

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

D.N.R.C.

Project Name:	Bureau of Mines Wells
Proposed Implementation Date:	June 2004
Proponent:	Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology Ground Water Assessment Program
Location:	Section 16 T8N R9W
County:	Powell

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

This project proposes to construct two static water level monitoring wells. These wells will be located near existing fences to minimize conflicts with other lessees. Data from the monitoring wells will be available from the following web site <http://mbmaggwic.mtech.adm>. The purpose of these wells is to provide ground water level information to Montana Tech and the general public. Well no. 1 would be approximately 25 ft. deep while well number 2 would be 125 ft. Deep. Both wells would have a 6" casing.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

RECEIVED

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: JUL 21 2004
Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

**LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL
POLICY OFFICE**

The other lessees involved with this tract were contacted for their comments and concerns. The Powell County High School Vo Ag Department, Montana State Prison Ranch, Rock Creek Buffalo. In addition DNRC specialists were contacted for their comments.

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

None

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

No Action-The permits would not be authorized to the Montana Tech Bureau of Mines and geology.

Action-DNRC would grant Mt. Tech the land use license they have requested. Drilling the two wells would be completed shortly after the license has been issued. Monitoring equipment would be installed immediately after completion of the well drilling.

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.

No Action-There would not be any impacts to soil quality

Action-There is potential for soil compaction if the drilling takes place when soils are wet, moisture content above 20%. While the impact area would be very small, to prevent this minor damage, well drilling would be restricted to periods when soil moisture did not exceed 20%.

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.

This project is designed to measure ground water levels in order to quantify land management impacts. No impacts to the quantity are anticipated since these are non-consumptive wells.

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.

None

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.

No Action-There would be no disturbance to existing vegetation

Action-A small area, less than 20' square would be disturbed during the drilling operation. It is anticipated that for such a small area the native vegetation would reoccupy the site. This would negate the need for any revegetation work.

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.

None

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.

None

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

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

No impact under either alternative. See archeologists report for a more in depth analysis.

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.

No Action-There would not be any change to the existing view shed.

Action-For a short time period, less than 2 weeks, there would be well drilling equipment on the site. This would have a very minor impact on the areas aesthetics for a short duration of time.

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.

None

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.

None

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.*
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14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

None

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

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

None

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.

None

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.

None

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

None

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 impact 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.

None

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.

None

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

None

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

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

None

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.

No Action –There would not be any change to existing revenue streams. Trust revenues from this tract would not be impacted.

Action- The trust would receive \$100 per year for the life of the wells and the study associated with the wells. After the data collection has been completed, the wells will revert to the State for use on the tract.

EA Checklist Prepared By	Name: Fred E. Staedler Jr.	Date: 5-14-04
	Title: Anaconda Unit Manager	

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

To proceed with the action alternative

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

There are no significant impacts associated with implementation of the action alternative. No further analysis is required

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

EIS

More Detailed EA

No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Brian Robbins
	Title: Lead Timber Management Forester
Signature:	Date: 5-19-04