

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Northern Telephone LUL / Easement

Proposed Implementation Date: August 2010

Proponent: Northern Telephone Cooperative, Inc. PO Box 190, Sunburst, MT 59482

Type and Purpose of Action: Northern Telephone Cooperative Inc. has applied for a Land Use License to install and maintain a buried telecommunications line (fiber optics) across state land. The line will cross a corner of state land which is approximately 200 feet in length. The fiber optic line route is immediately adjacent to a county road. Following installation the applicant will apply for a perminate easement.

Location: SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec 30, T35N, R3W
(along east section line)

County: Toole

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

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

None

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Approve the LUL.

No action. Do not approve the LUL.

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

RESOURCE

[Y/N]

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

N = Not Present or No Impact will occur.
Y = Impacts may occur (explain below)

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? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?

[N] Soils are suitable for line installation. The fiber optics line will be ripped in to minimize soil disturbances. All disturbed areas will be re-contoured and returned to grazing land. No long term impacts to soil erosion and /or other soil resources are expected.

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] The proposed action will not affect water quality and quantity.

6. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?

[N] The proposed action will not impact air quality.

7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or

[N] Current land use is grazing land – native rangeland. The line will be ripped in which will minimized impacts to the

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
cover types present? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	existing vegetation. All disturbed areas will be recontoured and reseeded to native vegetation similar to the surrounding plant communities. No long term impacts to the existing vegetation are expected.
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?	[N] No long-term negative affects on existing wildlife species and/or wildlife habitat are expected.
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?	[N] No threatened or endangered species are known to exist in this area.
10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?	[N] A field inspection of the proposed line route was completed on August 26, 2010 by Erik Eneboe. There were not cultural resources identified in the project area. No cultural artifacts and/or cultural resources will be impacted as a result of this project.
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?	[N] The fiber optics line will be buried. Not long term changes to the aesthetic character of the land will occur.
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? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] The demand on environmental resources such as land, water, air, or energy will not be affected by the proposed action. There are no other projects in the area that will affect the proposed project.
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?	[N] Currently, there are no other studies, plans, or projects associated with the proposed project area.

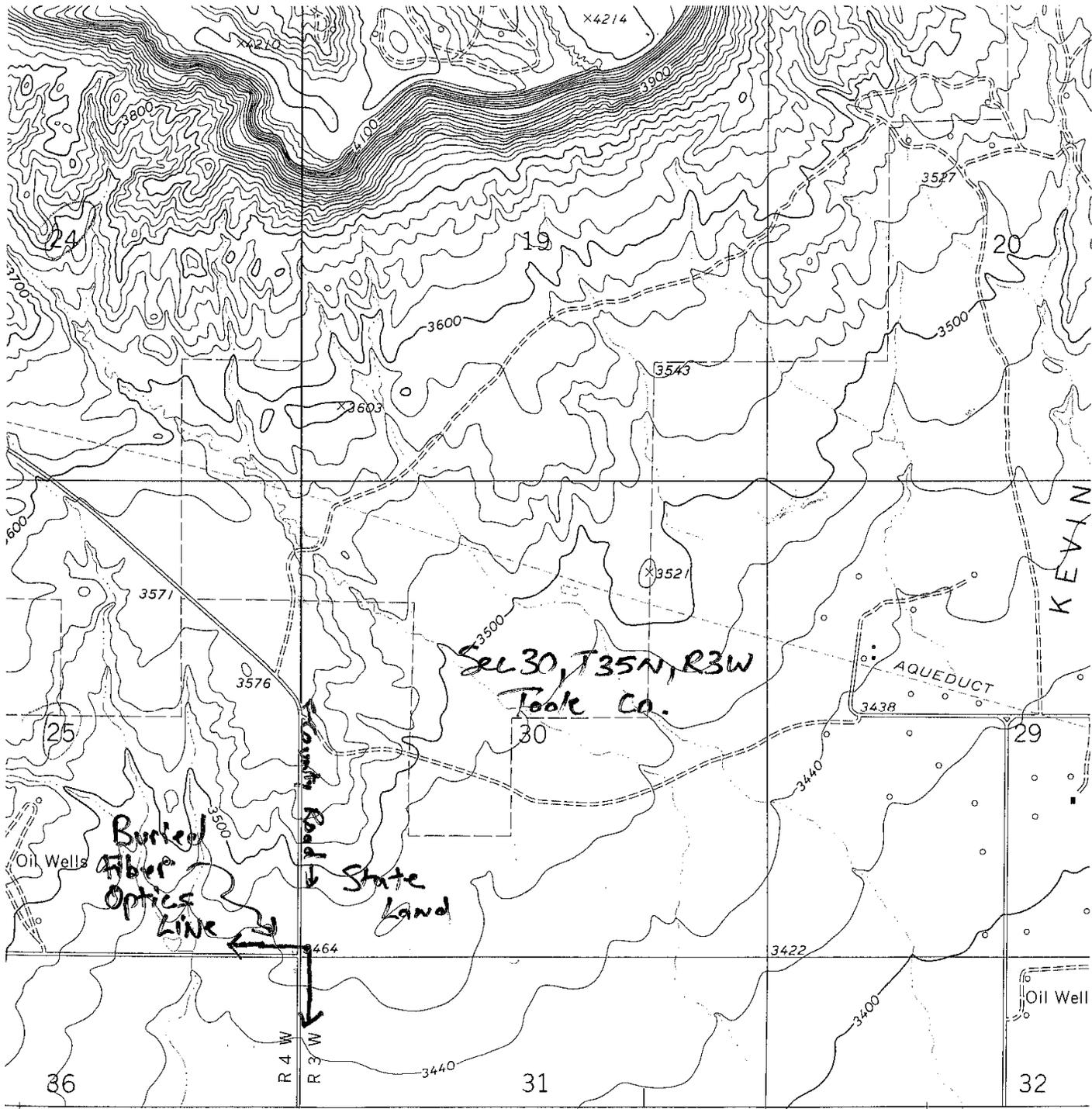
III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION	
RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?	[N] The proposed project will not affect human health or human safety in the area.
15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	[Y] The proposed fiber optics line will provide state of the art telecommunications for rural residents in the area. This will positively impact area industry and agricultural activities.
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?	[Y] Local contractors and cooperative employees will be used to install this line. The proposed action will increase local jobs.
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?	[Y] The proposed action will slightly increase local and State 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	[N] This project will not require additional governmental services.

result of this proposed action?	
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 action is in compliance with other 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] This state land tract is in a remote region and adjacent to a county road. The tract is legally accessible to the public. The proposed action will not create conflict to other general recreational activities within the area.
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 proposed action will not change the human population distribution or the housing requirements in the area.
22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	[N] The proposed action will not alter the social structure of surrounding native communities.
23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	[N] The proposed action will not impact the cultural uniqueness and/or the 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] The school trust will receive a LUL application fee (\$25.00) and a one-time LUL fee of \$100.00. After the line is installed the school trust will receive a easement fee based upon fair market value of the grazing land crossed.

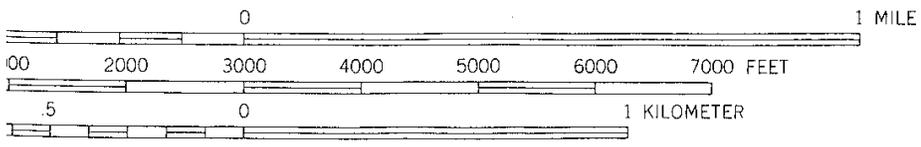
EA Checklist Prepared By: /S/ ERIK ENEBOE
Erik Eneboe

Conrad Unit Manager - CLO
Title

Date: August 26, 2010



(ALOE)
3581 11 NE
SCALE 1:24 000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL



Light-duty road
improved surf