

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Fred's Road Culvert Replacement for ROW 939
Proposed Implementation Date:	August 2026
Proponent:	Michael Bergeron, Daniels County Road Supervisor
Location:	T36 N R47E Section 13 (SE4 NE4)
County:	Daniels
Trust:	Common Schools

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Proponent Michael Bergeron, Daniels County Road Supervisor, is seeking approval to **remove damaged concrete crossing, replace with pit-run gravel, and install new culverts to restore proper draining and improve reliability of existing county road crossing.** The existing concrete slab crossing has deteriorated, and the culverts embedded within the structure are damaged and no longer adequately convey water flow.

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 Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)
Northeastern Land Office (NELO) & Glasgow Unit Office
Proponent: Michael Bergeron, Daniels County Road Supervisor
Surface Lessees: CBD Ranch, PO Box 274 Scobey, MT 59263
Other:

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

Montana DNRC-Real Estate Management Bureau, and the Glasgow Unit, Northeastern Land Office have jurisdiction over this proposed project.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A (No Action) – Under this alternative, the Department does not grant this request.

Alternative B (the Proposed Action) – Under this alternative, the Department does grant this request for the removal of damaged concrete and culverts and replacement with pit run gravel and new culverts to restore proper drainage and improve reliability of the crossing on Fred's Road for the Middle Fork of the Poplar River.

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.

Lallie Silty Clay comprises about 30% of the project area. Typic Ustifluvents comprise an additional 10%. The remainder is Ustifluvents. These soils are associated with the Middle Fork of the Poplar river. The proposed project has obtained a 310-1 permit from the local conservation district. These soils were disturbed to create the infrastructure that is being replaced and will be disturbed again with this course of action. No long-term changes to the Middle Fork of the Poplar River are anticipated from replacement of this structure.

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.

Surface Water: The Middle Fork of the Poplar River likely will experience and increase in turbidity during the removal and subsequent placing of additional pit run material and installation of the new culverts. Turbidity is expected to diminish rapidly following the completion of these activities.

Ground Water: A search of the Montana Ground Water Information Center's website two water wells in the area that are more than ¼ mile to the south and southwest. There are three wells that are more than ¼ mile northeast of the project site.

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.

Emission sources in the project area primarily include vehicles traveling on adjacent county roads and agricultural producers. Fugitive dust from vehicle travel on other adjacent gravel roads contributes to small amounts of airborne particulate matter in the area.

Decreased air quality in the area may occur during the project but will have no cumulative effects on air quality. Revegetation of the disturbed area will negate the air quality effects in the longer term.

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.

According to the Montana Natural Heritage Program the potential area of effect is covered by the Great Plains Dry Mixed Grass Prairie and Great Plains Mesic Mixed Grass Prairie and the Great Plains Wet Meadow , Marsh, and Shrub Swamp.

An inventory of the Montana Natural Heritage Program's Species of Concern database was conducted for the project area. The search yielded *Centunculus minimus* (Chaffweed) as a species of concern with 50% optimal and 50% low occurrence in the predicted model. Due to the relatively small area of disturbance, no long-term adverse effects to vegetative cover are anticipated for this project.

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.

Disturbances to the terrestrial, avian, and aquatic life and habitats will be temporary in nature and will primarily occur during this project. No long-term negative effects are anticipated as a result of this action.

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.

No significant impacts to unique, endangered, fragile or limited environmental resources are anticipated, though temporary displacement of local wildlife may occur during the project.

Montana NHP Species of Concern in the project area include the American Bittern, Bobolink, and the Northern Leopard Frog.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

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

There are no recorded cultural observations on this tract and the activity of replacing an existing culvert in a previously disturbed site should not do additional historical, cultural, or paleontological resource harm.

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.

No significant impacts on the aesthetics of the area 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.

No limited environmental resources will be significantly impacted because of this project. This project will also not add any significant cumulative demands to environmental resources.

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 tracts listed in this EA Checklist.

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.

There will be an increase in equipment usage along "Fred's Road" during this repair period. There is minimal potential for individual harm to occur.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

Repair of his crossing is anticipated to restore proper drainage and improve reliability for the usage of this road which may result in increased local usage.

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 project will not create or eliminate any jobs, so no significant effects to the employment market are 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.

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 not be any significant increases in traffic, school attendance, or need for fire and police protection if this project is approved.

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.

There are no zoning or other agency management plans affecting this project.

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.

There will be no significant direct or cumulative effects on access to or quality of recreation and wilderness activities because of this project.

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 proposed project does not include any changes to housing or developments.

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

There is no native, unique or traditional lifestyles or communities in the vicinity that would be significantly impacted by the proposal.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:*How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?*

The proposed project will have no significant impact on any culturally unique qualities 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.*

The proposed project will not have any significant cumulative economic or social effect.

V. FINDING**25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:**

Alternative B (the Proposed Action) – Alternative B (the Proposed Action) – Under this alternative, the Department does grant this request remove the damaged concrete crossing, replace with pit-run gravel, and install new culverts to restore proper draining and improve reliability of existing crossing. The existing concrete slab crossing has deteriorated, and the culverts embedded within the structure are damaged and no longer adequately convey water flow across the Middle Fork of the Poplar River.

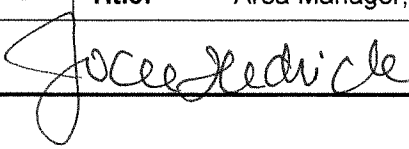
26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

I have evaluated the potential environment effects and have determined no significant impact to the environment because of this project.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

☐ EIS ☐ More Detailed EA ☒ No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Don Pyrah
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Signature:	
Date: August 27, 2026	

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Jocee Hedrick
	Title: Area Manager, Northeastern Land Office
Signature: 	
Date: 08/28/2026	

