

# CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Six inch natural gas pipeline.

Proposed Implementation Date: May 4, 2010

Proponent: Bear Paw Energy LLC, 2700 Lincoln Avenue SE, Sidney, Montana 59270

Type and Purpose of Action: Bear Paw Energy LLC has made a Land Use License application to place a six inch poly natural gas pipeline on State land. The gas pipeline will start at Rogney 17-B 1-H well site located on the SE4SE4, Section 17 Township 29 North Range 56 East. The six inch pipeline will extend across the E2NE4 a distance of 150.6 rods. The six inch poly pipeline will then be attached to an existing six inch steel natural gas pipeline.

Location: N2NW4, NW4NE4, Sec. 16 Twp. 29N Rge. 59E

County: Roosevelt

## I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

Bear Paw Energy LLC has made a Land Use License application to place a six inch poly pipeline on State land. Bear Paw Energy LLC has contacted the State land surface lessee concerning the gas pipeline project.

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

The other government agencies with jurisdiction for this project are the Montana Board of Oil and Gas, Billings Office, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Minerals Management Bureau, Helena Office.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Action Alternative: Grant a Land Use License to Bear Paw Energy LLC to construct a six inch natural gas pipeline on State land.

No Action Alternative: Deny a permit to Bear Paw Energy LLC to construct a six inch natural gas pipeline on State land.

## II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

### RESOURCE

### POTENTIAL IMPACTS

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?

Action Alternative: This type of project will impact the soils on the natural gas pipeline route. The impacts are minimal and the pipeline route will continue to produce native rangeland vegetation. The area of impact may require reseeding of the native grass species, depending on the surface soil impacts from the pipeline installation equipment. The area of impact has no special reclamation considerations other than the area will be reseeded to native plant species.

No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to the soils on the land under this alternative.

5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION: Are

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
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>Action Alternative: The project will have no impacts on the water quality, quantity and distribution associated with this tract of state land. There are no surface water resources on the natural gas pipeline route.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to water resources under this alternative.</p>
6. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?	<p>Action Alternative: The project will have no impacts on the air quality of the land involved with the project. There will be some airborne soil particles from the pipeline trenching operation.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to the air quality under this alternative.</p>
7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?	<p>Action Alternative: The natural gas pipeline installation will impact the vegetation on the pipeline route. If the area of impact does not reclaim from existing seed sources. The drilling company will reclaim the pipeline route with a mixture of native grass species.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to the vegetation under this alternative.</p>
8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?	<p>Action Alternative: This type of activity will disturb the habitat types on the State land. The area of impact is small in scope and there will be minimal impacts to the wildlife and upland bird resources of the area. The on-site Field Evaluation explained that the habitat was highly suitable for sharptail grouse.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to the wildlife habitat resources associated with the land under this alternative.</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>Action Alternative: The project area contains no known unique, endangered, fragile or limited environmental resources.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to the environmental resources under this alternative.</p>
10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?	<p>Action Alternative: There are no known historical or archaeological sites on the areas to be impacted by this project. The state land was inspected by Robert Putzker, Unit Manager and it was determined that the area of impact contained no known historical or archaeological sites.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to historical or archaeological sites under this alternative.</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>Action Alternative: The project site is located in a rural area and is visible to the general public. Montana Highway 16 is located to the west of the project site. The project will have no impacts to the aesthetic values associated with the state land involved with this project.</p>

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
	No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the aesthetics associated with the land under this project.
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>Action Alternative: The project will place no demands on environmental resources of land, water, air or energy. The associated activities that are similar to this project are existing oil well site and other oil pipelines located on this tract of State land. These existing activities are in close proximity to the pipeline project.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the environmental resources of land, water, air or energy under this alternative.</p>
13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?	<p>Action Alternative: The pipeline installation will not impact other projects or plans that may be occurring on the state land. The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation has no other studies, plans or projects currently proposed for this tract of State land.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the plans, studies or other projects on the land under this alternative.</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>Action Alternative; The pipeline installation has various human health and safety risks. The employer and employee identify the health and safety risks as occupational hazards.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to human health or safety under this alternative.</p>
15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	<p>Action alternative: The project will have no impacts to the agricultural activities that are occurring on the land. The area of impact is native rangeland for livestock grazing. If deemed necessary the reclamation of the project area will be accomplished by the applicant. The pipeline route will be reseeded to native grass species. The project construction will not impact the livestock grazing that may or may not be occurring on the State land.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the agricultural activities under this alternative.</p>
16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.	<p>Action Alternative: The project will not impact the quantity and distribution of employment. The project will provide continuation of existing jobs for the pipeline contractor who installs the natural gas pipeline.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the quantity and distribution of</p>

	employment under this alternative.
17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?	<p>Action Alternative: The project may create additional tax revenue for Roosevelt County. The writer of this document does not know what type of tax collection there may be on this type of natural gas pipeline. The project will not eliminate taxable values for Roosevelt County.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the local and state tax base under this alternative.</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>Action Alternative: The project will place no demands for government services. There may be additional traffic on Highway No. 16 during the construction phase of the pipeline construction. The additional traffic would be heavy equipment used for the pipeline installation.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts for government services under this alternative.</p>
19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?	<p>Action Alternative: The project will not impact locally adopted environmental plans and goals. The pipeline project is located mainly on State land. The project would not have any impacts on environmental plans and goals for Roosevelt County or the Fort Peck Tribes.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to locally adopted environmental plans and goals under this alternative.</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>Action Alternative: The project will not impact the hunting recreational values associated with the State land. This tract is not located near wilderness activities. The recreational activities would possibly be hunting of Sharptail grouse. This type of recreational activity was described in the on site Field Evaluation performed on the State land.</p> <p>No Action Alternative; There would be no impacts to the hunting recreational values associated with the land under this alternative.</p>
21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?	<p>Action Alternative: The project will not impact the density and distribution of the population and housing on this rural area. The pipeline construction crews will probably be housed in local motels and hotels.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the density and distribution of the population and housing under this alternative.</p>
22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	<p>Action Alternative: The project will not impact the social structures of the local communities. The local communities see these types of projects as helping the local economy through use of local infrastructure facilities.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to the social structures under this</p>

	alternative.
23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	<p>Action Alternative: The project will not impact the cultural uniqueness and diversity of the land. The pipeline will be buried and there will be visual signs of the project after reclamation of the pipeline route.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the cultural uniqueness and diversity under this alternative.</p>
24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:	<p>Action Alternative: The project provides some economic benefit to the local community businesses that supply products to the company that will be installing the natural gas pipeline. There should also be other community establishments that will be utilized by the employees of the pipeline installation company</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the social and economic circumstances under this alternative. .</p>

EA Checklist Prepared By: Randy Dirkson Land Use Specialist Date: \_\_\_\_\_

IV. FINDING	
25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:	Action Alternative: Grant a Land Use License to Bear Paw Energy LLC to install a 6 inch natural gas pipeline on this tract of State land. The revenue generated from the Land Use License will enhance the School Trust. No major impacts were identified.
26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:	The project will have no significant impacts to the native rangeland natural resources on the State land.
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: R. Hoyt Richares Name GUO Manager Title

/s/ Signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_