

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Lone Butte Stone- Land Use License
Proposed Implementation Date:	Summer 2015
Proponent:	Michael Hagen
Location:	Section 11, T20N, R1E
County:	Cascade County
Trust:	Montana Tech

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Michael Hagen is proposing to use an existing road across 1.03 miles of State Land in Section 11, T20N, R1E to haul decorative rock to a 5 acre staging area on the aforementioned State Trust Land parcel. The LUL would allow access to haul, by truck, decorative rock across state land and to utilize five acres of classified grazing State Trust Land to palletize the rock for shipping purposes

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

Agencies, Groups or Individuals Scoped:	Purpose/Method/Response:
DNRC, Landowner	Neutral-Landowner
Michael Hagen	Proponent is in favor of the project
Ed Hastings	Lessee/adjacent landowner (Settlement of Damages Form)-no concerns
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks-Rick Thompson-First Peoples' State Park	Adjacent Lessee/landowner-by Phone on July 8, 2015-no concerns
Gilbert Payne	Adjacent Landowner-by Phone

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

DNRC is not aware of other government agencies with jurisdiction. The proponent is responsible to obtain any necessary permits.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Proposed Action Alternative: Issuing the Land Use License as proposed

No Action Alternative: Not issuing the Land Use License

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.

According to the NRCS Web Soil Survey existing soils are: Ernem stony loam, Lisam-rock outcrop (clay), and Marmarth clay loam are moderately (81.3%) to poorly suited (18.7%). Using the existing road to haul decorative rock will result in minimal ground disturbing activities. An existing ranch road accesses the area. Staging the material and putting the rock on pallets for shipping will cause minor disturbances. Standard LUL stipulations will address road maintenance, rehabilitation and weed control requirements.

Proposed Action Alternative: No lasting impacts to fragile, compactable, or unstable soils or any unusual geologic features are anticipated.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to the geology or soil characteristics 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.

Impacts to the water quality, quantity and distribution would be minimal since rock hauling will occur on an existing road. Little or no water resources are present. Standard LUL stipulations would address reclamation to the staging area.

Proposed Action Alternative: No direct or cumulative impacts to water quality are anticipated as a result of the proposed action.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to the water quality, quantity, and/or distribution will occur.

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.

In general, this area is considered to be of high quality air standards with good ventilation and would not be affected by the proposal.

Proposed Action Alternative: Short duration increases in dust from hauling will occur. Minimal direct or cumulative effects are expected to occur to air quality as a result of the proposed action.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to air quality will occur.

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.

The Montana Natural Heritage Program lists 0 plant species of concern, 0 potential species of concern, and 0 special status species within T20N R1E.

Proposed Action Alternative: Temporary disturbances to plant communities may occur. These vegetative communities would not be permanently altered. No lasting impacts to rare plants or cover types are anticipated within the project area.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to the vegetation cover, quantity, and/or quality will occur.

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 ungulates (mule deer, whitetail deer, and pronghorn), small to large sized predators (weasels, skunks, red fox, and coyotes), numerous species of small mammals (mice,

voles, ground squirrels, rabbits, etc.), various raptors (red-tailed hawks, golden eagles, bald eagles, American kestrels, prairie falcons, etc.) upland game birds (Hungarian partridge, pheasant), and numerous non-game bird species (a wide variety of migrant and resident bird species associated with available habitats). The proposed project would temporarily displace these wildlife species.

Proposed Action Alternative: Temporarily disturbances may occur during the proposed project duration. No lasting impacts to terrestrial, avian, and/or aquatic life and/or habitats are anticipated.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to terrestrial, avian, and/or aquatic life and habitats will occur.

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 Montana Natural Heritage Program lists 6 animal species of concern (Black-tailed Prairie Dog, Golden Eagle, Burrowing Owl, Chestnut-collared Larkspur, Long-billed Curlew), 0 potential species of concern, and 1 special status species (bald eagle) within this township. The area wildlife would be affected by temporary displacement during proposed project.

Animal Species of Concern [\(switch to Plants report\)](#)
 6 Species of Concern
 1 Special Status Species
 Filtered by the following criteria:
 Township = 20 N, Range = 1 E (based on mapped Species Occurrences)

[Expand All](#) [Collapse All](#)

- # Introduction
- Species of Concern

Species of Concern
 6 Species
 Filtered by the following criteria:
 Township = 20 N, Range = 1 E (based on mapped Species Occurrences)

MAMMALS (MAMMALIA)

SCIENTIFIC NAME COMMON NAME TAXA SORT	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC) FAMILY (COMMON)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	USFWS	USFS	BLM	CFWCS TIER ID
Cynomys ludovicianus Black-tailed Prairie Dog	Scuridae Squirrels	G4	S3		SENSITIVE	SENSITIVE	1

Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Big Horn, Blaine, Carbon, Carter, Cascade, Chouteau, Custer, Fallon, Fergus, Garfield, Golden Valley, Hill, Jefferson, Judith Basin, Lewis and Clark, Liberty, Treasure, Valley, Yellowstone, Yellowstone

BIRDS (AVES)

SCIENTIFIC NAME COMMON NAME TAXA SORT	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC) FAMILY (COMMON)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	USFWS	USFS	BLM	CFWCS TIER ID
Aquila chrysaetos Golden Eagle	Accipitridae Hawks / Kites / Eagles	G5	S3	BOEPA; MSTA; SCC		SENSITIVE	2
Ardea herodias Great Blue Heron	Ardeidae Bitterns / Egrets / Herons / Night-Herons	G5	S3				3
Athene cucularia Burrowing Owl	Strigidae OWLS	G4	S3B		SENSITIVE		1
Calcarius ornatus Chestnut-collared Longspur	Calcariidae Longspurs and Snow Buntings	G5	S2B			SENSITIVE	3
Numenius americanus Long-billed Curlew	Scolopacidae Scaup/Pipers	G5	S3B			SENSITIVE	1

Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Beaverhead, Big Horn, Blaine, Broadwater, Carbon, Carter, Cascade, Chouteau, Custer, Daniels, Deer Lodge, Fallon, Fergus, Flathead, Glacier, Golden Valley, Hill, Judith Basin, Liberty, Musselshell, Park, Petroleum, Phillips, Powder, Powder River, Powell, Prairie, Ravalli, Richland, Rosebud, Sanders, Sheridan, Silver Bow, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton, Toole, Treasure, Valley, Yellowstone

State Rank Reason: Species has a negative direct stress population trend and lacks the geographic diversity of native and non-native populations and habitat diversity.

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Potential Species of Concern

Potential Species of Concern
 0 Species
 Species Occurrences are not maintained for Animal PSDC, therefore we cannot filter these species geographically.

Special Status Species

Special Status Species
 1 Species
 Filtered by the following criteria:
 Township = 20 N, Range = 1 E (based on mapped Species Occurrences)

BIRDS (AVES)

SCIENTIFIC NAME COMMON NAME TAXA SORT	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC) FAMILY (COMMON)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	USFWS	USFS	BLM	CFWCS TIER ID
Haliaeetus leucocephalus Bald Eagle	Accipitridae Hawks / Kites / Eagles	G5	S4	DN; BOEPA; MSTA; SCC	SENSITIVE	SENSITIVE	1

Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Beaverhead, Big Horn, Blaine, Broadwater, Carbon, Carter, Cascade, Chouteau, Custer, Daniels, Deer Lodge, Fallon, Fergus, Flathead, Glacier, Golden Valley, Hill, Judith Basin, Liberty, Musselshell, Park, Phillips, Powder, Powder River, Powell, Prairie, Ravalli, Richland, Rosebud, Sanders, Sheridan, Silver Bow, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton, Toole, Treasure, Valley, Yellowstone, Yellowstone

State Rank Reason: Population numbers have visibly increased since the 1980s and breeding pairs now occupy a high percentage of suitable habitat across the state. However, the species is still protected.

Proposed Action Alternative: Temporarily disturbances may occur during the proposed project duration. No lasting impacts to unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources habitats are anticipated.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources will occur.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

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

Proposed Action Alternative: The DNRC conducted a Class III cultural and paleontological resources inventory of the area of potential effect on the state tract. During the course of investigation, one cultural resource site was documented. The cultural resource consists of three stone circles and three cairns presumed to be associated with activities of past Native American occupants of the region. None of the six stone features will be impacted if the existing two track trail, proposed for use as a haul road, continues to be used as is but is not modified in any way. The site has not been evaluated to determine if it is a Heritage Property per the terms of the State Antiquities Act. However, feature avoidance will result in *No Effect to Antiquities*. A formal report of findings has been prepared and is on file with the DNRC (DNRC Project #2015-3-4) and the Montana State Historic Preservation Officer.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to historical, archeological, and/or paleontological resources will occur.

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 project area represents a typical rural community found in this geographic area in Cascade County, Montana. The project would have minimal impacts to the area's aesthetics. Noise and dust increases would occur during the project similar to other farming and ranching operations in the area. These impacts would cease as soon as the project is completed.

Proposed Action Alternative: No impacts to the aesthetics are anticipated.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to the aesthetics will occur.

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.

The area does not contain limited resources. Nearby activities consist mostly of farming and ranching operations.

Proposed Action Alternative No impacts to the demands of environmental resources such as land, water, air, and/or energy resources are anticipated.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to the demands of environmental resources such as land, water, air, and/or energy resources will occur.

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.

DNRC is not aware of other plans or projects in the area.

Proposed Action Alternative: No impacts to studies, plans, and/or projects pertinent to this area are anticipated to occur.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to studies, plans, and/or projects will occur.

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.

The proposed project would create human health and/or safety risks associated with hauling decorative rock and preparing it for shipping.

Proposed Action Alternative: Mr. Hagen is responsible to identify and mitigate the risks associated with the project activities.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to human health and/or safety risks will occur.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

Proposed Action Alternative: No lasting impacts to industrial, commercial and agricultural activities/production are anticipated.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to industrial, commercial and agricultural activities/production will occur.

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 project would be completed in a relatively short time frame and it would not create permanent jobs.

Proposed Action Alternative: No lasting impacts to quantity and distribution of employment are anticipated.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to quantity and distribution of employment will occur.

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.

Proposed Action Alternative: The project would not have any measurable effects to local or state tax revenues.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to the state tax base and/or tax revenues will occur.

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

Proposed Action Alternative: The proposal would not have any impacts on traffic or government services.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to traffic, road uses, or government services will occur.

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.

DNRC is not aware of other plans or projects in the area.

Proposed Action Alternative: No impacts to local environmental plans and goals are anticipated occur.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to local environmental plans and goals will occur.

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.

Legal, public access does exist to this parcel of state land in Section 11, T20N, R1E from Goetz Road (County Road).

Proposed Action Alternative: The proposed action is not expected to impact general recreational and wilderness activities on this state tract.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to the quality of recreational and wilderness activities will occur.

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.

Proposed Action Alternative: The proposal does not include any changes to housing or developments. No direct or cumulative effects to population or housing are anticipated.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to the density and/or distribution of population and housing will occur.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

Proposed Action Alternative: No impacts to the areas social structures, native/traditional lifestyles, or communities are anticipated to occur.

No Action Alternative: No impacts social structures, native/traditional lifestyles, or communities will occur.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

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

Proposed Action Alternative: No impacts to the areas cultural uniqueness and/or diversity are anticipated to occur.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to the areas cultural uniqueness and/or diversity will occur.

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.

Proposed Action Alternative: The proposed project would allow access across state land on approximately 1.03 miles of road to haul decorative rock to a five acre staging area on the same State Trust Land parcel. Compensation to the trust beneficiary would total of \$300.00 annually. This is equal to similar fees required by the REMB fee schedule regarding similar projects on the Central Land Office. This Land Use License should not impact future uses or income potential to this tract of state trust land.

No Action Alternative: No impacts to the social and economic circumstances will occur.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Casey Kellogg Title: Land Use Specialist	Date: July 3, 2015
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V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Proposed Alternative – Approve the project as proposed to use an existing road across 1.03 miles of State Land in Section 11, T20N, R1E to haul decorative rock to a 5 acre staging area on the aforementioned State Trust Land parcel. The LUL would allow access to haul, by truck, decorative rock across state land and to utilize five acres of classified grazing State Trust Land to palletize the rock for shipping purposes

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

Use of the existing road and the staging area is not expected to result in direct, indirect or cumulative adverse effects from this proposed road use or staging of materials. Standard LUL stipulations regarding road maintenance, reclamation, and noxious weed control will appear in the license. The proponent will be required to only operate within the road prism and staging area as mentioned above in Item 10 in order to avoid disturbance of known cultural resources. Compliance with these stipulations will be monitored by DNRC staff.

The following special stipulations will appear in the land use license:

- A pre-use and post-use inspection of the road condition will be performed by DNRC staff. The road used and the staging area will be put back into pre-use condition by the licensee.
- The licensee may be required to blade the road. The licensee will provide maintenance or re-construction of drainage features necessary to fix or prevent road damage by erosion.
- Work shall occur during dry or frozen conditions only. If rutting occurs, all hauling and staging activities will cease immediately. Ruts will be fixed by the licensee as soon as soil conditions allow.
- Reseeding will be required of the licensee regarding areas of disturbance. The required seed mix is 50% Bluebunch Wheatgrass, 50% Slender Wheatgrass.
- The licensee will post-treat the road and staging area on state land for noxious weeds.
- Off-road activity is prohibited.
- Hauling of material will occur within the identified, established road prism only.
- Palletizing material for transport and staging of equipment will occur in the 5 acre staging area only. This area must be identified with stakes and pre-approved before use.
- Damage to improvements such as fences, cattle guards, etc. will be repaired at the licensee's expense.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

EIS

More Detailed EA

No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Andy Burgoyne
	Title: Helena Unit Manager
Signature: 	Date: 8/4/15



