

## CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

<b>Project Name:</b>	LUL # 3073313--Access on and over existing trails and roads through state trust lands for agricultural purposes.
<b>Proposed Implementation Date:</b>	Fall 2015
<b>Proponent:</b>	Salmond Ranch Co., PO Box 1327, Choteau, MT 59422
<b>Location:</b>	See below list of tracts.
<b>County:</b>	Teton County
<b>Trust:</b>	Common Schools (CS) and Capitol Buildings (CB)

### I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The proponent has applied for LUL #3073313 across state land for access on and over existing trails and roads through state trust lands for agricultural purposes. The access will only be used for repair and maintenance of an existing irrigation ditch, and no road improvements will occur. The access crosses approximately 2.14 miles of state land to access the existing irrigation ditch on the above mentioned tracts of state owned land. The proposed LUL #3073313 will be located on existing trails and roads through the above state tracts.

Township	Range	Section	Access Trail Location	Miles Affected	Trust
23N	8W	10	W2SW4	0.53	CB
23N	8W	15	NW4NW4	0.20	CB
23N	8W	16	N2	1.14	CS
23N	8W	17	E2NE4	0.27	CS
<b>TOTALS</b>				<b>0.73</b>	<b>CB</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>				<b>1.41</b>	<b>CS</b>

### II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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- 1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:**  
*Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.*  
 DNRC-Surface Owner  
 Salmond Ranch Co.-Proponent and Surface Lessee, Lease #10002  
 Deep Creek Ranch and Mgmt. Co. LLC-Surface Lessee, Lease #10313
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- 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
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- 3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:**  
 Alternative A (No Action) – Deny the proponent the requested LUL #3073313  
  
 Alternative B (the Proposed action) –Grant the proponent the requested LUL #3073313

### 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.*

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#### 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.

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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.*

No important surface or groundwater resources will be impacted by the proposed LUL #3073313 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.

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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.*

The proposed LUL #3073313 will consist of no disturbance to the soils, so no cumulative effects to air quality are anticipated.

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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.*

The vegetation within the proposed project areas consists primarily of native rangeland. The access will only be used for repair and maintenance of an existing irrigation ditch, and no road improvements will occur. Long-term impacts to the vegetation are not expected in either alternative.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted for T23N, R8W: There were no plant species of concern noted or potential species of concern noted on the NRIS survey.

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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.*

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.

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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.*

The state land parcels are located in the NCD grizzly bear recovery zone. This action is not expected to impact grizzly bears and/or grizzly bear habitat due to the small scale and temporary nature of the proposed LUL #3073313. Other threatened or endangered species, sensitive habitat types, or other species of special concern or potential species of concern will not be impacted by proposal.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted for T23N, R8W. There were seven animal species of concern, zero potential species of concern, and zero special status species noted on the NRIS survey: Mammals-Wolverine, Canada Lynx, Fisher, and Grizzly Bear. Birds-Sprague's Pipit and Golden Eagle. Fish-Westslope Cutthroat Trout. These particular tracts of grazing land do not contain many, if any of these species. Threatened or endangered species, sensitive habitat types, or other species of special concern or potential species of concern and will not be impacted by the proposed project.

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**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 #3073313.

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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.*

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.

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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.*

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.

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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.*

There are no other projects or plans being considered on the tract listed on this EA.

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

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**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.

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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.*

The proposed action will not create any jobs as no road improvements will take place.

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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.*

There are no direct or cumulative effects to taxes or revenue for the proposed project.

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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*

There will be no direct or cumulative effects on government services.

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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.*

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

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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.*

These tracts of state land do have a high recreational value for hunting. The tracts are legally accessible to the public. The proposed action is not expected to impact general recreational activities on these state land tracts.

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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*

The proposal does not include any changes to housing or developments.

No direct or cumulative effects to population or housing are anticipated.

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**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.

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**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.

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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.*

This project will benefit the school trust in terms of the \$25.00 fee generated from the LUL application. The LUL #3073313 on the Common Schools and Capitol Buildings trust lands will affect approximately 2.14 miles. This project will benefit the trusts from the LUL fee based on fair market value. This LUL is only for access for agricultural purposes and no road improvements will occur, so no cumulative economic or social effects are likely to occur.

<b>EA Checklist Prepared By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Tony Nickol	<b>Date:</b> October 20, 2015
	<b>Title:</b> Land Use Specialist, Conrad Unit, Central Land Office	

**V. FINDING**

**25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:**

Alternative B (the Proposed action) –Grant the proponent the requested LUL #3073313.

**26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:**

None.

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

EIS

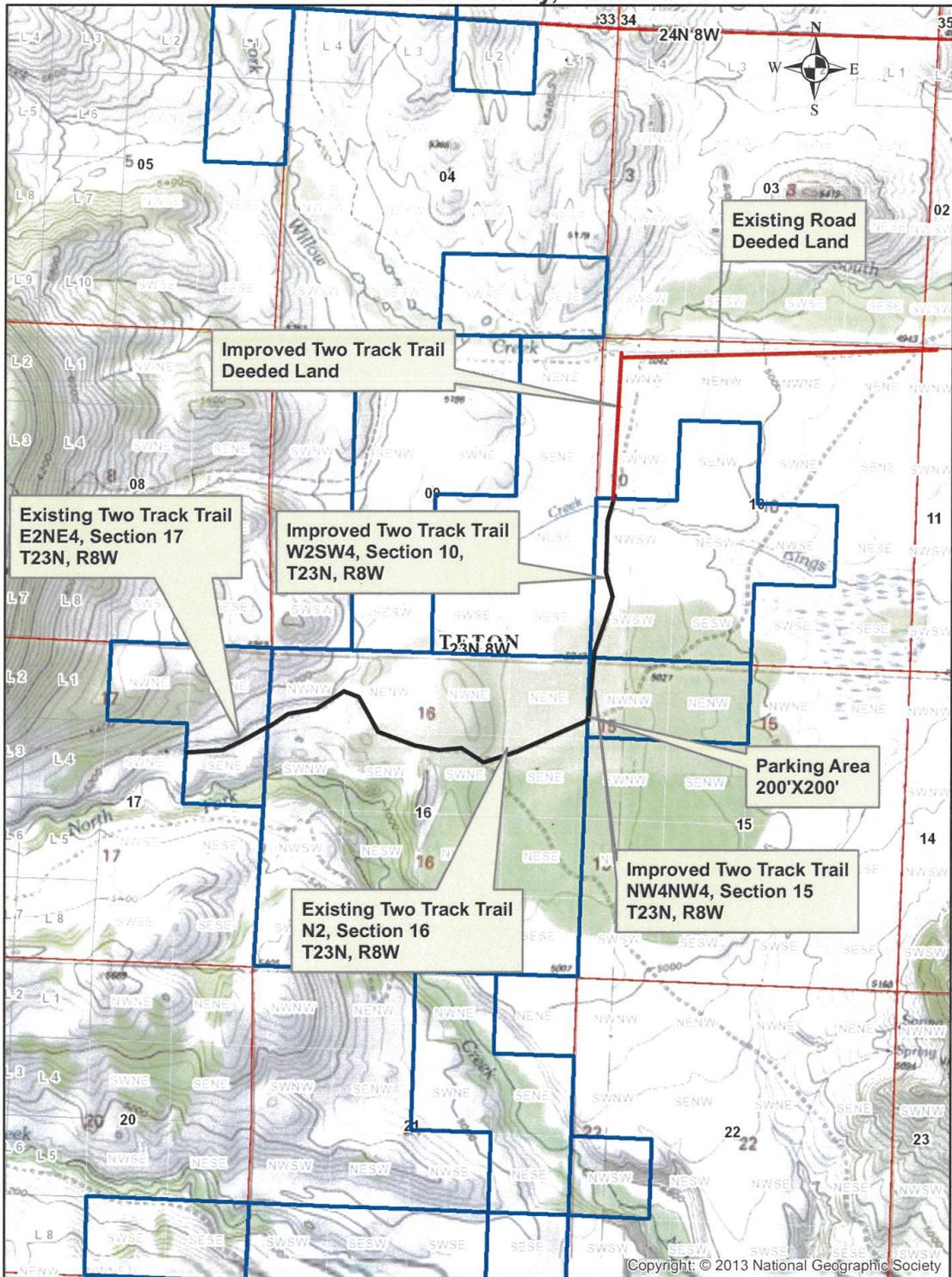
More Detailed EA

No Further Analysis

<b>EA Checklist Approved By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Erik Eneboe
	<b>Title:</b> Conrad Unit Manager, CLO
<b>Signature:</b> 	<b>Date:</b> Nov 24, 2015



# Teton County, Montana



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