CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Zach Johnson Stock Water Pipeline LUL
Proposed Implementation Date:	2025
Proponent:	Zach Johnson
Location:	T9S-R46E-Sec 16
County:	Powder River

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Zach Johnson has requested a land use license from the DNRC for the purpose of placing and maintaining a stock water pipeline across state-owned T9S-R46E-Sec 16. The pipeline will run from a well located on T9S-R46E-Sec 17 and terminate on the south side of T9S-R46E-Sec 9. This pipeline would be installed using the rip trench/static plow method and be approximately 1 mile in length. This pipeline should create more reliable water sources for livestock and wildlife in the area, while creating better grazing distribution within the scope of the project. No stock tanks will be placed upon trust land only buried 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 is completing the application for a land use license (DS-401). A field review of the site was completed on June 6th, 2025.

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

NRCS- Sage Grouse Initiative Program

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A- Issue a land use license for the proposed 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 a silty loam to thin silty and are stable. The proposed pipeline would be installed using a rip trench/ static plow method. All soil disturbances will be reclaimed to specifications set forth by the DNRC Eastern Land Office staff.

Alternative B- No Impact.

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 additional impacts expected.

Alternative B- No Impact

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

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. The proposed pipeline will follow the edge of an existing hay field. Vegetation species present include Western Wheatgrass (Agropyron smithii), Blue Grama (Bouteloua gracilis), Green Needlegrass (Stipa viridula) Needle and Thread (Stipa comata), Prairie Junegrass (Koleria, pyramdata), Bluebunch Wheatgrass (Agropyron spicata), Little Bluestem (Schizachyrium scoparium) Prairie Sandreed (Calamovilfa longifolia), Sandberg Bluegrass (Poa secunda), Silver Sagebrush (Artemisia cana). . Vegetation disturbance should be minimal and recover naturally within 2-3 growing seasons.

Alternative B- No Impact

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

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 Database shows one sensitive species.

Greater Sage-Grouse - Centrocercus urophasianus
Pinyon Jay - Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus
Snapping Turtle - Chelydra serpentina
Black-tailed Prairie Dog - Cynomys ludovicianus

While these species may be present in the general project area, no significant impacts are expected due the short time frame for construction of the project.

The project is located within Greater Sage Grouse General Habitat. This project would be in compliance with EO-012-15. The NRCS is in the process of submittng this project to the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program. And will implement the project based on the recommendations received back from the program.

Alternative B- No Impact

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

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

Alternative A- A Class III inventory was conducted of the entire area of potential effect (APE) and adjoining areas in 2008. Several cultural resources were documented but none in this project's APE. No additional archaeological investigative work will be conducted. 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 B- No Impact

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

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

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

- *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- There may be potential safety risks for laborers, but the potential risk is minimal with proper safety efforts.

Alternative B- No Impact

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:
Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

Alternative A- No Significant Impact

Alternative B- No Impact

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

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 require the issuance of a land use license for the pipeline placement. The Land Use License fee would be set at $225.00 for a term of 10 years.

Alternative B- No Impact

EA Checklist Prepared By:	**Name:** Scott Aye	**Date:**	6-10-2025
	Title: Eastern Land Office; Land Program Manager		

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Alternative A

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

The granting of the requested stock water pipeline land use license 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 with a land use license fee and ensures the long-term productivity of the land. An environmental assessment checklist is the appropriate level of analysis for the proposed action

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

[ ]	EIS	[ ]	More Detailed EA	[X]	No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	**Name:** Chris Pileski		
	Title: ELO Area Manager		
Signature: /s/ Chris Pileski		**Date**:	6-12-2025