

## CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

<b>Project Name:</b>	Gay Ranch Stock Water Pipeline
<b>Proposed Implementation Date:</b>	2016
<b>Proponent:</b>	Gay Ranch
<b>Location:</b>	T6S-R48E-Sec 36
<b>County:</b>	Powder River

### I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The proponent has requested to place a stock water pipeline upon state owned T6S-R48E-Sec 36. The pipeline would tie into an existing pipeline located on private land to the southeast. This pipeline would be installed using a trenching method and be approximately 1 mile in length. This pipeline should create more reliable water source for livestock and wildlife, while creating better grazing distribution within the scope of the project. The proponent has requested a land use license for installation of the proposed pipeline.

### 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 completed the application for improvement to state land. A field review of the site was completed on July 13<sup>th</sup> 2016.

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

None

#### 3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A- Issue a land use license for the installation, use and maintenance of a stock water pipeline.  
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- Some soil disturbance will occur in the area of the pipeline. This disturbance should be minimal in nature. The soils at this site are shallow, and are stable. The proposed pipeline would be installed using a trenching method. All soil disturbances will be reclaimed to specifications set forth by the DNRC Eastern Land Office staff.

Alternative B- No Impact.

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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.*

Alternative A- The pipeline would be fed from an existing pipeline. Effects to the available water supply should be negligible. The project should not result in any degradation of water quality.

Alternative B- No Impact

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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.*

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

Alternative B- No Impact

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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.*

Alternative A- There may be disruption to some of the vegetation currently growing at the site. Species present on the site include Western Wheatgrass (*Agropyron smithii*), Blue Grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*), Green Needlegrass (*Stipa viridula*) Needle and Thread (*Stipa comata*), Prairie Junegrass (*Koeleria pyramidata*), Bluebunch Wheatgrass (*Agropyron spicata*), Little Bluestem (*Schizarium scoparium*). Vegetation disturbance should be minimal and recover naturally within 2-3 growing seasons.

Alternative B- No Impact

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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.*

Alternative A- There may be minimal disruption to the wildlife that inhabit the area. Disturbance may occur while the construction is being completed. After construction is complete and the area is reclaimed there should be minimal impact. This project will also create more reliable water sources for wildlife in the area.

Alternative B- No Impact

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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.*

Alternative A- A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program Database shows no sensitive species have been observed in the general project area. This project is not located within Greater Sage Grouse General, Core or Connectivity habitat.

Alternative B- No Impact

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**10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:**

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

Alternative A- A search of the TLMS Database shows no noted historical archaeological or paleontological resources within the scope of this project. A review by ELO field staff found no significant historical or antiquity findings within the pipeline route.

Alternative B- No Impact

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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.*

Alternative A- Noise levels may be increased slightly and temporarily during the project but will return to normal after the completion. No lasting aesthetic impacts are expected.

Alternative B- No Impact

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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.*

Alternative A- No impact expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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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

<b>IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION</b>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.</i></li><li>• <i>Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.</i></li><li>• <i>Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.</i></li></ul> |
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**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 is minimal with proper safety efforts.

Alternative B- No Impact

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

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

Alternative A- It would have a positive effect on Agricultural Activities and Production.

Alternative B- No Impact

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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.*

Alternative A- No impact expected.

Alternative B- No Impact

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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.*

Alternative A- No significant impact

Alternative B- No Impact

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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*

Alternative A- No significant impact

Alternative B- No Impact

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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.*

Alternative A- No Impact

Alternative B- No Impact

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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.*

Alternative A- No impact expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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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.*

Alternative A- No Significant Impact

Alternative B- No Impact

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**22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:**

*Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.*

Alternative A- No Significant Impact

Alternative B- No Impact

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**23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:**

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

Alternative A- No Significant Impact

Alternative B- No Impact

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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.*

Alternative A- This project would be constructed through a land use license the price of this license will be set at \$200.00. This project would allow for better grazing distribution and a more reliable water source for livestock and wildlife in the area.

Alternative B- No Impact

<b>EA Checklist Prepared By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Scott Aye	<b>Date:</b> 7-18-2016
	<b>Title:</b> Land Program Manager	

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**V. FINDING**

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**25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:**

Alternative A

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**26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:**

The granting of the requested stock water pipeline on this tract of state owned trust lands for the purpose of improving grazing distribution and wildlife habitat should not result in nor cause significant environmental impacts. The proposed action satisfies the trusts fiduciary mandate through a purchase of a land use license and improving grazing distribution in the area. An environmental assessment checklist is the appropriate level of analysis for the proposed action

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

EIS

More Detailed EA

No Further Analysis

<b>EA Checklist Approved By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Chris Pileski
	<b>Title:</b> Eastern Land Office; Area Manager
<b>Signature:</b> /s/ Chris Pileski	<b>Date:</b> 7-18-2016