

# CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Natural Gas Pipeline	Proposed Implementation Date: July, 2007
Proponent: JB Operating Co. LP	
Type and Purpose of Action: The proponent has requested permission to install a 6"- natural gas pipeline across State land. The pipeline will transport natural gas from a well on private land to a well on State land; the gas from both wells will be transported through the pipeline across another State section.	
Location: W $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW $\frac{1}{4}$ , S16 T35N R18E & NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , SE $\frac{1}{4}$ S36 T35N R18E	County: Blaine

## 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> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>MAR 29 2008</p> <p>LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY OFFICE</p> </div>	<p>The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) Trust Land Management Division (TLMD) has been petitioned by JB Operating Co. LP to install a six inch natural gas pipeline across State land in the referenced locations. The State surface lessees, Duane Skoyen, Gary Unruh, and Robert Munson have all been informed of the proposed pipeline. In addition, the north Chinook irrigation district has an irrigation ditch that runs through both State sections where the pipeline is proposed. The irrigation district has also been informed about the proposed project.</p>
<p>2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:</p>	<p>The DNRC Trust Land Management Division is the only government agency that has jurisdiction over this proposed project.</p>
<p>3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:</p>	<p><b>Action Alternative:</b> Allow the proponent to install a six inch natural gas pipeline within the referenced locations. Through mitigation measures, any disturbances to the environment surrounding the project sites will be limited.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> Deny the proponent permission to install a six inch natural gas pipeline within the referenced locations.</p>

## II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

RESOURCE	POTENTIAL IMPACTS
<p>4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are fragile, compactable or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there</p>	<p>Action Alternative: No Action Alternative:</p> <p><b>Action Alternative:</b> The soils within the proposed project area primarily consist of dense clays. Allowing the proponent to install the pipeline will</p>

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
special reclamation considerations?	<p>impact the soils within the proposed project area. Soils will be displaced in order to install the pipeline. Any displaced soils will be replaced and contoured to match the existing landscape. Heavy equipment used to install the pipeline will cause soil compaction; However, through mitigation measures, including not allowing construction activity during wet or muddy conditions, impacts to the soils will be minimized.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> The soils will not be affected.</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><b>Action Alternative:</b> Portions of the proposed pipeline route goes through low lying areas that receive runoff water at certain times of the year. Disturbances to the soils in these areas may cause increased sediment in the water near the pipeline. Once vegetation has reestablished along the pipeline route, the sediment will disappear.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> Water quality and quantity will not be affected in this area.</p>
6. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?	<p><b>Action Alternative:</b> During the installation of the pipeline, some airborne dust particles will be created. The dust will be temporary and localized.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> Air quality will not be affected.</p>
7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?	<p><b>Action Alternative:</b> The vegetation along the proposed pipeline corridor consists mainly of native grasses, forbs, and shrubs. If installation of the pipeline is approved, the vegetation within the project area will be impacted. The proponent will be required to reseed any disturbed areas along the pipeline route using a native grass mixture.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> Vegetation in this area will not be effected.</p>
8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?	<p><b>Action Alternative:</b> During the installation of the proposed pipeline, there will be some disturbance to local wildlife species. These disturbances will be temporary. Once the pipeline is installed, there will be no long-term impacts to local wildlife species.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> Wildlife species will not be affected.</p>

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
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><b>Action Alternative:</b> There are no known Unique, endangered, fragile or limited environmental resources within the proposed project area.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> No resources in the area will be affected.</p>
10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?	<p><b>Action Alternative:</b> Personnel from the DNRC's Havre office inspected the proposed pipeline route and found no cultural resources.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> Cultural sites will not be affected.</p>
11. AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from populated or scenic areas? Will there be excessive noise or light?	<p><b>Action Alternative:</b> Once the proposed pipeline has been installed, the aesthetics of this area will not be altered.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> The aesthetics of this area will not be altered.</p>
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?	<p><b>Action Alternative:</b> No demands on environmental resources will occur.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> No resources will be affected.</p>
13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?	<p><b>Action Alternative:</b> There is a DNRC grazing lease associated with the surface of the State land that this project is proposed for. Allowing the proponent to install a gas pipeline will have a no long term affect on the grazing activities in the area.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> There will be no impact to the DNRC grazing lease.</p>

III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION	
RESOURCE	POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?	<p><b>Action Alternative:</b> There will be some health and safety concerns during the installation of the proposed pipeline. Workers are aware of any health and safety concerns and recognize them as occupational hazards. Once the construction has been completed, there will be no health and safety concerns associated with this project.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> There will be no health and safety concerns in this area.</p>

<p>15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?</p>	<p><b>Action Alternative:</b> If approved, the proposed gas pipeline will transport natural gas from producing gas wells. This will benefit commercial gas activity in the area.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> Commercial gas activities and production in this area will not benefit from the proposed pipeline.</p>
<p>16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.</p>	<p><b>Action Alternative:</b> This proposed project would help secure continued employment for workers employed by the gas company. Employees of other companies associated with the construction and maintenance of the gas pipeline will also benefit.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> The quantity and distribution of employment in this area will not be affected.</p>
<p>17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?</p>	<p><b>Action Alternative:</b> State and local tax revenue will increase from the sale of natural gas that will flow through the proposed gas line. This will help increase gas production in the area and therefore benefit the gas industry and increase gas related tax revenues in the area. In addition, employment security for people that work for companies associated with this project and the gas industry will help the state and local tax base.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> Taxes will not be affected.</p>
<p>18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed?</p>	<p><b>Action Alternative:</b> During construction activities to install the pipeline, traffic in the area will increase. The increase will be temporary with no long term affect on government services in the area.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> Demands for government services will not be affected.</p>
<p>19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?</p>	<p><b>Action Alternative:</b> No zoning or management plans will be affected.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> No zoning or management plans will be affected.</p>
<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><b>Action Alternative:</b> The main recreation activity in this area is hunting. Allowing the proponent install the pipeline will not affect hunting opportunities in this area.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> Recreational activities will not be affected.</p>

<p>21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?</p>	<p><b>Action Alternative:</b> Population and housing will not be effected.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> Population and housing will not be effected.</p>
<p>22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?</p>	<p><b>Action Alternative:</b> Social structures will not be affected.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> Social structures will not be affected.</p>
<p>23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?</p>	<p><b>Action Alternative:</b> The cultural uniqueness and diversity of this area will not be affected.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> The cultural uniqueness and diversity of this area will not be affected.</p>
<p>24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:</p>	<p><b>Action Alternative:</b> This proposed project will have no effect on social or economic circumstances in this area.</p> <p><b>NO Action Alternative:</b> Social or economic circumstances will not be effected.</p>

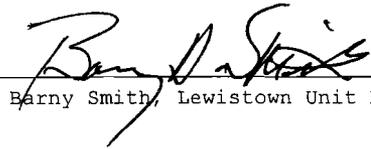
EA Checklist Prepared By:


  
 Craig Biggart, Land Use Specialist

Date: February 27, 2008

IV. FINDING	
25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:	To allow the proponent to install the 6" pipeline. "The Action Alternative"
26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:	minimal negative impacts are expected with this alternative.
27. Need for Further Environmental Analysis:	
<input type="checkbox"/> EIS <input type="checkbox"/> More Detailed EA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Further Analysis	

EA Checklist Approved By

  
 Barry Smith, Lewistown Unit Manager

Date:

3/3/08