CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Somont Oil Company, Inc. Utility Easement (above ground natural gas pipeline)
Proposed Implementation Date:	Winter / Spring 2026
Proponent:	Somont Oil Company, Inc., 16126 Chasemore Drive, Spring, TX 77379
Location:	E½NE¼, Section 30, T35N, R2W
County:	Toole
Trust:	Capitol Buildings

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Somont Oil Company, Inc. proposes, under an easement application, to install an above ground natural gas pipeline located on state land, referred to herein as the "Project". The gas pipeline will transport gas across state land to service an oil well located on private land. The Project will be 1545.56 feet in length and .71 acres. See **Attachment A**. Project Location Map.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

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

DNRC – Landowner

DNRC Grazing Lessee – Lease # 6826 – Wayne Gillespie

The lessee is refusing to sign the surface damages settlement form due to ongoing legal issues with the proponent – Somont Oil Company.

Somont Oil Company – Easement applicant

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. The Project will be permitted under a Right of Way Easement in State Lands.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A (No Action) – Deny Somont Oil Company permission to install the above ground natural gas pipeline for domestic purposes.

Alternative B (the Proposed action) – Grant Somont Oil Company permission to install the above ground natural gas pipeline for domestic purposes.

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.

Soils at the proposed project sites are clayey and dense clays. The topography is flat. Soils and slopes are suitable for the installation of an above ground natural gas pipeline. Equipment will cause a one-time, localized area of soil compaction and will only temporary disturb the soils where the line is laid. No digging or other soil disturbances will occur. Cumulative impacts on soil resources are not expected.

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.

Water rights, water quality and water quantity will not be impacted by the proposed project.

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 action will not impact air quality.

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.

Vegetation in the project area consists of native rangeland with the dominate species including: western wheatgrass, sandburg blue grass, Canada bluegrass, and prairie june grass. Vegetation will be minimally impacted from the installation of the above ground natural gas pipeline. Noxious and annual weeds within the proposed construction areas are a concern, but this concern will be mitigated by the applicants required weed control after installation. Cumulative impacts on the vegetative resources are not expected because the line will be installed above ground and no ground disturbing actives will occur.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted for the project area and no species of concern were reported.

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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 area is not considered critical wildlife habitat. However, this tract provides habitat for a variety of big game species (mule deer, whitetail deer, pronghorn antelope), predators (coyote, fox, badger), upland game birds (sharp tail grouse, Hungarian partridge), other non-game mammals, raptors, and various songbirds. 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. Wildlife usage is expected to return to “normal” (pre-action usage) following the installation. The proposed action will not have long-term negative effects on existing wildlife species and/or wildlife habitat.

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.

There are no threatened or endangered species, sensitive habitat types, or other species of special concern associated with the proposed project area. At this time, no known unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources have been identified within the proposed project area.

No species of concern will be impacted within the Project.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

Identify and determine 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) for the proposed SOMONT Oil Company's above ground pipeline project. 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 tangible cultural or paleontological resources have been identified in the APE. However, the APE is within the boundaries of the Kevin Ceremonial Landscape Archaeological District (24TL1295). Because no ground disturbance is expected with the proposed project, and because no tangible cultural resource is within or near the 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.

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.

Installation of the pipeline will not drastically affect the aesthetics of the land. The pipeline is expected to blend into the landscape and is a common use of area property.

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 on environmental resources.

The Project will not affect the demand on environmental resources such as land, water, air, or energy. The Project will not consume environmental resources that are limited in the area. There are no other projects in the area that will affect the proposed Project. Negative cumulative effects on environmental resources are not expected.

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.

Surrounding land is owned by the state with a surface use of grazing under State Lease # 6531. Any future development in the area will likely be restricted to utility or mineral development, with minimal impacts on the surface. Future development of projects is not expected to have negative cumulative effects.

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.

The proposed project will not change human safety in the area.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:
Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

Land Use:
The current land use on which the gas pipeline will be installed on state lease # 6826 consists of native grazing land.

Production:
The Project will benefit the Capitol Buildings Trust in terms of a one-time easement fee. The Project will not impede the existing production or use of State Lease # 6826.

Commercial:
The Project is expected to increase oil and gas production on private land.

The proposed project is not expected to have negative cumulative effects on future land use activities.

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 would not result in any new jobs nor eliminate any, therefore negative cumulative effects on the employment market are not expected.

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.

The Project is expected to slightly increase the overall tax revenues, although the scale of the project is so small that cumulative impacts will be very minor.

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

This proposed project area is adjacent to a public county road. The tract is legally accessible, and the proposed action is not expected to impact general recreational and wilderness activities on this state tract.

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 proposal follows State and County laws and will be permitted under the DNRC easement process (pending land board approval). No other management plans are in effect for the area.

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.

The Project is legally accessible to the public from a county road and therefore does offer recreation potential. The Project will not result in any new permanent impacts on the surface of the land, impact access, or recreational opportunities. The Project is not expected to have negative cumulative effects on recreational and wilderness activities.

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 Project will not require additional housing and is not expected to have negative cumulative effects on population and housing.

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

The proposed pipeline is located approximately 2.5 miles NE of Kevin Montana. No archeological sites were identified within the Project footprint. The Project is consistent with the surrounding land use, therefore, negative cumulative effects on native or traditional lifestyles or communities are not expected.

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

The Project will not result in any new activities to occur in the area and therefore it is not expected to have negative cumulative effects on the unique quality 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 Project will benefit the Capitol Buildings Trust in terms of a one-time easement fee estimated to be $500.00 per acre on .71 acres = $355.00

The Project will not impede the use or production of State Lease #6826.

Any future development in the area will likely be restricted to utility or mineral development, with minimal impacts on the surface. Future development of projects is not expected to have negative cumulative effects.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	**Name:**	Erik Eneboe	**Date:**	2/17/2026
	Title:	Conrad Unit Manager, CLO, DNRC		

V. FINDINGS

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

On behalf of the DNRC, I have selected the Action Alternative B to recommend approval of the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the proponent for the purpose of installing an above round gas pipeline to transport gas across 1545.56 feet of DNRC State of Montana Trust Land to service a new well located on private land.

- The Action Alternative will benefit the oil production in the area.
- 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.

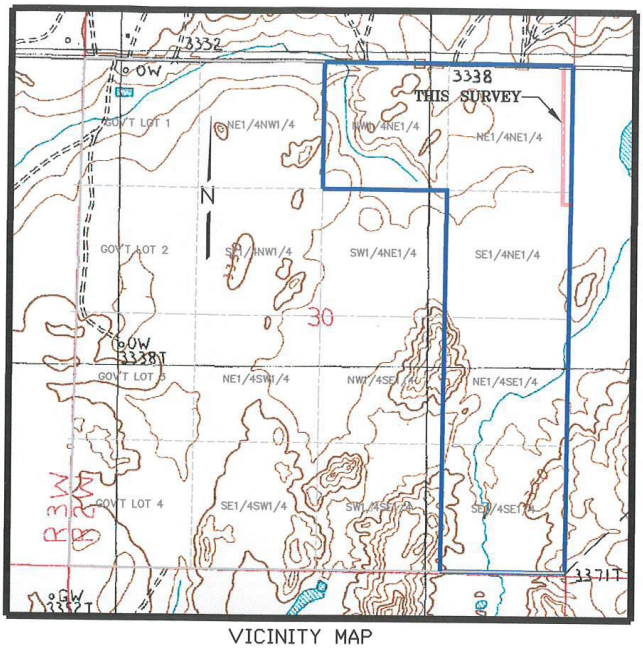
No secondary or cumulative impacts have been identified

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

	EIS		More Detailed EA	X	No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	**Name:**	Andy Burgoyne
	Title:	Forest and Lands Program Manager, CLO, DNRC
Signature: 		**Date**: 2/27/26

Attachment A
Project Location Map



VICINITY MAP

SOMONT OIL COMPANY, INC. 92 OILMONT HIGHWAY OILMONT, MONTANA 59466	JOB NO 25-035 SCALE 1"=500'
Above ~~UNDERGROUND~~ NATURAL GAS PIPELINE CROSSING STATE OF MONTANA LANDS IN TOOLE COUNTY, MONTANA E1/2NE1/4 SECTION 30, T35N, R2W, P.M.M.	OCTOBER 2025 JMC
CICON AND ASSOCIATES BOX 541 CHESTER, MONTANA 59522 406-759-5826	DRAWING NO. 25035SOMONTREV1 SHEET 1 OF 1