

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Garnet Range Road "Hwy 200" Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Easement
Proposed Implementation Date:	2025
Proponent:	DNRC & BLM
Location:	Section 14, Township 13 North – Range 15 West
County:	Missoula

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) proposes an easement grant to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to provide public access parking on the existing Garnet Range Road "Hwy 200" parking lot. It would encumber 2.15 acres (see Easement Exhibit A on page 6) and include placement of a snow groomer storage shed.

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.

No formal scoping was initiated.

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.

N/A.

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.

No Action Alternative

The proposed easement would be denied and would not occur.

Action Alternative

The proposed easement would be approved and would occur.

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.

The project area consists of an existing, native surface parking lot with spot gravelling on DNRC land.

No Action Alternative:

The effects of No-Action would be the same as those described under the existing conditions and are not expected to cause direct, indirect and cumulative impacts to soils.

Action Alternative:

The proposed easement would be granted and is not expected to cause direct, indirect and cumulative impacts to soils.

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.

No Action Alternative:

The effects of No-Action would be the same as those described under the existing conditions and are not expected to cause direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to water quality, quantity, and distribution.

Action Alternative:

The proposed easement would be granted and is not expected to cause direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to water quality, quantity, and distribution.

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 impacts to air quality would be anticipated with either alternative.

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.

No Action Alternative:

The effects of No-Action would be the same as those described under the existing conditions and are not expected to cause direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to vegetation.

Action Alternative:

The proposed easement would be granted and is not expected to cause direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to vegetation.

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.

No Action Alternative:

The effects of No-Action would be the same as those described under the existing conditions and are not expected to cause direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to terrestrial, avian, and aquatic life and habitats.

Action Alternative:

The proposed easement would be granted and is not expected to cause direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to 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.

Fisheries: No federally listed threatened and endangered fish species or critical habitat for threatened and endangered fish species as designated by the USFWS would be affected by this project.

Terrestrial Wildlife: Potential habitats for grizzly bears, gray wolves, and pileated woodpeckers exist in the project area.

No Action Alternative:

The effects of No-Action would be the same as those described under the existing conditions and are not expected to cause direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources.

Action Alternative:

The proposed easement grant is on an existing parking lot with year-round use. As such, this action is not expected to cause direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

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

No historical or archaeological sites are known to exist within the existing parking lot associated with the easement request.

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.

No impacts are likely to occur under either alternative.

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 direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to environmental resources.

No impacts are likely to occur under either alternative.

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.

Categorical Exclusion Hwy 200 Exclusive Parking Lot Easement, DOI-BLM-MT-B010- 2025-0006-CX, submitted for Public Review and Comment Period on 5/28/2025.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <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.

No change from existing conditions is anticipated.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

No change from existing conditions is anticipated.

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.

No change from existing conditions is anticipated.

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 change from existing conditions is 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 change from existing conditions is 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.

None.

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.

No Action Alternative:

The effects of No-Action would be the same as those described under the existing conditions and are not expected to cause direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to access to and quality of recreational and wilderness activities.

Action Alternative:

The proposed easement is expected to promote more consistent management of the parking lot. This is expected to cause minor, beneficial direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to access and quality of recreational and wilderness activities.

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.

No change from existing conditions is anticipated.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

No change from existing conditions is anticipated.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

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

No change from existing conditions is 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.

No change from existing conditions is anticipated.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Kristen Baker-Dickinson	Date: 06/04/2025
	Title: Clearwater Unit Manager	

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Following a review of the document as well as the corresponding Department policies and rules, the Action Alternative has been selected because it meets the intent of the project objectives outlined in Section I – Type and Purpose of Action.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

I find that the Action Alternative will not have significant impacts for the following reasons:

The Action Alternative is in compliance with the existing laws, rules, policies, and standards applicable to this type of proposed action.

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: Sierra Farmer
	Title: Trustlands Program Manager
Signature:	
	Date: 06/05/2025

