

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	LUL # 3073299—Access on and over existing trails and roads through state trust Lands for maintenance and repair of the MATL LLC transmission line.
Proposed Implementation Date:	May 2015
Proponent:	MATL LLP, 30 West 14 th Street, Suite 204, Helena, MT 59601
Location:	Lot 2, 3, 4, E2SW4, Section 31, T37N, R4W-Toole County E2, Section 36, T37N, R5W-Glacier County N2NE4, SW4NE4, Section 18, T28N, R3W-Pondera County All, Section 16, T25N, R1E-Teton County Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, S2N2, S2, Section 5, T21N, R3E-Cascade County
County:	Toole, Glacier, Pondera, Teton, and Cascade Counties
Trust:	Common Schools (CS)

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The proponent has applied for LUL #3073299 across state land for access for ingress and egress to and from the adjacent portions of the above listed sections for repair and maintenance of the MATL power transmission line. The access will only be used during the repair and maintenance, and no road improvements will occur. The access crosses approximately 2.94 miles of state land to access the MATL LLP easement on state and deeded property located in and adjacent to the above mentioned tracts of state owned land. The proposed LUL #3073299 will be located on existing trails and roads through the above state tracts.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:
Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

DNRC-Surface Owner
Kelly Hartwell-Surface Lessee, Lease #7714 and Lease #7727
Ruby Bouma-Surface Lessee, Lease #4031
Robert T. Stephens-Surface Lessee, Lease #4271
Robert Doran-Surface Lessee, Lease #1129
MATL LLP-Proponent

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:
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) – Deny the proponent the requested LUL #3073299
Alternative B (the Proposed action) –Grant the proponent the requested LUL #3073299

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.

Soils and geology in this area are generally suitable for use of the existing access trails and roads. The access trails and roads are existing and no new road improvements will occur. No cumulative effects to the soils are anticipated in either alternative.

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.

No important surface or groundwater resources will be impacted by the proposed LUL #3073299 as the access trails and roads existing and no road improvements will occur.

Other water quality and/or quantity issues will not be impacted by the proposed action.

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 proposed LUL #3073299 will consist of no disturbance to the soils, so 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 vegetation within the proposed project areas consists primarily of native rangeland and CRP-Section 16, T25N, R1E. The access trails and roads will be utilized during the repair and maintenance of the MATL power transmission line. Long-term impacts to the vegetation are not expected in either alternative.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted for T37N, R4W: There were no plant species of concern noted or potential species of concern noted on the NRIS survey.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted for T37N, R5W: There were no plant species of concern noted or potential species of concern noted on the NRIS survey.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted for T28N, R3W: There were no plant species of concern noted or potential species of concern noted on the NRIS survey.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted for T25N, R1E: There were no plant species of concern noted or potential species of concern noted on the NRIS survey.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted for T21N, R3E: There were zero species of concern and one potential species of concern noted on the NRIS survey: Dicots-Little Indian Breadroot. This particular tract of native rangeland does not contain many, if any of this species. The access trails and roads are existing and no new road improvements will occur. No cumulative effects to this species are anticipated in either alternative.

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 proposal does not include any land use change which would yield changes to the wildlife habitat. The proposed action will not impact wildlife forage, cover, or traveling corridors. Nor will this action change the juxtaposition of wildlife forage, water, or hiding and thermal cover. The proposed action will not have long-term negative effects on existing wildlife species and/or wildlife habitat.

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.

There are no threatened or endangered species, sensitive habitat types, or other species of special concern associated with the proposed project area. At this time, no known unique, endangered, fragile or limited environmental resources have been identified within the proposed project area.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted for T37N, R4W: There were three species of concern and two potential species of concern noted on the NRIS survey: Birds-Golden Eagle and Ferruginous Hawk. Mammals-Hoary Bat. Fish-Brook Stickleback and Brassy Minnow. This particular tract of native rangeland does not contain many, if any of these species. If any are present, they will be dispersed into the surrounding permanent cover and return to the project area once it is completed.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted for T37N, R5W: There were three species of concern and one potential species of concern noted on the NRIS survey: Birds-Chestnut-collared Longspur, Long-billed Curlew, McCown's Longspur, and Short-eared Owl. This particular tract of native rangeland does not contain many, if any of these species. If any are present, they will be dispersed into the surrounding permanent cover and return to the project area once it is completed.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted for T28N, R3W: There were one species of concern and zero potential species of concern noted on the NRIS survey: Mammals-Dwarf Shrew. This particular tract of native rangeland does not contain many, if any of these species. If any are present, they will be dispersed into the surrounding permanent cover and return to the project area once it is completed.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted for T25N, R1E: There were four species of concern and zero potential species of concern noted on the NRIS survey: Birds-Baird's Sparrow. Reptiles-Spiny Softshell and Greater Short-horned Lizard. Fish-Sauger. This particular tract of native rangeland and CRP does not contain many, if any of these species. If any are present, they will be dispersed into the surrounding permanent cover and return to the project area once it is completed.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted for T21N, R3E: There were seven species of concern, zero potential species of concern, and one special status species noted on the NRIS survey: Birds-Chestnut-collared Longspur, Long-billed Curlew, Sprague's Pipit, Burrowing Owl, American Bittern, Ferruginous Hawk, Loggerhead Shrike, and Bald Eagle. This particular tract of native rangeland does not contain many, if any of these species. If any are present, they will be dispersed into the surrounding permanent cover and return to the project area once it is completed.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

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

Due to the access trails and roads being existing and no road improvements will occur, no historical, archaeological, or paleontological resources would be present, so no cultural resources will be impacted by this proposed LUL #3073299.

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 state land does not provide any unique scenic qualities not also provided on adjacent private lands. The proposed LUL #3073299 will consist of use of existing access trails and roads and will only be used during the repair and maintenance of the MATL power transmission line, so there would be no change to the aesthetics in either alternative.

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.

The demand on environmental resources such as land, water, air, or energy will not be affected by the proposed action. The proposed action will not consume resources that are limited in the area. There are no other projects in the area that will affect the proposed action.

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 tract 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.

The proposed action will not impact human health or safety in the area.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

The proponent will use existing access trails and roads and no road improvements will occur. The use of these access trails and roads will not alter agricultural and grazing activities or production on the lease and no damages are 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.

The proposed action will not create any jobs as the MATL power transmission line is already staffed and no road improvements will take place.

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 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.

The proposed action is in compliance with State and County laws. No other management plans are in effect for the area.

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.

These tracts of state land do not have a high recreational value for hunting and fishing. The tracts are not legally accessible to the public except for Section 5, T21N, R3E. The proposed action is not expected to impact general recreational activities on these state land tracts.

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 action will not impact the cultural uniqueness or diversity 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.

This project will benefit the school trust in terms of the \$25.00 fee generated from the LUL application. The LUL #3073299 on the Common Schools trust lands will affect approximately 2.94 miles. This project will benefit the Common Schools trust from the LUL fee based on fair market value. This LUL is only for access for maintenance and repairs and no road improvements will occur, so no cumulative economic or social effects are likely to occur.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Tony Nickol	Date: May 14, 2015
	Title: Land Use Specialist, Conrad Unit, Central Land Office	

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Alternative B (the Proposed action) –Grant the proponent the requested LUL #3073299.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

There are no other reasonable routes to provide access to these areas of the transmission line. Significant impacts are not anticipated as a result of issuing the LUL.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

EIS

More Detailed EA

No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Erik Eneboe
	Title: Conrad Unit Manager, CLO
Signature: 	Date: May 15, 2015

T37N, R5W Section 36
Approximately 2,000 lineal feet

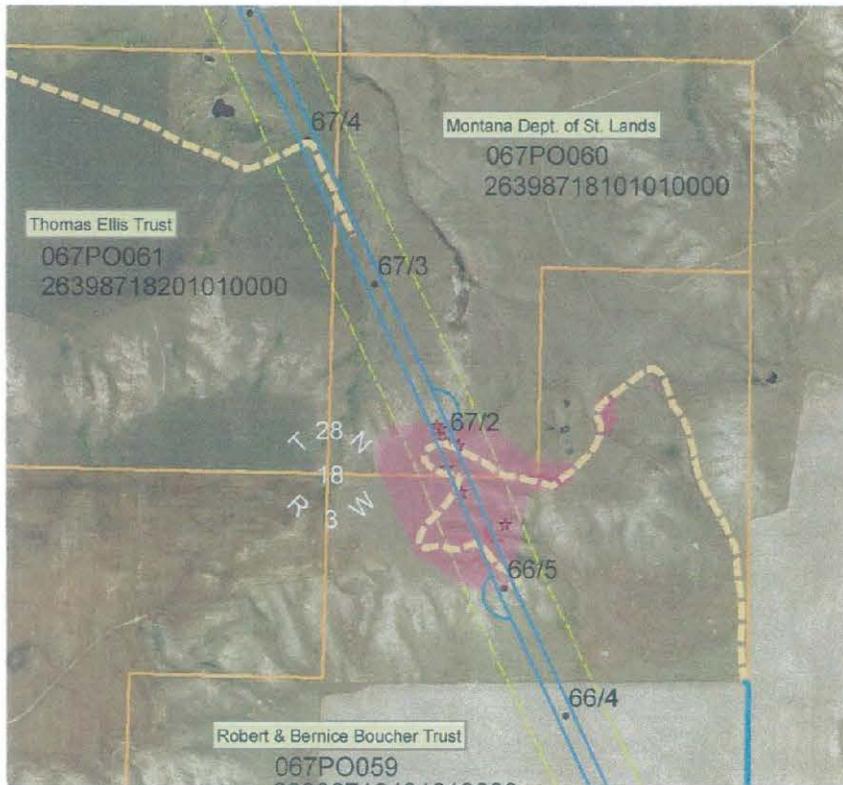
Kelly Hartwell Tenant

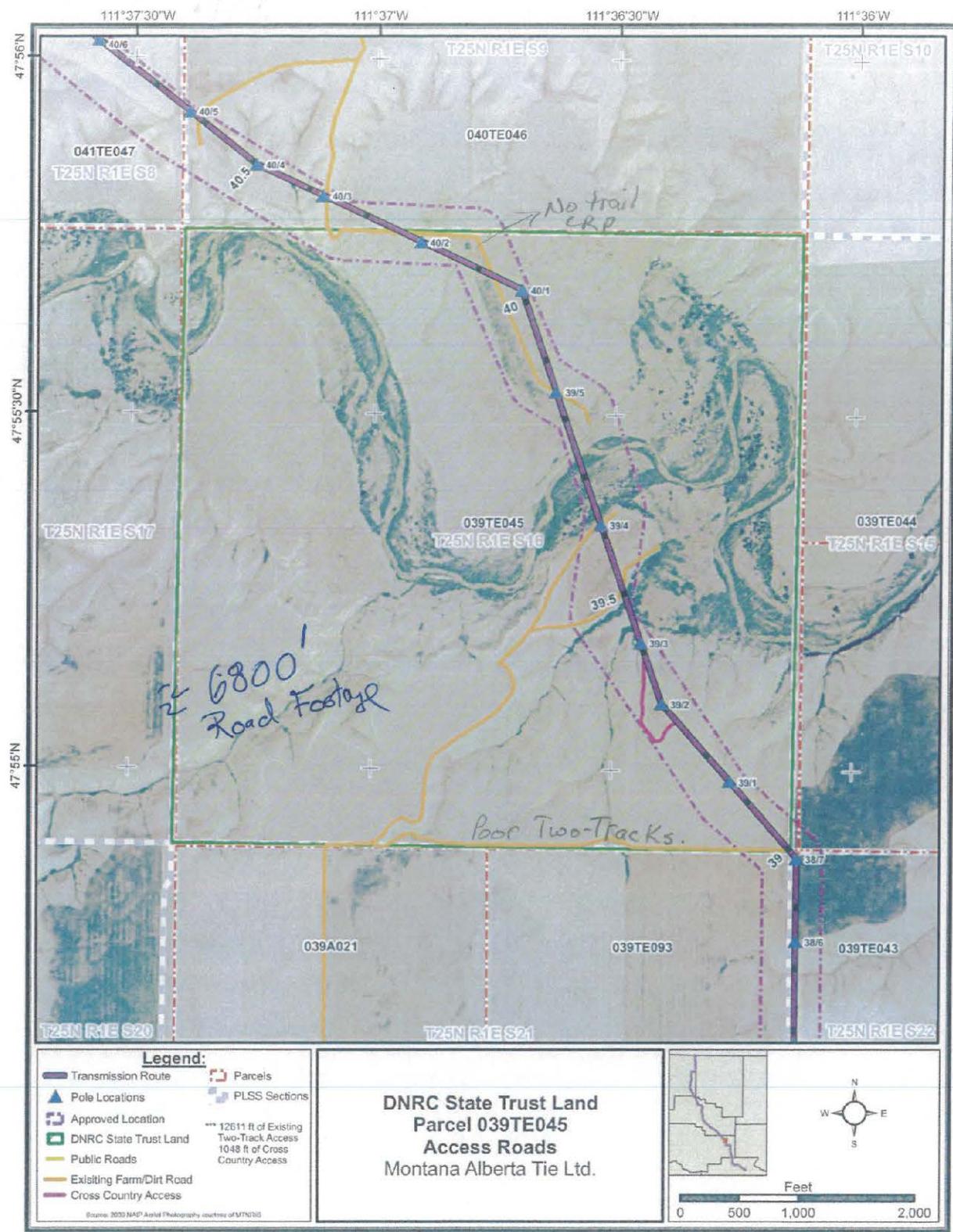
T37N, R4W Section 31
Approximately 3,000 lineal feet

Kelly Hartwell- Tenant



T28N, R3W Section 18
Tenant: Ruby Bouma
Access is approximately 700 lineal feet





State Lease Parcel T21N, R3E Section 5
Tenant: Robert Doran
Access is approximately 3,000 lineal feet

