

## CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

<b>Project Name:</b>	Stockwater Pit Development
<b>Proposed Implementation Date:</b>	Fall 2015
<b>Proponent:</b>	Jennifer Montgomery
<b>Location:</b>	T 18N R 19E Section 16
<b>County:</b>	Fergus
<b>Trust:</b>	Common Schools

### I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Jennifer Montgomery is proposing to build two Stockwater pits on grazing lease 9363 to aid in forage utilization. The pits will be less than 15 acre-feet in volume and located on the NW4NW4 and the SW4SW4.

### II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

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

Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)  
Northeastern Land Office (NELO)  
Jennifer Montgomery (Proponent)

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

The DNRC, and NELO have jurisdiction over this proposed project.  
DNRC is not aware of any other agencies with jurisdiction or other permits needed to complete this project

#### 3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

**Alternative A (No Action)** – Under this alternative, the Department does not grant permission to build two Stockwater pits.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)** – Under this alternative, the Department does grant permission to build two Stockwater pits.

### 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.*

The Stockwater pits will be located in two different soil types. The SW pit will be built in a Lawther silty clay. This soil has a "Not Limited" rating in respects to Pond Reservoir Areas. The NW pit will be built in a Norbert-Eltac clay and this soil is rated at "Very Limited." The reason for this rating is due to slope and depth to bedrock. This will be mitigated by placing the pit in drainage with deeper soil depths and less slope.

See attached for specific information.

Soils information was obtained from the NRCS soil data viewer.

No cumulative effects to geology and soil quality, stability and moisture 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.*

Surface water may experience an increase in sediment for a short while after the project has started but is expected to go back to normal conditions when the pit is completed.

No important ground will be impacted by the proposed project.

No cumulative effects to the water resources 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.*

The air quality in the area will not be affected.

No cumulative effects 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.*

The current vegetation will be removed and replaced by the pit construction.

No rare plants or cover types are present.

No long term cumulative effects to vegetation 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 area is not considered critical wildlife habitat.

No cumulative effects 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.*

A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program for Species of Concern with a state rank of 3 or higher was conducted in the township that includes the area of potential effect. (State rank of 3 means Potentially at risk because of **limited** and/or **declining** numbers, range and/or habitat, even though it may be abundant in some areas.)

There are five potential SOC in the area, but No cumulative effects are anticipated.

There are no known unique, endangered, fragile or limited environmental resources on this site.

**10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:**

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

A ground search was conducted on the proposed Stockwater pit site on 8/27/15 and no historical or archaeological site was present.

**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.*

No direct or cumulative effects to aesthetics 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 in this EA Checklist.

#### 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 normal farming safety concerns of dealing with heavy equipment will apply during the construction of the Stockwater pit.

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

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

This project will add to existing agricultural activities in this area.

#### 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 will not create any new long term jobs.

No cumulative effects 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.*

No cumulative effects to the local and state tax base are anticipated.

#### 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 not be any increases in traffic or traffic patterns if this project is approved.

There will be no direct or cumulative effects on 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.*

There are no zoning or other agency management plans affecting this project.

#### 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.*

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 proposed project does not include any changes to housing or developments. Population and housing will not be affected.

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 proposed project will not have any cumulative economic or social effect.

<b>EA Checklist Prepared By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Brandon Sandau
	<b>Title:</b> Land Use Specialist
<b>Signature:</b> /s/ Brandon Sandau	
<b>Date:</b> August 27, 2015	

**V. FINDING**

**25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:**

I have selected the Proposed Alternative B, and recommend the proponent be granted permission build two Stockwater pits for livestock use.

**26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:**

I have evaluated the potential environment effects and have determined that no negative long-term environmental impacts will result from the proposed activity.

**27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	EIS	<input type="checkbox"/>	More Detailed EA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No Further Analysis
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<b>EA Checklist Approved By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Barny D. Smith <b>Title:</b> Unit Manager, Northeastern Land Office
<b>Signature:</b> /s/ Barny D. Smith	
<b>Date:</b> August 27, 2015	

# Jennifer Montgomery Proposed Stockwater Pits



0 0.05 0.1 0.2  
Miles

Author: Brandon Sandau



## Legend

-  Pit Locations
-  9363\_soils

## Pond Reservoir Areas

Aggregation Method: Dominant Condition  
Tie-break Rule: Higher

Fergus County, Montana  
Survey Area Version and Date: 15 - 09/11/2014

Map symbol	Map unit name	Rating	Component name and % composition Rating reasons
56	Danvers clay loam, 2 to 8 percent slopes	Somewhat limited	Danvers 90% Slope Seepage
78	Eeltsac clay, 4 to 8 percent slopes	Somewhat limited	Eeltsac 85% Slope Depth to bedrock Lawther 7% Slope
80	Eeltsac-Norbert clays, 8 to 25 percent slopes	Very limited	Eeltsac 50% Slope Depth to bedrock Norbert 45% Slope Depth to bedrock
146	Lawther silty clay, 2 to 4 percent slopes	Not limited	Lawther 90%
175	Neldore-Thebo clays, 25 to 60 percent slopes	Very limited	Neldore 60% Slope Depth to bedrock Thebo 30% Slope Depth to bedrock
179	Norbert-Eeltsac clays, 15 to 60 percent slopes	Very limited	Norbert 65% Slope Depth to bedrock Eeltsac 25% Slope Depth to bedrock
223	Tanna-Abor complex, 2 to 8 percent slopes	Somewhat limited	Tanna 60% Slope Depth to bedrock Abor 30% Slope Depth to bedrock
233	Thebo clay, 2 to 8 percent slopes	Somewhat limited	Thebo 90% Slope Depth to bedrock
252	Vanda clay, 0 to 8 percent slopes	Somewhat limited	Vanda 90% Slope Marvan 5% Slope Nobe 5% Slope
253	Vanda-Nobe clays, 0 to 4 percent slopes	Not limited	Vanda 50% Nobe 30% Absher 10%
272	Winifred-Judith clay loams, 4 to 8 percent slopes	Somewhat limited	Winifred 50% Slope Depth to bedrock Linwell 10% Slope

# Animal Species of Concern

Species List Last Updated 06/23/2015



A program of the Montana State Library's Natural Resource Information System operated by the University of Montana.

5 Species of Concern  
 Filtered by the following criteria:  
 Species = Mammals, Birds, Reptiles, Amphibians, Fish, Invertebrates  
 Heritage State Rank = S1, S2, S3  
 Township = 18 N Range = 19 E (based on mapped Species Occurrences)

**Species of Concern**  
**5 Species**  
 Filtered by the following criteria:  
 Species = Mammals, Birds, Reptiles, Amphibians, Fish, Invertebrates  
 Heritage State Rank = S1, S2, S3  
 Township = 18 N Range = 19 E (based on mapped Species Occurrences)

BIRDS (AVES)											5 SPECIES
FILTERED BY THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:											
SPECIES = MAMMALS, BIRDS, REPTILES, AMPHIBIANS, FISH, INVERTEBRATES											
HERITAGE STATE RANK = S1, S2, S3											
TOWNSHIP = 18 N RANGE = 19 E (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)											
SCIENTIFIC NAME COMMON NAME TAXA SORT	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC) FAMILY (COMMON)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	USFWS	USFS	BLM	FWP SWAP	% OF GLOBAL BREEDING RANGE IN MT	% OF MT THAT IS BREEDING RANGE	HABITAT	
<b>Buteo regalis</b> Ferruginous Hawk	<b>Accipitridae</b> Hawks / Kites / Eagles	G4	S3B			SENSITIVE	SGCN3	11%	95%	Sagebrush grassland	
<b>Species Occurrences verified in these Counties:</b> Prairie, Mccone, Teton, Park, Broadwater, Madison, Hill, Stillwater, Pondera, Rosebud, Gallatin, Fallon, Judith Basin, Liberty, Valley, Lake, Garfield, Petroleum, Phillips, Roosevelt, Cascade, Wheatland, Chouteau, Beaverhead, Sheridan, Lewis and Clark, Yellowstone, Carter, Jefferson, Powder River, Meagher, Fergus, Musselshell, Blaine, Custer, Dawson, Daniels, Glacier, Toole, Golden Valley											
<b>Centrocercus urophasianus</b> Greater Sage-Grouse	<b>Phasianidae</b> Upland Game Birds	G3G4	S2	C	SENSITIVE	SENSITIVE	SGCN2	17%	75%	Sagebrush	
<b>Species Occurrences verified in these Counties:</b> Prairie, Mccone, Park, Madison, Hill, Big Horn, Silver Bow, Stillwater, Rosebud, Carbon, Fallon, Gallatin, Valley, Garfield, Petroleum, Phillips, Wheatland, Chouteau, Beaverhead, Wibaux, Yellowstone, Carter, Powder River, Meagher, Fergus, Musselshell, Blaine, Deer Lodge, Custer, Treasure, Dawson, Sweet Grass, Golden Valley											
<b>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</b> Bobolink	<b>Icteridae</b> Blackbirds	G5	S3B			SENSITIVE	SGCN3	9%	100%	Moist grasslands	
<b>Species Occurrences verified in these Counties:</b> Prairie, Mccone, Teton, Park, Broadwater, Madison, Hill, Big Horn, Stillwater, Rosebud, Carbon, Gallatin, Fallon, Judith Basin, Powell, Liberty, Richland, Valley, Ravalli, Lake, Garfield, Petroleum, Phillips, Roosevelt, Cascade, Wheatland, Chouteau, Beaverhead, Sanders, Sheridan, Wibaux, Lewis and Clark, Yellowstone, Carter, Jefferson, Powder River, Meagher, Fergus, Flathead, Musselshell, Blaine, Custer, Dawson, Sweet Grass, Granite, Missoula, Daniels											
<b>State Rank Reason:</b> Species has undergone recent large population declines in Montana and a patchwork of declines and increases have been documented in surrounding states and provinces.											
<b>Numenius americanus</b> Long-billed Curlew	<b>Scolopacidae</b> Sandpipers	G5	S3B			SENSITIVE	SGCN3	19%	100%	Grasslands	
<b>Species Occurrences verified in these Counties:</b> Prairie, Mccone, Teton, Broadwater, Madison, Hill, Big Horn, Stillwater, Pondera, Rosebud, Carbon, Gallatin, Fallon, Judith Basin, Powell, Liberty, Richland, Valley, Ravalli, Lake, Petroleum, Phillips, Roosevelt, Cascade, Wheatland, Chouteau, Beaverhead, Sanders, Sheridan, Wibaux, Lewis and Clark, Yellowstone, Carter, Jefferson, Powder River, Meagher, Fergus, Flathead, Musselshell, Blaine, Deer Lodge, Custer, Treasure, Dawson, Sweet Grass, Granite, Missoula, Daniels, Glacier, Golden Valley, Toole											
<b>Spizella breweri</b> Brewer's Sparrow	<b>Emberizidae</b> Sparrows	G5	S3B			SENSITIVE	SGCN3	12%	100%	Sagebrush	
<b>Species Occurrences verified in these Counties:</b> Prairie, Mccone, Teton, Park, Broadwater, Madison, Hill, Big Horn, Silver Bow, Stillwater, Pondera, Rosebud, Carbon, Gallatin, Fallon, Powell, Liberty, Richland, Valley, Ravalli, Lake, Garfield, Petroleum, Phillips, Roosevelt, Wheatland, Chouteau, Beaverhead, Sanders, Sheridan, Wibaux, Lewis and Clark, Yellowstone, Carter, Jefferson, Powder River, Meagher, Fergus, Flathead, Musselshell, Blaine, Deer Lodge, Custer, Treasure, Dawson, Lincoln, Sweet Grass, Granite, Missoula, Glacier, Golden Valley, Toole											
<b>State Rank Reason:</b> Species faces threats from loss of sagebrush habitats it is dependent on as a result of habitat conversion for agriculture and increased frequency of fire as a result of weed encroachment and drought.											