

## CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

<b>Project Name:</b>	Stockwater Development
<b>Proposed Implementation Date:</b>	July 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2016
<b>Proponent:</b>	Vince Murnion
<b>Location:</b>	14N 27E Sec.16
<b>County:</b>	Petroleum
<b>Trust:</b>	Common Schools

### I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Vince Murnion was originally approved for a well and tank in the NW4 of State lease 9877. They failed to hit adequate water and Vince is requesting to install a ¼ mile pipeline and tank in lieu of the well and tank. This project is located in Greater Sage-grouse core habitat.

### 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)  
(Vince Murnion)

#### 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 install the stockwater pipelines and tank.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)** – Under this alternative, the Department does grant permission to install the stockwater pipelines and tank with the following mitigating factors:

1. Construction will occur after the Sage-grouse nesting period (March 15 to July 15).
2. The stockwater tank will have wildlife escape ramps installed prior to use.

### 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 in the Area of Potential Effect (APE) are typical of what is expected in the sedimentary plains. The ecosite associated with the APE is classified as Sandy.

**Alternative A (No Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** There will be some ground disturbance and bare ground created associated with the stockwater installation. The effect will be minimal and the bare ground should revegetate naturally within a few growing seasons. Sandy soil is more susceptible to erosion, but it should be minimal with very little slope and crested wheatgrass being the dominant grass. Crested wheatgrass is known for quick establishment with its rhizomatous characteristics.

#### 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 (No Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** No effect 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.*

**Alternative A (No Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** No effect 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.*

Current plant community is a monoculture of crested wheatgrass. This land was once previously cultivated.

**Alternative A (No Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** There will be some ground disturbance and bare ground created associated with the stockwater installation. These areas will be prone to noxious weed infestations. Frequent scouting should occur until revegetation has occurred to suppress noxious weed establishment. The pipeline scar will remain visible for many years, due to the disturbance.

**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 APE is located in Sage-grouse core area. Currently the APE and surrounding land use is either a monoculture of crested wheatgrass or in small grain production.

**Alternative A (No Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** No effect 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 2 or higher was conducted in the township that includes the area of potential effect.

SPECIES OF CONCERN		STATE RANK		SPECIAL CONCERN		SPECIES	
SPECIES OF CONCERN		STATE RANK		SPECIAL CONCERN		SPECIES	
SPECIES OF CONCERN		STATE RANK		SPECIAL CONCERN		SPECIES	
Greater Sage-Grouse	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Upland Game Birds	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

*Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Beaverhead, Big Horn, Blaine, Carbon, Carter, Cascade, Custer, Dawson, Deer Lodge, Fergus, Glacier, Hill, Judith, Liberty, Musselshell, Park, Petroleum, Phillips, Powder River, Prairie, Rosebud, Silver Bow, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Treasure Valley, Yellowstone, and Yellowstone.*

The nearest Sage-grouse lek is 5 miles to the APE.

**Alternative A (No Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** There is no suitable habitat for the Sage-grouse in the APE.

**10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:**

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

A Class I (literature review) level review was conducted by the DNRC staff archaeologist for the area of potential effect (APE). This entailed inspection of project maps, DNRC's sites/site leads database, land use records, General Land Office Survey Plats, and control cards. The Class I search revealed that *Antiquities* have not been identified in the APE. No additional archaeological investigative work will be conducted in response to this proposed development. However, if previously unknown cultural or paleontological materials are identified during project related activities, all work will cease until a professional assessment of such resources can be made.

**Alternative A (No Action) -** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action) -** No effect anticipated.

**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 (No Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** No effect 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.*

**Alternative A (No Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** No effect 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.*

**Alternative A (No Action)-**No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**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.*

**Alternative A (No Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** No effect anticipated.

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

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

**Alternative A (No Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**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 Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** No effect 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.*

**Alternative A (No Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** No effect 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*

**Alternative A (No Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**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 Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**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 Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**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 Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:**

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

**Alternative A (No Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**Alternative B (the Proposed Action)-** No effect anticipated.

**23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:**

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

**Alternative A (No Action)-** No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

**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 Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action)- No effect anticipated.

<b>EA Checklist Prepared By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Brandon Sandau <b>Title:</b> Land Use Specialist
<b>Signature:</b> 	<b>Date:</b> May 11, 2016

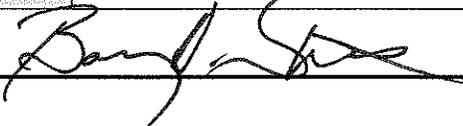
**V. FINDING**

**25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:**

**26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:**

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

EIS       More Detailed EA       **XXX** No Further Analysis

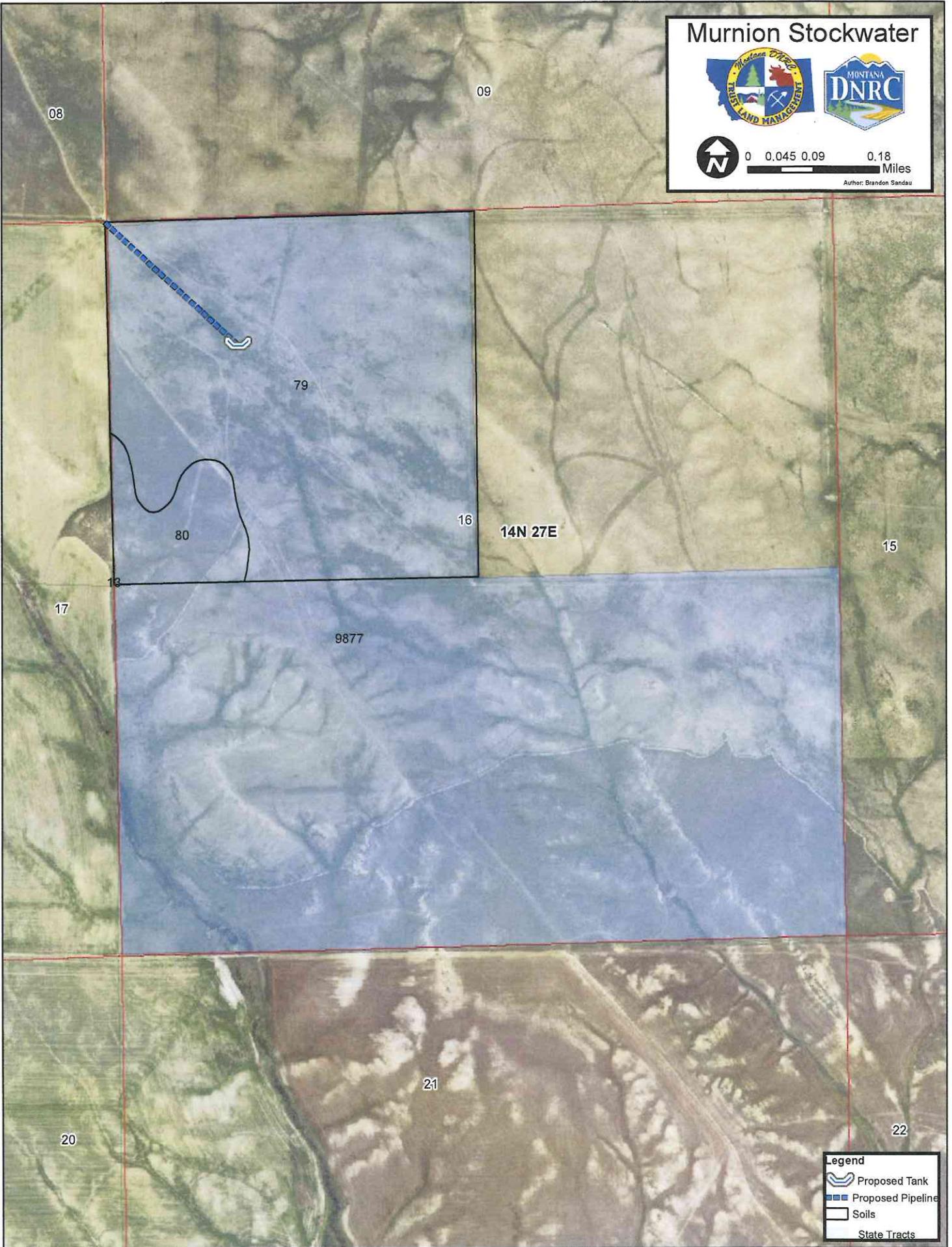
<b>EA Checklist Approved By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Barny D. Smith <b>Title:</b> Unit Manager, Northeastern Land Office
<b>Signature:</b> 	<b>Date:</b> May 11, 2016

# Murnion Stockwater



0 0.045 0.09 0.18  
Miles

Author: Brandon Sandau



**Legend**

- Proposed Tank
- Proposed Pipeline
- Soils
- State Tracts