

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Ted Kautzman Reservoir
Proposed Implementation Date:	2015
Proponent:	Ted Kautzman
Location:	T4S R60E S36
County:	Carter

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Ted Kautzman (Henceforth referred to as the proponent) has requested to build a stock water reservoir on the State Trust land mentioned above. This project would utilize heavy equipment for the purpose of building a reservoir for watering livestock. The project will be located in T4S R60E S36 in Carter County.

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 proponent has submitted the proper documentation to request this project. The proponent has been in touch with the DNRC to discuss potential impacts.

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

None

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A- Allow the proponent to build a reservoir on the parcel of State Trust Land.

Alternative B- No Action

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.

Alternative A- Soil composition is varied throughout the project. Soil types include silty and shallow. Some soil disturbance may take place through the use of heavy equipment moving dirt and digging a pit for the reservoir. Major disturbance can be mitigated through the exclusion of heavy equipment on some areas of trust land in which the soils are excessively compactable or fragile. Heavy equipment will not be allowed into any riparian zone, sub-irrigated, reservoir, or stream area on the project. Equipment will also not be allowed in steeper topography or any area where the soil structure is fragile. Some soil compaction may take place in areas where heavy equipment will be operated.

Alternative B- No Impacts expected

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.

Alternative A- Water quality will be maintained by excluding access to any area where ground or surface water could potentially be disturbed. All equipment will be kept out of rivers, wetlands, sub irrigated ground or any area where water quality, quantity or distribution could be affected.

Alternative B- No Impacts Expected

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- Pollutants and Particulates may be increased during the project. After the completion of the project pollutant and particulate levels should return to normal.

Alternative B- No Impacts Expected

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 is no evidence of rare plants or cover types in the scope of the project. Current plant species which occupy the construction area include Western Wheatgrass (*Agropyron Smithii*), Green Needlegrass (*Stipa Viridula*), Bluebunch Wheatgrass (*Agropyron Spicatum*), Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium Scoparium*), Prairie Sandreed (*Calamovilfa longifolia*) Needle and Thread (*Stipa comata*), Prairie Junegrass (*Koleria pyramidata*), Blue Grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*) Fringed Sagewort (*Artemisia frigida*), Broom Snakeweed (*Gutierrezia sarothrae*), Downy Brome (*Bromus tectorum*) and Japanese Brome (*Bromus japonicus*).

Alternative A-Vegetation communities will be affected by this project. The use of heavy equipment has the potential to damage some areas of the plant community. This may come from the vegetation being compacted by heavy equipment, and submerged from where the reservoir will be. However this will be a small area of disturbance and the area around the reservoir will recover in time.

Alternative B- No Impacts expected

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-There may be minimal disruption to the wildlife that inhabits the area. The scale and length of the project should not be enough to permanently disrupt the wildlife species. Species in the area may include Whitetail and Mule Deer, Elk, Antelope, Raptors and other birds, various rodents, rabbits, reptiles and others.

Alternative B- No Impacts Expected

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 Database shows that Sharp Tailed Grouse and Greater Sage Grouse are listed as species of concern in the general proposed project area. There is an active sage grouse lek that has been recorded approximately 1 ½ miles from where the project will take place. The proposed project occurs in General Sage Grouse habitat as defined and mapped in the "Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy". Due to the area of the project being in general sage grouse habitat there will be no activity between March 15 and July 15 according to the Greater Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy.

Alternative A- Building a reservoir in this area has the potential to disturb the sage grouse during breeding, nesting, and early brood rearing habitat is present due to the machinery that will be present during construction. The impacts will be greatly reduced by implementing mitigation measures such as timing restrictions on when construction can be done as to not disturb the bird. Timing restrictions will be enforced and no construction will be done between March 15 and June 15. The birds will have a positive impact from the placement of the reservoir as water is limited in the area.

Alternative B- No Impacts Expected

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

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

Alternative A- No cultural, historical, or archaeological sites have been recorded on this site.

Alternative B- No Impacts Expected

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- Due to the short duration and area that the project is occurring in, the aesthetics should not be affected in the area of this project. There may be minimal lasting affects on the landscape from this project. The project should last a few weeks on the tract and the landscape will be allowed to recover.

Alternative B- No Impacts Expected

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- No impacts expected.

Alternative B- No Impacts expected

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
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.</i>• <i>Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.</i>• <i>Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.</i>

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

Alternative A- There may be potential safety risks for laborers but the potential risk should be minimal with proper safety efforts.

Alternative B- No Impact Expected

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

Alternative A- No Impacts Expected.

Alternative B- No Impacts Expected.

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.

Alternative A- This project will not create additional jobs.

Alternative B- No Impacts Expected

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.

Alternative A- No Impacts Expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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

Alternative A- No Impacts Expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- No Impact Expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- No Impacts Expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- No Impacts Expected

Alternative B- No Impact

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

Alternative A- No Impacts Expected

Alternative B- No Impact

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

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

Alternative A- No Impacts Expected

Alternative B- No Impacts

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- No Impacts Expected

Alternative B- No Impact

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Spurr Watson	Date: 2/12/2015
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V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Alternative A

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

The granting of building a reservoir has would have a positive impact on the trust land, not only for getting better grazing utilization in the pasture, but also in the event of a wildfire would provide water to help put it out.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

EIS More Detailed EA No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Marc Aberg
	Title: Eastern Land Office; Lands Program Manager
Signature: /s/ Marc Aberg	Date: 2/12/2015