

# CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

<b>Project Name:</b> LUL #8652, Existing Irrigation Ditch	<b>Proposed Implementation Date:</b> Summer 2010
<b>Proponent:</b> Deep Creek Ranch and Management Co, LLC, 10100 Santa Monica Boulevard, Suite 1300, Los Angeles, CA 90067	
<p><b>Type and Purpose of Action:</b> Deep Creek Ranch and Management Co, LLC, (“Deep Creek”) has applied for a Land Use License for the purpose of conveying irrigation and livestock water across state land via an irrigation ditch and also for ditch access for monitoring and maintenance purposes. The irrigation ditch was installed in the early 1960’s and was not properly authorized by the DNRC. The ditch crosses approximately 1.50 miles of state land classified as grazing. The objective of the LUL is to authorize use of the existing irrigation ditch. No damages or changes to the existing environment will occur because the ditch has already been installed. This ditch is fed by an irrigation ditch that comes through state owned land in Sec. 17 and is allowed by easement #3959. The irrigation ditch then crosses into Sec. 16 and is allowed by easement #3958. The above unauthorized ditch is fed by a diversion from the above permitted irrigation ditch, see attached maps.</p>	
<b>Location:</b> N2, SE4, Sec. 16, T23N, R8W <b>Trust:</b> Common Schools	<b>County:</b> Teton

## I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS, OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.	DNRC, Surface owner Deep Creek, Surface Lessee, Proponent
2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:	DNRC-Water Rights Division
3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:	Approve the request. Deny the request

## II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

RESOURCE	POTENTIAL IMPACTS [Y/N] N = Not Present or No Impact will occur. Y = Impacts may occur (explain below)
4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are fragile, compactable or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] The proposed action will require no new construction. Minimal maintenance will occur on an annual basis, but all disturbed areas will be reclaimed. Existing roads will be used for ditch access and maintenance.
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? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] Water diversion will lower in stream flows and may impact downstream users. However, Deep Creek has a legal right to the water associated with this ditch (water right #41O-W181983-00). The proposed action will not have any other affects on the quality, quantity, or distribution of water resources in the area.
6. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I air shed)? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] The proposed action will not impact the air quality.

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<p>7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?</p>	<p>[N] The ditch is currently in place and fully functioning. Minimal amounts of annual maintenance will occur, but all disturbed areas will be reclaimed and reseeded with native vegetation. There were no plant species of concern or potential species of concern noted on NRIS survey.</p>
<p>8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?</p>	<p>[N] The area is not considered critical wildlife habitat. However, these tracts provide habitat for a variety of big game species (mule deer, whitetail deer, pronghorn antelope), predators (coyote, fox, badger), upland game birds (sharp tail grouse, Hungarian partridge), other non-game mammals, raptors and various songbirds. The proposal does not include any land use change which would yield changes to the wildlife habitat. The proposed action will not impact wildlife forage, cover, or traveling corridors. Nor will this action change the juxtaposition of wildlife forage, water, or hiding and thermal cover.</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? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?</p>	<p>[N] A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted and there were seven animal species of concern and no potential species of concern noted on the NRIS survey.</p> <p>Wolverine, Canada Lynx, Fisher, Grizzly Bear, Golden Eagle, Great Blue Heron, and Sharp-tailed Grouse were found to be potentially located in the area that contains the irrigation ditch. However, since the irrigation ditch is existing, no direct, indirect, or cumulative effects are expected to the species of concern due to the proposed action.</p>
<p>10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?</p>	<p>[N] As the irrigation ditch is currently in place and no new construction will occur, historical, archaeological, and paleontological sites will not be impacted.</p>
<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? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?</p>	<p>[N] As the irrigation ditch is currently in place, the aesthetic character of the land will not be altered.</p>
<p>12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, and AIR OR ENERGY: Will the project use resources that are limited in the area? Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?</p>	<p>[N] The demand on environmental resources such as land, water, air, or energy will not be affected by the proposed project. The proposed project will not consume resources that are limited in the area. There are no other projects in the area that will affect the proposed project.</p>
<p>13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of other private, state or federal current actions w/n the analysis area, or from future proposed state actions that are under MEPA review (scoping) or permitting review by any state agency w/n the analysis area?</p>	<p>[N] There are no other studies, plans or projects that will affect this proposed action.</p>

<b>III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION</b>	
<b>RESOURCE</b>	<b>[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES</b>
14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?	[N] This project will not add to the health and safety of the area.
15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	[Y] This irrigation ditch is vital to Deep Creek's ranching operation. It is used for both livestock water and irrigation purposes.
16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number. Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] This project will not create any new jobs, as the irrigation ditch has been previously completed.
17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] This project will not affect the tax base or tax revenues.
18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] There will be no excessive stress placed of the existing infrastructure of the area as the irrigation ditch has been previously completed.
19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?	[N] The proposed project is in compliance with Federal, State, and County laws. No other management plans are in effect for the area.
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? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] These tracts of state land are not accessible to the public. Because there will be no new construction, any ditch maintenance will be reclaimed, no impacts on recreational activities are anticipated.
21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] The project is of a very small scale and will not affect the density and distribution of population or housing in the surrounding area.
22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	[N] The proposed project will not alter the social structure of the surrounding native communities.
23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	[N] The proposed project will not impact the cultural uniqueness and/or cultural diversity of the area.
24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES: Is there a potential for other future uses for easement area other than for current management? Is future use hypothetical? What is the estimated return to the trust? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[Y] This project will benefit the school trust in terms of a fee generated from LUL #8652. The fee will be \$150.00 per year for the ten year term of the license for a total of \$1500.00. Cumulative impacts are not likely as the area is only used for grazing and the existing irrigation ditch will not affect the long-term viability of grazing on the tract.

EA Checklist Prepared By: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tony Nickol, Land Use Specialist–Conrad Unit

Date: 06/16/2010

**IV. FINDING**

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:	Issue LUL #8652
26. SIGN4IFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:	Issuing this LUL will authorize water conveyance across state land and allow for the school trust to be adequately compensated for such use. All infrastructure is currently in place and functional. No new construction is required. No significant impacts are expected.
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: ERIK ENEBOE Conrad Unit Manager  
Name Title

/S/ Erik Eneboe 6-16-2010  
Signature Date



