

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	City of Belgrade Water-Sewer Utility ROW
Proposed Implementation Date:	Spring - Fall 2026
Proponent:	City of Belgrade
Location:	T1S R4E Sec. 11
County:	Gallatin
Trust:	Common Schools

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The City of Belgrade has submitted an easement application to provide water and sewer utilities to serve the proposed Belgrade Elementary School (granted under easement D-17697) located on State Trust Land in T1S R4E Section 11 pursuant to MCA 77-2-101 & 102.

Two distinct 30-foot-wide utility easements, and a short 30-foot-wide connection between an existing water and sewer easement (granted under easement D-17536) are proposed. Total acres to be encumbered are 1.56 acres. See the attached exhibits for the proposed easement route and location.

The proponent will be required to follow Montana Public Works Standard Specifications as well as any City of Belgrade modifications and/or additional modifications to said standards. Typical installation would consist of an excavator digging a trench, the lines and appurtenances installed based on the above-described specifications and standard details, the lines backfilled, and the surface 'reclaimed' by being either re-seeded or re-sodded.

Exhibits:

- Exhibit A: Vicinity Map
- Exhibit B: Topographical Location Map
- Exhibit C: (TD & H Engineering) Aerial Photo
- Exhibit D: Survey 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.

The DNRC did not perform any formal public scoping for this project as this is a local government project utilizing the City of Belgrade's process regarding appropriate public engagement.

Agencies, Groups or Individuals Scoped:	Relationship to the Tract/Project:
DNRC	Landowner
City of Belgrade	Proponent
TD & H Engineering	Proponent Contractor
Larry Dyk	Ag & Grazing License Lessee

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

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A (No Action alternative). Deny the proposal to issue a utility Right-of-Way easement to the City of Belgrade for the installation of a water and sewer pipelines, 30 feet wide and encumbering 1.56 acres. This utility would need an alternative route across state land to provide the services intended for the proposed Belgrade Elementary School (easement no. D-17697)

Alternative B (Proposed Action Alternative): Recommend approval to the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the City of Belgrade for the purpose of a utility Right-of-Way for the installation of a water and sewer pipelines, 30 feet wide and encumbering 1.56 acres.

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 Beavwan loam (0 to 2 percent slopes), Beaverell cobbly loam (0 to 2 percent slopes), and Beaverell-Beavwan complex (0 to 2 percent slopes). All three soils depth to a restrictive layer is more than 80 inches and they are classified as well-drained. All three soils were identified as "Somewhat Limited" for shallow excavations; "Somewhat Limited" indicates that the soil has features that are moderately favorable for the specified use. The limitations can be overcome or minimized by special planning, design, or installation. Fair performance and moderate maintenance can be expected. Reclamation, through either being re-seeded or re-sodded, and success of revegetation will be monitored by the DNRC.

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

Alternative B (Proposed Action): The proposed alternative would create short duration impacts to the geology and soil quality associated with excavation and installation activities of the pipelines. Minor impacts to geology and soil quality, stability and moisture are expected following installation. Reclamation requirements will be monitored.

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.

There are three irrigation ditches that predate State ownership that the proposed easements would cross in two separate locations. The ditches are identified as the Weaver Ditch, Story Creek Ditch, and Dutiel Branch Ditch and they provide services to pivots and hand-pipe sprinkler systems. Per the Natural Heritage Wetland and Riparian Mapping, the two ditches that run north to south are identified as a forested riparian area (Rp1FO). Coordination with the appropriate ditch owners will be scheduled during the dry season, and channel bottoms and banks will be restored in accordance with the requirements of the controlling entity.

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

Alternative B (Proposed Action): The proposed alternative would create short duration impacts to the three irrigation ditches. Minor impacts to the irrigation ditches are expected following installation. Reclamation requirements will be monitored in accordance with the requirements by the controlling entity.

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 parcel is located just south of I-90 and Amsterdam Road in Belgrade. Residential, commercial activities, interstate travel, and other uses are adjacent to this parcel. 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): Implementation of the project would create temporary impacts to the air quality associated with construction, excavation, and installation activities of the pipelines. As a result minor impacts to air quality are expected to occur.

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 buried water and sewer lines. The proposed easement is 30 feet wide and encumbering 1.56 acres. Short-term impacts on vegetation cover and agricultural lands are expected in this easement corridor during installation. The disturbed area will be reclaimed and reseeded where there is grass vegetation and re-sodded where there is agricultural crop production. The Montana Natural Heritage Map view classifies the grass vegetation as Rocky Mountain Lower Montane, Foothill, and Valley Grassland combined with Rocky Mountain Subalpine-Montane Mesic Meadow.

DNRC will require the applicant to reseed and maintain weed management. The applicant will need to use a pre-approved seed mix for State Trust Land and will be responsible for weed management on the easement corridors. DNRC will require the applicant to resod the disturbed agricultural land.

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

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Implementation of the project would create temporary short-term, localized impacts on vegetation cover. Minimal impacts to vegetation cover, quantity, and quality are expected to occur.

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 project area includes limited, variable quantities and qualities of terrestrial and avian habitat due to the proximity of roads, highways, subdivisions, and commercial businesses. The projects area's vegetation and

agricultural land provides habitat for fauna such as insects, small animals (which are prey for raptors, fox, and coyote) deer, geese, and field birds. The construction phase would be short duration, and the infrastructure will be underground.

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): Implementation of the project would create temporary short-term, localized impacts on terrestrial and avian habitat. Minimal impacts to terrestrial, avian, and aquatic life and habitats are expected to occur.

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 Montana Natural Resource Information Service (NRIS) was queried for information regarding sensitive or endangered species located near the proposed easement area. Species having habitat polygons occurring in the proposed project location include Grizzly Bear, Bald Eagle, Cassin's Finch, Evening Grosbeak, Great Blue Heron, Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bee, Alberta Snowfly, Annual Muhly, and Small Dropseed.

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): Due to the proximity of the City of Belgrade and the associated residential and commercial activities combined with the active agricultural operation of the tract, the parcel is not suited to be considered critical habitat. No direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts to unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources are expected to occur.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

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

The area of potential effect was fully inventoried in 2007 for an unrelated project. No cultural or palaeontologic resources were identified. A report of findings is on file with the Montana State Historic Preservation Officer and the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. No additional archaeological investigative work is recommended for this proposed project.

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 project area and the surrounding lands are relatively flat and are currently used for irrigated agriculture. There is a residential subdivision located to the east and south, commercial development to the west and I-90 to the north. The proposed water and sewer lines would be placed underground, and areas of disturbance would be reseeded or re-sodded. This project area on State Trust Land is a smaller segment of a larger project area. Other utilities are in the immediate vicinity of the proposed easement. The construction phase will be short-term, and the area will be revegetated resulting in temporary, minor impacts to aesthetics.

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

Alternative B (Proposed Action): The proposed project would cause minor, short-term impacts to aesthetics during project implementation. The project would result in heavy equipment and construction vehicles in the area. Construction staging areas containing pipeline construction materials will also be present. Project implementation would also cause a temporary increase in noise levels due to the number and type of equipment used. There

would be continuous noise during work hours. There are residences and/or commercial operations in the vicinity of the project area. The proposed action would add to the existing noise levels, but this short-term addition is not expected to cause a permanent, adverse impact.

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.

The area does not contain limited resources. Nearby activities consist mostly of residential, commercial, interstate travel, farming, and ranching operations. No demands for additional environmental resources are required for this project.

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): Implementing the proposed project is not expected to result in any significant impacts to demands on 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.

The proposed project will provide water and sewer utility services to the proposed Belgrade Elementary School (granted under easement no. D-17697). It will connect to an existing City of Belgrade water and sewer line (granted under easement no. D-17536). Additional projects occurring on the tract consist of the construction of the Central Valley Fire Department engine bay (granted under easement no. D-17698). There is also a lease granted to Exit 298 LLC (under OL-307-23000037) for future commercial development that could consist of homes, offices, parks, shops, restaurants, and other commercial development.

The DNRC is not aware of other projects or plans being considered in the project area regarding this Environmental Assessment Checklist. The permits required by other local, state and federal agencies or departments for the project must be obtained by the proponent.

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 installation phase. Locating any other underground utilities would be the responsibility of the contractor to avoid these utilities during installation.

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

Alternative B (Proposed Action): The City of Belgrade, its employees and contractors are responsible for identifying and mitigating the potential impacts to human health and safety associated with the proposed project.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

Nearby activities consist mostly of residential, commercial, interstate travel, farming and ranching operations. The site is in irrigated agriculture and native grazing land bordered by residential development to the south and west with commercial development to the east.

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): The proposed project will provide water and sewer utilities to the proposed Belgrade Elementary School (granted under easement no. D-17697). Short duration impacts to industrial, commercial, and agricultural activities and production will likely occur during the installation phase of the project, however, the utility will provide a service to the proposed Belgrade Elementary School.

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 be completed in a relatively short time frame, so 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): 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.

The land is exempt from property taxation and would continue to generate no revenue for local taxing jurisdictions.

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): The project will not have any measurable effects to local or state tax revenues.

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.

The parcel currently has a very low demand for government services except for a small wildfire risk. The area roads are public county roads, state highways or federal interstates. The proponent is responsible for communicating impacts to Gallatin County and other pertinent agencies regarding the use of roads accessing the project. Increases in traffic including associated attributes and hazards resulting from the work associated with this project will be short-lived.

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

Alternative B (Proposed Action): No permanent adverse impacts on traffic or 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.

The parcel is not within Belgrade city limits, but it is within the city of Belgrade's extra-territorial zoning jurisdiction. Any proposed use will have to go through the City's conditional use process, and a conditional use permit issued.

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

Alternative B (Proposed Action): 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.

The 247-acre state parcel, adjacent residential and commercial development, offers minimal recreational opportunities. Since the parcel is predominantly in cultivated agriculture, it is closed to recreation by statute when in crop.

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): No impacts to access, quality of recreational and wilderness activities are expected to occur.

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 would provide water and sewer utility services to the proposed Belgrade Elementary School (granted under easement no. D-17697) and are not proposed to provide utilities to additional infrastructure at this time.

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): 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): 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): 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 purpose of the project is to provide water and sewer utilities to the proposed Belgrade Elementary School (granted under easement no. D-17697). The easement is proposed to be 30 feet wide and encumber 1.56 acres.

An appraisal, completed on February 9, 2022, established the following value: \$54,720/acre. 1.56 acres x \$54,720 = \$85,363.20 attributed to the Common Schools Trust.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Michaela Kalinowski	Date: 08/20/2026
	Title: Forest Action Plan Forester Dillon Unit	

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Two Alternatives presented and fully analyzed in the EAC.

Alternative A: Deny the proposal to issue a utility Right-of-Way easement to the City of Belgrade for the installation of a water and sewer pipelines, 30 feet wide and encumbering 1.56 acres. This utility would need an alternative route across state land to provide the services intended for the proposed Belgrade Elementary School (easement no. D-17697)

Alternative B: Recommend approval to the Montana Board of Land Commissioners to grant an easement to the City of Belgrade for the purpose of a utility Right-of-Way for the installation of a water and sewer pipelines, 30 feet wide and encumbering 1.56 acres.

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

- The Action Alternative will benefit the surrounding community with new infrastructure and provide required water and sewer utilities to the proposed Belgrade Elementary School.

- 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:☐ EI☐ More Detailed EA☒ No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Kara Huyser
	Title: Bozeman Unit Manager
Signature: 	Date: 8/2/26

Exhibit A: Vicinity Map

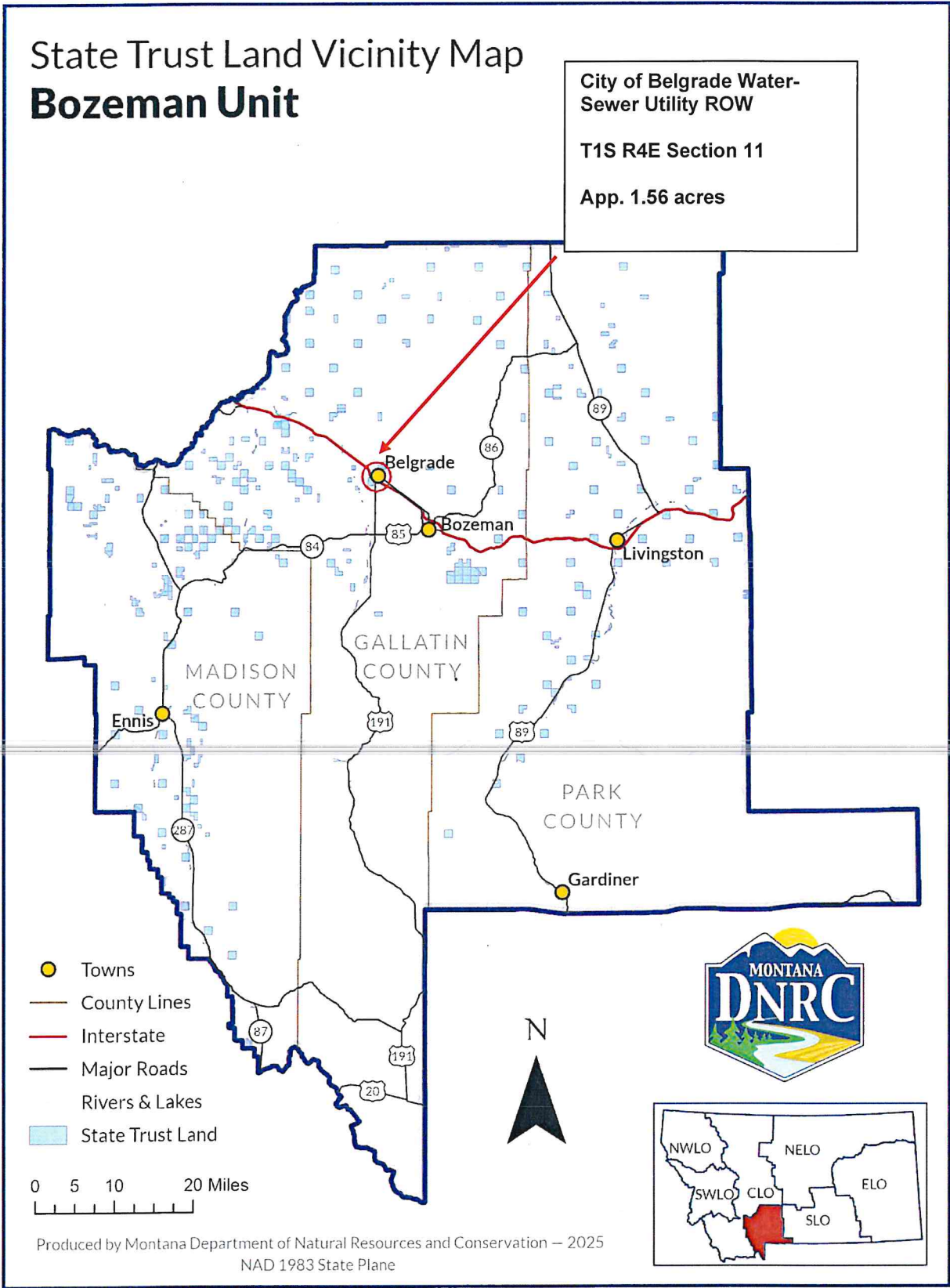


Exhibit B: Topographical Location Map

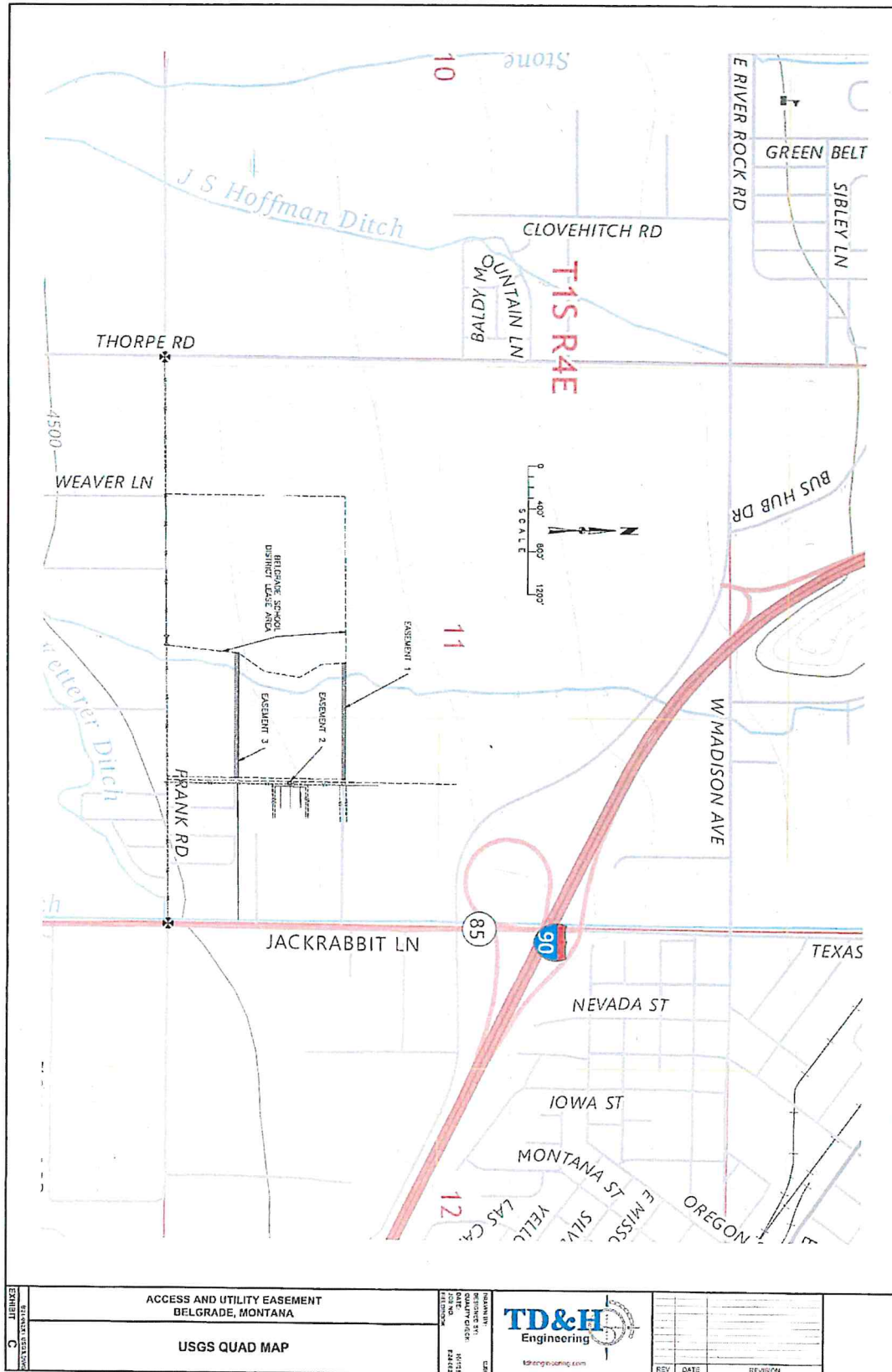


EXHIBIT C	ACCESS AND UTILITY EASEMENT BELGRADE, MONTANA	QUANTITY ENGINEER DESIGNED BY DATE JOB NO. T.D. ENGINEERING	T.D. ENGINEERING DESIGNED BY DATE JOB NO. T.D. 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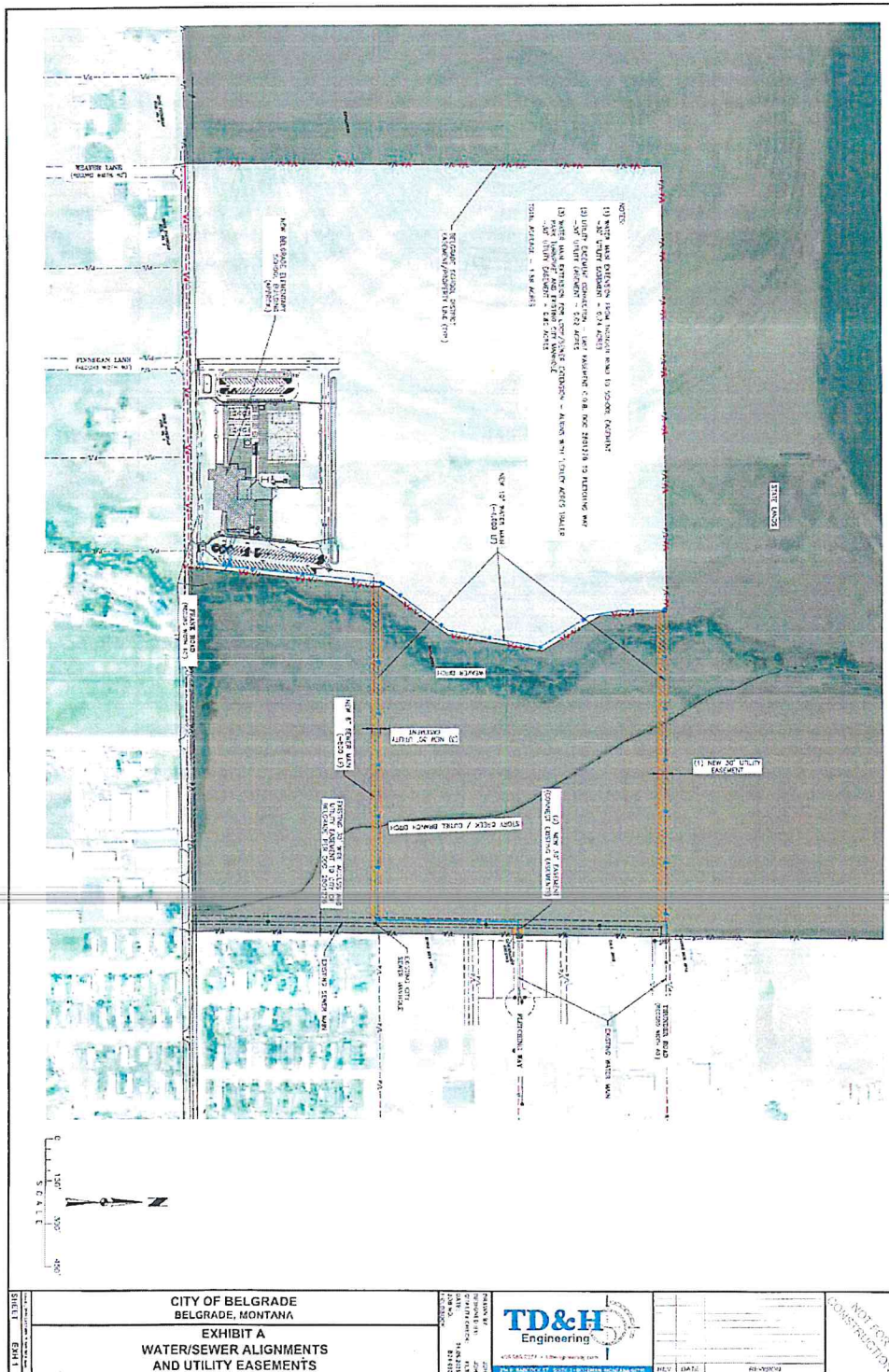


Exhibit D: Survey Map

