

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Malmstrom AFB Sewer Facility Expansion Utility Easement
Proposed Implementation Date:	2025-2026
Proponent:	United States of America, USAF, Malmstrom AFB
Location:	T18N R4W Sec. 10
County:	Lewis and Clark
Trust:	Common Schools

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The proponent has submitted an easement application to authorize the expansion and upgrading of the current 60-year-old sewer infrastructure servicing a Missile Alert Facility to include the construction, operation, and maintenance of the updated expanded infrastructure. The proposed easement would encumber an addition 2.81 acres to 4.84 acres already encumbered by the missile facility, access road, helipad, etc. Additionally, this action would block up existing encumbered lands and improve connectivity to the already existing infrastructure. See the attached exhibits for the proposed easement route and location.

Exhibits:

- Exhibit A: Vicinity Map
- Project Map/Arial Photo
- Exhibit B: Survey Exhibit

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

- Grazing Lessee, Barrett Land and Livestock Co-Notice of Settlement of Damages sent by the proponent, signed April 25th, 2025.
- Department of Natural Resources and Conservation Archaeologist, Patrick Rennie (December 9, 2025)

Public outreach was limited to the list above due to the limited project impacts in general, thus, resulting in the supposition little or no opposition would result from the project and the evident need for the replacement of important national defense infrastructure.

No comments in opposition were received by DNRC.

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

The proposed easement would involve Montana State Trust Land allocated to the Common Schools Trust. Approval of the project is contingent on the proponent obtaining all necessary and lawful permits, licenses, and authorizations from the appropriate entities.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

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 expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities.

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.

The following information was derived from Web Soil Survey for this project area. The proposed easement would be mainly located on Reeder-Regent Cabba loams—"very limited" (2 to 8 percent slopes & 8 to 25 percent slopes). This installation will occur adjacent to existing lagoon facilities with engineering and permitting required; no detrimental, severe or cumulative impacts are anticipated. The proponent is responsible to adhere to any regulatory requirements and mitigations.

Alternative A (No Action): No work would occur. No direct impacts to geology and soils would occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Action Alternative: Recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities. Minimal or no impacts are anticipated.

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 are present that could be impacted by the project. No cumulative impacts to water quality, quantity and distribution are anticipated.

Alternative A (No Action): No work would occur. No direct impacts to water quality, quantity and distribution would occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities. Minimal or no impacts are 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.

Machinery and vehicles operating in the proposed easement area during installation will cause temporary impacts due to the resulting dust and exhaust, but no long-term effects to air quality are expected.

Alternative A (No Action): No work would occur. No direct impacts to air quality would occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities. Minimal or no impacts 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 cumulative effects to vegetation.

Cover, quantity, and quality of vegetative communities will be minimally impacted by this easement due to the relatively small area disturbed for the expansion and upgrading of sewer facilities. Additionally, the project area is adjacent to existing military facilities and are not considered critical or unique in regard to existing vegetation. Short-term impacts to vegetation cover, quantity and quality are expected in this easement corridor during construction. The disturbed area will be reclaimed and reseeded as necessary.

Alternative A (No Action): No work would occur. No direct impacts to vegetation cover, quantity, and quality would occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities. Minimal or no impacts are anticipated.

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.

No cumulative effect to terrestrial, avian, or aquatic life are anticipated from this proposed easement. The project area is small, and the construction phase would be short duration. Additionally, new infrastructure will be constructed, operated and maintained adjacent to a publicly used highway and existing military facilities.

Alternative A (No Action): No work would occur. No direct impacts to terrestrial, avian, and aquatic life and habitats would occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities. Minimal or no impacts are 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.

The proposed project to expand existing sewer infrastructure servicing the present military facility will not impact unique, endangered, threatened or fragile animal or vegetative species. Construction is anticipated to persist for a short duration. The area is rural with extensive military and adjacent public use with very limited or unlikely occurrences as the area is not considered critical, suitable habitat as the project site is directly adjacent to existing military facilities and a public highway.

Alternative A (No Action): No work would occur. No direct impacts to unique, endangered, fragile, or limited

environmental resources would occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities. Minimal or no impacts are anticipated.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

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

A Class III cultural and paleontological resources inventory was conducted of the area of potential effect on state land in 2019. Despite a detailed examination, no cultural or fossil resources were identified, and no additional archaeological or paleontological investigative work is recommended. The proposed project will have *No Effect* to *Antiquities* as defined under the Montana State Antiquities Act. A formal report of findings has been prepared and is on file with the DNRC and the Montana State Historic Preservation Officer.

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 (P. Rennie December 9, 2025).

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 proposed easement is in a rural area of Lewis and Clark County approximately 15 miles southwest of Simms, MT. The proposed upgrade of sewer facilities would slightly increase the footprint of an existing military facility. The construction phase will be short-term resulting in minor impacts to aesthetics.

Alternative A (No Action): No work would occur. No direct impacts to aesthetics would occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities. Minimal or no impacts 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 demands for additional environmental resources are required for this project.

No cumulative effects to environmental resources will result from this proposed easement.

Alternative A (No Action): No work would occur. No direct impacts to demands on environmental resources of land, water, air or energy would occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities. Minimal or no impacts are 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.

No other studies, plans, or projects were identified during the scoping for this proposed easement.

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.

No health or safety risks are anticipated by the proposed easement. Expected utility, work-related risk associated with the proposed easement would occur during the construction phase. Locating any other underground utilities would be the responsibility of the contractor to avoid these utilities during construction.

Alternative A (No Action): No work would occur. No direct impacts to human health and safety would occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities. Potential impacts to human health and safety are not expected to occur.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

As proposed, this easement is designed to expand and update sewer infrastructure for the military facility that already exists. The project area is small, and its encumbrance will have minor impacts to grazing on the state parcel.

Alternative A (No Action): No work would occur. No direct impacts to industrial, commercial and agriculture activities and production would occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities. Minimal impacts to industrial, commercial and agriculture activities and production are 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.

Quantity and distribution of employment is not expected to change as a result of this proposed project.

Alternative A (No Action): No work would occur. No direct impacts to quantity and distribution of employment would occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities. No impacts to quantity and distribution of

employment 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.

No significant increase in tax revenues is anticipated as a result of this proposed easement.

Alternative A (No Action): No work would occur. No direct impacts to local and state tax base and tax revenues would occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities. Minimal impacts to local and state tax base and tax revenues are expected to occur.

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.

No increased demand for government services is expected as a result of this proposed easement.

Alternative A (No Action): No work would occur. No direct impacts to demand for government services would occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities. No impacts to demand for government services are expected to occur.

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.

No known locally adopted environmental plans will be impacted by this proposed easement.

Alternative A (No Action): No work would occur. No direct impacts to locally adopted environmental plans and goals would occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities. No impacts to locally adopted environmental plans and goals are 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.

Recreational activity by the public occurs on this parcel and adjacent state trust lands. Hunting for deer, upland birds, and predators is the primary recreational activity in the area. Firearm discharge is prohibited within .25 miles of an inhabited structure. Since the project area is within this threshold directly adjacent to an

already existing military facility, no impacts are anticipated.

Alternative A (No Action): No work would occur. No direct impacts to access to and quality of recreational and wilderness activities would occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities. Temporary, minimal impacts to access, quality of recreational and wilderness activities may occur, but they are unlikely. Game animals may temporarily avoid the area during construction.

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.

Expanded and upgraded sewer infrastructure provided by the activity will be installed. No impacts to density and distribution of population and housing are anticipated.

Alternative A (No Action): No work would occur. No direct impacts to density and distribution of population and housing would occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities. No impacts to density and distribution of population and housing are anticipated.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

No change in social structures and mores is expected as a result of this proposed easement.

Alternative A (No Action): No work would occur. No direct impacts to social structures and mores would occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities. No impacts to social structures and mores are anticipated.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

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

The proposed easement has no anticipated impacts to the unique quality of the area.

Alternative A (No Action): No work would occur. No direct impacts to cultural uniqueness and diversity would occur.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities. No impacts to cultural uniqueness and diversity are anticipated to occur.

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 easement on this State Trust Land would generate **\$3,091** in revenue for the Common Schools Trust.

2.81 acres (Easement area) x \$1,100/acre = \$3,091 (18N 4W 10, Common Schools)

This proposed easement would enable the proponent to expand and upgrade sewer facilities to a military missile alert facility.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Andy Burgoyne	Date: 12/9/2025
	Title: Trust Land Program Manager- Central Land Office	

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 expanding and upgrading sewer infrastructure to include the installation, operation, and maintenance of the new facilities.

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

- The Action Alternative will benefit critical military and national defense operations.
- The lands, involved in the project, are held by the State of Montana in trust for the support of the specific beneficiary institution, Common Schools. 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:

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More Detailed EA

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No Further Analysis

**EA Checklist
Approved By:**

Name: *Adam Blythe*
Title: Unit Manager

Signature:



Date:

12/12/25

Exhibit A: Vicinity Map

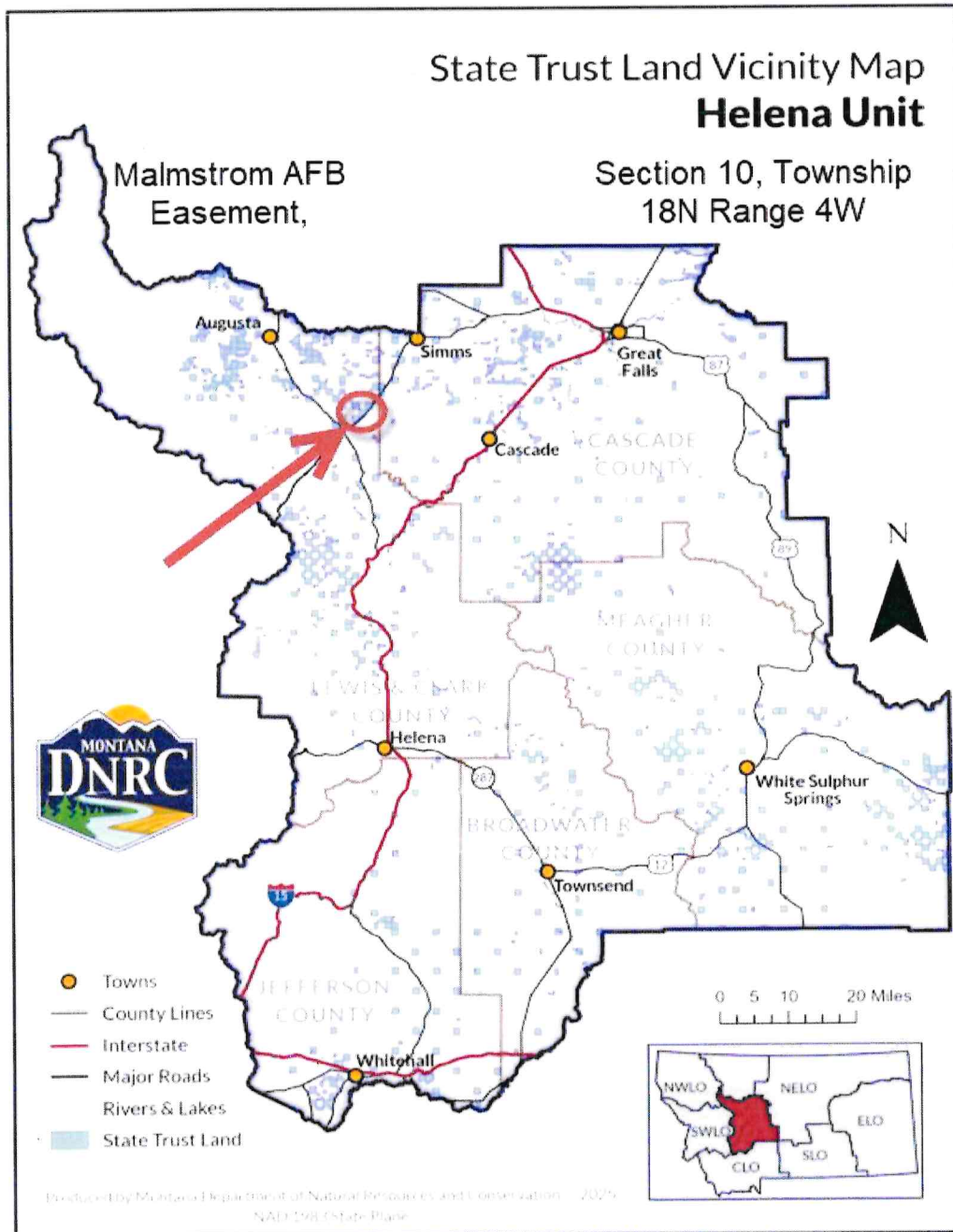


Exhibit B: Project Map/Arial Photo

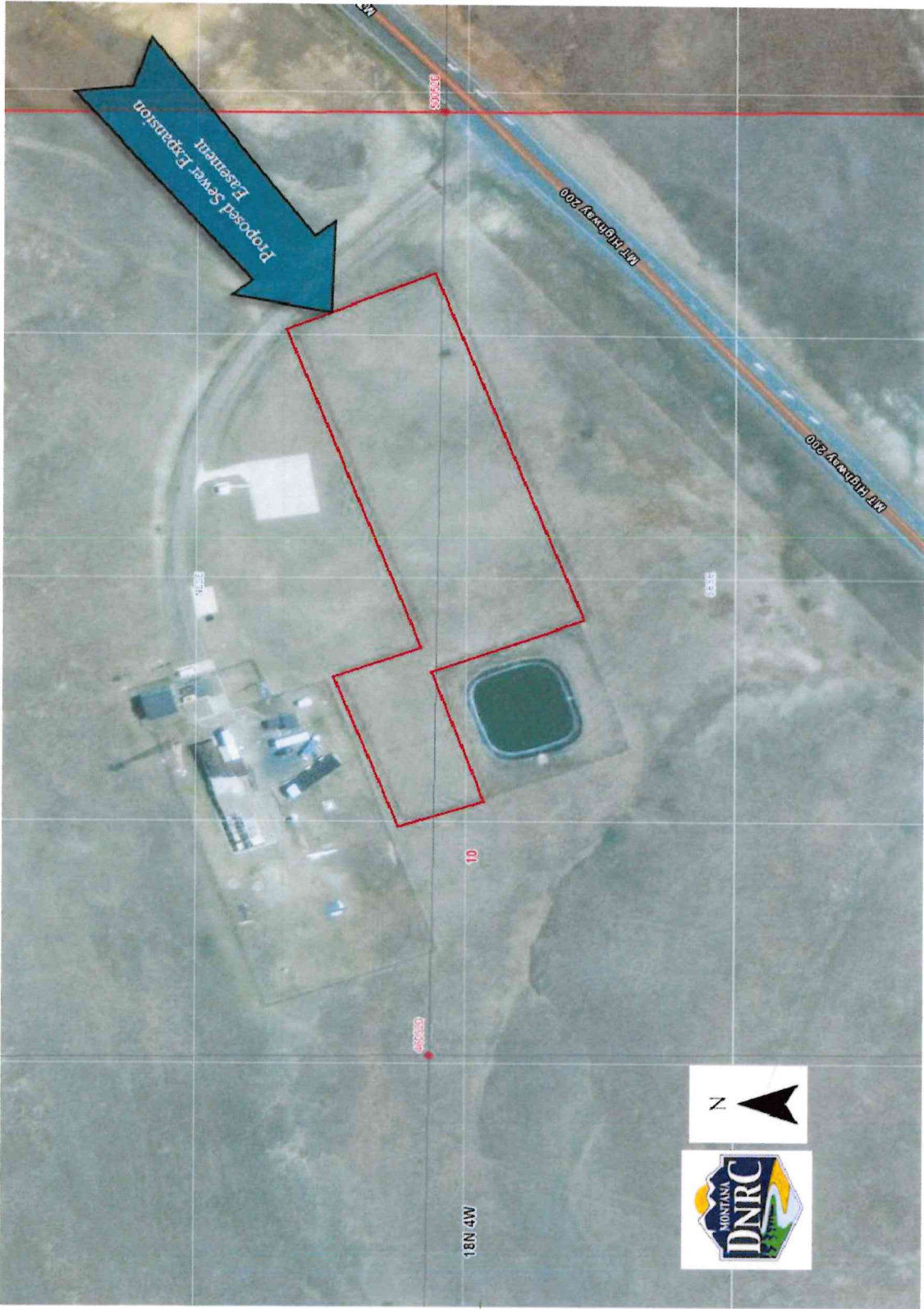


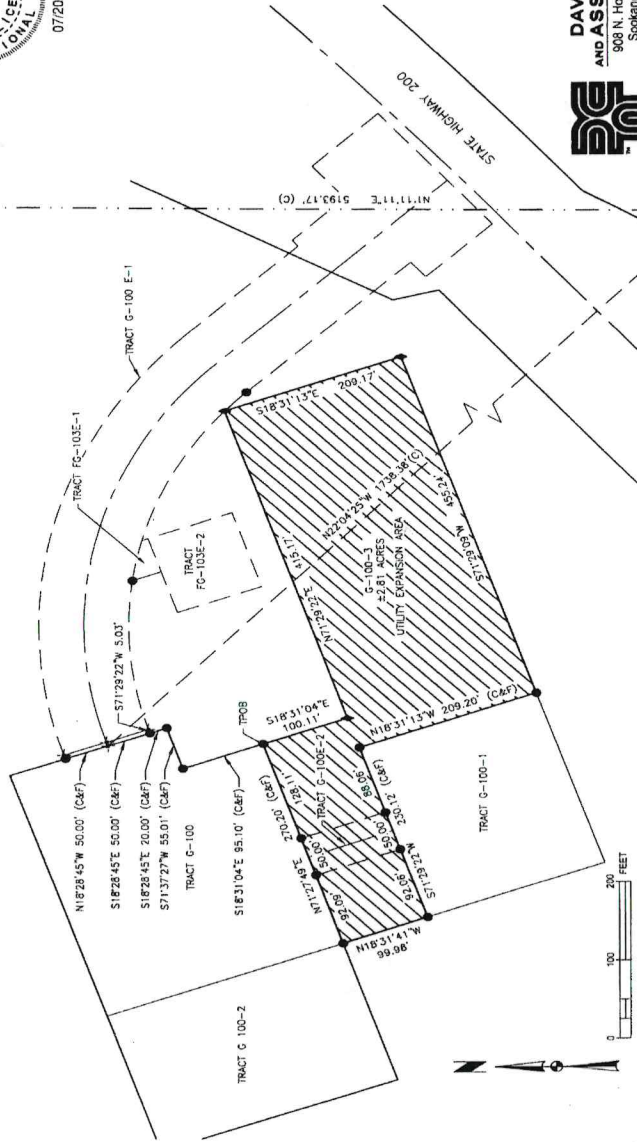
Exhibit C: Survey Exhibit

EXHIBIT MALMSTROM AFB G-01, SE1/4 OF SECTION 10, T18N, R4W, P.M.M., LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY, MONTANA



07/20/2023

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