

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
AND CONSERVATION

Trust Land Management Division



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February 21, 2006

MEMORANDUM:

TO: Clive Rooney, NELO Area Manager  
Kevin Chappell, AGMB Chief

FR: R. Hoyt Richards, Glasgow Unit Manager

RE: Reclassification from Unsuitable to Agriculture (small grain)  
Lease # 7419 N2NE4 S23 T37N R47E; 11.6 Acres FSA Field # 2

RECEIVED  
MAR 2 2006  
DNRC NELO

**RECEIVED**

MAR 08 2006

LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL  
POLICY OFFICE

The referenced FSA field was classified as unsuitable with a 0 AUM rated to the land for the former lease term. Field Evaluations were completed by me for renewal purposes this past summer. The inspections led me to believe that unsuitable is not the highest and best use for this land. My field findings instigated an EA and a Capability Inventory (attached). I am proposing to re-classify the 11.6 acres as agriculture (LRC enclosed).

Upon completion of the EA and Capability Inventory it was determined these fields highest and best use should be hay land. The soils units are capability subclass IIIe.

This lease is to be renewed on March 1, 2006. GUO staff contacted the lessee regarding the Department's management goals for these lands during the next lease terms.

By copy of this memo, I am requesting your consideration of the proposed conversion of this land to small grain agriculture.

Clive: Please sign the EA and forward to Kevin. Please return a signed copy back to GUO.

Kevin: I recommend approval of the reclassification. A LRC is attached if you approve of this project. I have added a stipulation to the lease agreement (March 1, 2006-February 28, 2016) requiring the land to be farmed.

# CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Cromwell reclassification of 11.6 acres.	Proposed Implementation Date: 2/14/06
Proponent: DNRC	
Type and Purpose of Action: Reclassify 11.6 acres from unsuitable to small grain agriculture land.	
Location: Lease # 7419, N2NE4, S23, 37N 47E	County: Daniels

## I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

<p>1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.</p>	<p>DNRC staff inspected (9/12/05) the land to comply with the lease renewal obligations. During the inspection, it appeared to DNRC staff that the highest and best use of the 11.6 acres is small grain agriculture. At the time of the inspection, the DNRC had the land classified as unsuitable, per election of the lessee. The lessee is not utilizing this land due to the surrounding abandoned homesite that is present on the land. After the inspection, the Department staff wrote the lessee stating they thought the highest and best use of the land was small grain agriculture land.</p>
<p>2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:</p>	<p>Action: Re-classify the land in question from unsuitable to small grain agriculture land. No-Action: Keep the land classified as unsuitable.</p>

## II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS
<p>4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are fragile, compactible or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations?</p>	<p>N = Not Present or No Impact will occur. Y = Impacts may occur (explain below)</p> <p>General Discussion: The proposed acreage to be reclassified as dry land agriculture consists of #70 William Zahl. 2 to 8 percent slope, capability subclass III. The depth to bedrock is &gt; 60", K=.43-.37, T=5, WEG =6, the NRCS soils survey predicted yield is 31 bu/ac.</p> <p>Action: The conversion of this land to small grain agriculture land will destroy the permanent cover. These soils are highly suited for farming. Wind and</p>

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

	<p>water erosion will be kept to a minimal.</p> <p>No-Action: No affect to these resources will take place.</p>
<p>5.WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION: Are important surface or groundwater resources present? Is there potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality?</p>	<p>There is not water surface features of below ground water features present on this tract.</p> <p>Action: No affect.</p> <p>No-Action: No affect.</p>
<p>6.AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?</p>	<p>Action: None</p> <p>No-Action: None</p>
<p>7.VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?</p>	<p>The vegetation in this area consists of crested wheatgrass. The stand is fairly productive and is capable of being hayed in its present condition if a weed control action was taken.</p> <p>Action: The land will be converted to small grain agriculture.</p> <p>No-Action: No affect.</p>
<p>8.TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?</p>	<p>The area is being used by nesting upland game birds and migratory song birds.</p> <p>Action: Conversion to small grain agriculture land will not affect this habitat type.</p> <p>No-Action: No affect to this habitat type will take place.</p>
<p>9.UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Sensitive Species or Species of special concern?</p>	<p>No unique, endangered or fragile environmental resources are known to exist.</p> <p>Action: Conversion to hay land will not affect this resource type.</p> <p>No-Action: No affect to this resources type will take place.</p>
<p>10.HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?</p>	<p>No cultural, historical, or archaeological resources are known to exist.</p> <p>Action: No affect will take place by implementing of this action. The land has already been disturbed. Any surface features that were present would have been disturbed when the land was initially broken.</p> <p>No-Action: No affect will take place by implementing of this action.</p>
<p>11.AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from</p>	<p>Action No affect will take place by implementing of this action.</p>

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

populated or scenic areas? Will there be excessive noise or light?	No-Action No affect will take place by implementing of this action.
12.DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY: Will the project use resources that are limited in the area? Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project?	Action: No additional demands to environmental resources will take place. No-Action: No affect.
13.OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?	Action: No affect. No-Action: No affect.

III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
14.HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?	Action: Temporary human health and safety risks will be added by the implementation of this project. No-Action: No human health or safety risk will be added because no action will be taking place.
15.INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	Action: Implementation will add to industrial activities, No-Action: By not implementing this action, the industrial production of the land will not be increased while the agricultural activities will remain the same. The potential agriculture will not be achieved.
16.QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.	Action: the Quantity of employment opportunities will increase. No-Action: Employment opportunities will not be created.
17.LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?	Action: Implementation of the project will increase the State and local tax base and will also increase trust lands revenue. No-Action: By not implementing this project, State, local, and Trust revenues will not be increased.
18.DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed?	Action: No demands on government services will be required by this project. No-Action: Government services will not be enhanced.
19.LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?	Action: The zoning regulations for this area will not be impacted. No-Action: The zoning regulations for this area will not be impacted.

<p>20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract?</p>	<p>Action: There are no wilderness areas in this vicinity. The recreational opportunities will not be impacted due to the fact that the surface owner (fee lands) controls recreational opportunities.</p> <p>No-Action: No impacts to the quality of recreation and wilderness activities will take place</p>
<p>21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?</p>	<p>Action: No additional housing demands are anticipated.</p> <p>No-Action: No additional housing demands are anticipated.</p>
<p>22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?</p>	<p>Action: No disruption of native or traditional lifestyles is anticipated.</p> <p>No-Action: No disruption of native or traditional lifestyles is anticipated.</p>
<p>23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?</p>	<p>Action: No cultural uniqueness or diversity quality shift is anticipated.</p> <p>No-Action: No cultural uniqueness or diversity quality shift is anticipated.</p>
<p>24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:</p>	<p>Action none.</p> <p>No-Action none.</p>

EA Checklist Prepared By: R. Holly Richards 600 Date: February 21, 2006

<p>IV. FINDING</p>	
<p>25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:</p>	<p>Action</p>
<p>26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:</p>	<p>NSI</p>
<p>27. Need for Further Environmental Analysis:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> EIS      <input type="checkbox"/> More Detailed EA      <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Further Analysis</p>	

EA Checklist Approved By:

Name

Title

  
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Signature

Date: February 21, 2006