified on this parcel. The surface disturbance will be temporary and adjacent to the existing county road.

No significant adverse effects are anticipated.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

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

There are three historic sites that have been identified on this tract prior to this proposal.

One quarter mile north of Square Butte, Lithic Scatter was discovered. Square Butte is located west of the cropland and the proposed pipeline will be installed on the extreme far east side of the cropland. This should mitigate the probability of the Lithic Scatter being disturbed.

In the E2E2SW4, an old homesite was noted. It was also noted that the old homesite may or may not be on the state land. During the field inspection, the old homesite was not found.

Cove Ditch, and historic irrigation canal, is also located on this tract. The ditch will be avoided during pipeline installation. The start of the proposed pipeline route is a quarter mile north of Cove Ditch.

A field inspection was done on April 17, 2015. No historic or archaeological sites were found to be immediately near the proposed pipeline route.

The Crow Tribal Historic Preservation Officer was contacted about the proposed pipeline, but he has yet to respond with any comments.

No significant adverse impacts are 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 project is located on land that is used for crop production and thus is already disturbed. No long term or cumulative effects to aesthetics are anticipated.

No adverse impacts 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 on this EA.

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.

There are some human safety risks associated with operating equipment. The proponent and their employees accept these risks as acceptable occupational hazards.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

The project will not alter any current use patterns dealing with agricultural use. Grazing of livestock will continue as before and crop production will remain the same.

No adverse impacts to agriculture activities are anticipated.

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 proposed activity will not create, move or eliminate any jobs. No new jobs will be created.

No adverse impacts 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 be no increases in traffic, no changes in traffic patterns, and no need for additional fire protection, or police services.

No adverse impacts to government services are anticipated.

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 these lands.

The Crow Tribal Historic Preservation Office has been contacted about this proposal, but has yet to respond with any comments.

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 impacts to the recreational value are anticipated.

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 proposal does not include any changes to housing or developments.

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 area included in the proposed underground pipeline is currently leased as agricultural land that is used to grow wheat. The proposed project will only encompass approximately 1 acre, and will not reduce anticipated wheat production. The Land Use License for the residential/stock water pipeline would generate \$750.00 annually for the common school trust.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Jocee Hedrick
	Title: Land Use Specialist
Signature:	<i>Jocee Hedrick</i>
	Date: <i>4-22-15</i>

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

I have selected the Proposed Alternative B, and recommend that permission be granted to Dale Bruner to install the new residential/stock water pipeline.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

I have evaluated the potential environment effects and have determined that no significant adverse environmental impacts will result from the proposed activity.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

EIS

More Detailed EA

No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Matthew Wolcott
	Title: Southern Land Office Area Manager
Signature: 	Date: Apr 24 2015