

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Ditch Maintenance
Proposed Implementation Date:	April 2010
Proponent:	Fred Broling
Location:	Township 1 South, Range 2 East, Section 8
County:	Gallatin
Trust:	University of Montana

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The proponent has applied for a license that would allow for maintaining 2300 feet of irrigation ditch originating on State Trust Lands for the purposes of flood irrigation.



A tracked excavator will perform the necessary ditch cleaning to maintain water right conveyance.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:

Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

Claiming Arrow Ranch c/o Katherine Anderson, Lessee: concerns that they are currently calving, and in general with work being done while they have cows on the section (usually have cows on the land till around June), and if they have to bring in any equipment that may tear up the land.

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

None.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Grant Land Use License: Grant the License to allow for the ditch maintenance.

No Action: Do not grant the license to allow for the ditch maintenance, leaving the ditch as is.

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.*
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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.

According to the state of Montana SURGO soils database, the soils within the project area are Map Unit Symbol #528A, or Greycliff Lamoose silt loams. Upon review of the soils database for this soil formation, there are no environmentally sensitive or unstable soils. There are no unusual geologic formations or special reclamation considerations included in this soil formation.

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.

The proposed project includes maintaining an existing seasonal water feature, specifically an irrigation ditch that provides irrigation water to a private landowner. No additional important surface or ground water features exist within the project area. Diverting water through the ditch should not impair drinking water or alter any water features on State lands.

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.

The project includes scraping vegetation out of the irrigation ditch to improve water conveyance. Existing vegetation proposed for removal from the ditch includes upland pasture grasses such as smooth brome, timothy, and orchard grass. Material excavated from the ditch will be placed immediately adjacent to the ditch, and allowed to revegetate naturally. Seed sources will remain in the excavated soils.

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 existing ditch provides very little wildlife or aquatic features due to the absence of riparian, stream, or wetland habitat. Wildlife use of the area includes whitetail deer, raptors, and migratory songbirds. Scraping the ditch and placing spoils adjacent to it will not affect wildlife use of the area. The ditch remains dry outside of the irrigation season, and is not considered useful for fisheries.

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 Heritage Program listed three species of birds and one reptile as species of concern in the Township and Range this license would effect. The limited size of the project should have no effect on unique, endangered, fragile or limited environmental resources

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

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

No cultural resources have been identified on the track.

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 does not lie within a populated area and will not jeopardize an area of visual appeal. The final product will not result in increased noise, light, or visual changes to the landscape. Noise will be temporarily increased while excavation work is under way (1 day).

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
<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.

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.

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 cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

No effect.

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?

No affect.

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 License would generate \$150.00 in revenue for the School State Trust Land.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Katie Svoboda/s/	Date: 5/12/2010
	Title: Bozeman Office Manager	

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED: Grant the License to allow for the ditch maintenance.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS: This is a ditch that has been used and maintained historically, No significant impacts would be expected.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

EIS
 More Detailed EA
 No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Craig Campbell
	Title: DNRC, Bozeman Unit Manager
Signature: Craig Campbell/s/	Date: 5/17/2010