

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Land Use License Cleveland – Spring development and water Pipeline.
Proposed: 9/15/2025
Implementation Date: Winter/Fall 2025
Proponent: Grover Cleaveland
Location: T17N, R3W, Section 36
County: Cascade

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The proponent has a water right with a point of diversion (POD) located on state land for a domestic water supply and is proposing to improve the current infrastructure at the point of diversion by building and installing an updated spring box with an underground water line to gravity feed water 100 feet across state property to the proponent's deeded property.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:

Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project. List number of individuals contacted, number of responses received, and newspapers in which notices were placed and for how long. Briefly summarize issues received from the public.

The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)
DNRC Archeologist Patrick Rennie
Central Land Office (CLO) & Helena Unit Office
State Land Surface Lessee

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

Examples: cost-share agreement with U.S. Forest Service, 124 Permit, 3A Authorization, Air Quality Major Open Burning Permit.

This project is associated with Water Right 41U 101619-00.

3. ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT:

Describe alternatives considered and, if applicable, provide brief description of how the alternatives were developed. List alternatives that were considered but eliminated from further analysis and why.

Alternative A: No Action. The proposed project would not be approved.

Alternative B: Action Alternative. Allow the proponent to build and install an updated spring box and underground water line.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to soils.

No fragile, compactable, or unstable soils are present. Construction of the project would entail developing a concrete spring box at the point of diversion, located along a rock feature to collect water. Additionally, 100 feet

of plastic pipe would be buried between the spring box and the property boundary. After construction the spring box will be buried, and both the spring box and buried line location will be rehabbed and grass seeded.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to water resources.

This project is associated with water right 41U 101619-00, for a domestic water supply. The diversion means is a developed spring. This water right was issued in 1997 and has been in utilized since issued. This project involves improving infrastructure at the POD (developed spring) to create a more reliable water source at the point of use. No new impacts to water quality, quantity and distribution are anticipated.

6. AIR QUALITY:

What pollutants or particulate would be produced (i.e. particulate matter from road use or harvesting, slash pile burning, prescribed burning, etc)? Identify the Airshed and Impact Zone (if any) according to the Montana/Idaho Airshed Group. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to air quality.

No significant impacts 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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to vegetation.

Cover, quantity, and quality of vegetative communities would not be significantly affected by this project due to the low amount of disturbance and use of low impact equipment. The proposed spring box would disturb a footprint approximately 15 X 15 feet and be covered when complete. The buried pipeline would include approximately 100 feet of state ground. The pipeline and spring box would affect native rangeland and would be reseeded with a seed mix approved by DNRC.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:

Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

The project would be of short duration for construction and rehabbed when complete. Any disturbance would be short term and will not have any negative impacts on terrestrial, avian and aquatic life and habitats.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

The duration of the project will be short, and the area will be rehabilitated once complete. Disturbance to the area will be limited to the project construction. There are no anticipated effects to Unique, endangered, fragile or limited environmental resource.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

Identify and determine direct, indirect, and cumulative 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 no cultural or paleontological resources have 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.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to aesthetics.

The project location is not legally accessible and only visible from the property which holds the point of use. The spring box and pipeline will be buried after construction. No impacts to Aesthetics in the area are anticipated.

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:

Determine the number of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to environmental resources.

There are no other activities in the area. The water right was issued in 1997 and has been in use since then. The spring box and pipeline are an improvement to the POD. Impacts to environmental resources are anticipated to be of short duration during the construction phase of this project. No long term or cumulative effect are anticipated to environmental resources of land, water, air or energy.

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 environmental documents pertinent to the area. The state section is leased, and future improvements would be analyzed if requested by the lessee.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION
• <i>RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.</i> • <i>Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.</i> • <i>Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.</i>

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

Normal risks to human health and safety associated with the handling of construction equipment and materials will be present during project construction. Impacts would be limited to those implementing the project. These impacts can be mitigated through property procedures and the use of personal protective equipment. No other impacts or risks are anticipated to human health and safety.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

The water right is for a domestic water supply. The construction phase of the project will require some of the state lessees' fence to be temporarily removed. The fence will be replaced once the project is complete. This interruption will not impact the lessee's operation. No impacts are anticipated to industrial, commercial and agriculture activities and production.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:

Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to the employment market.

The project is being implemented by the landowner. This project will not create jobs or provide work for any local contractors. No impacts are anticipated to the quantity and distribution of employment.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:

Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

No significant impacts to local and state tax base and tax revenues are 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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services

No significant impacts to demand for government services are 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.

The state currently leases this section for grazing. The small footprint and location of this project will not impact the state lessee's operation. The boundary fence owned by the lessee will be down during project implementation to install the pipeline. The fence will be re-installed after the project is complete. The water has been in use since the water right was issued and has not caused any conflict with the state lessee. No other state projects are currently planned for this section.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

This section is not legally accessible to the public. Recreation is limited to neighboring landowners. The spring box and pipeline will be buried once the project is complete. This project is not anticipated to impact recreational activities on this section.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:

Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to population and housing.

The private property at the point of use has already been developed with housing present on site. The spring is only certified to supply a single point of use. No other properties will be affected. No impacts are anticipated to density and distribution of population and housing.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

No significant impacts to social structures and mores are anticipated.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

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

No significant impacts to social structures and mores are 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 direct, indirect, and cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.

The project is located on the common school's trust and will generate \$200 annually for 10 years. The License may be renewed after 10 years, and a new valuation will be determined at that time.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Adam Blythe	Date: 11/08/2025
	Title: Unit Manager	

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Two Alternatives presented and fully analyzed in the EAC.

Alternative A: No action alternative. The proposed project would not be approved.

Alternative B: Action Alternative: Recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of replacement of existing natural gas distribution infrastructure to include the installation, utilization, and maintenance of a buried natural gas line.

On behalf of the DNRC I have selected Alternative B: Action Alternative.

- The Action Alternative will have low impacts and is improving an existing spring development.
- The lands involved in the project are held by the State of Montana in trust for the support of specific beneficiary institutions. This project is consistent with MCA 77-1-601 and MCA 77-1-202.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

After Reviewing the two Alternatives, I find that the Action Alternative will have no significant adverse impacts on the Physical Environment or the Human Population.

Direct impacts have short duration. These impacts have been analyzed, and mitigations have been developed to reduce or prevent undesirable effects or impacts.

No secondary or cumulative impacts have been identified

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:☐

EIS

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More Detailed EA

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No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Hoyt Richards
	Title: Clo Area Manager
Signature: Hoyt Richards	
Date: 11/14/25	