CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Easement application for existing road use.
Proposed Implementation Date:	Spring 2011
Proponent:	E. Mark Hammond, 15 Creekside Lane, Barrington, IL 60010
Location:	See below list of tracts and attached map.
County:	Teton
Trust:	Common Schools (CS)

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The proponent has applied for an easement across state land to use an existing two track trail for ingress and egress to and from the real estate described on the attached Exhibit A for farm and ranch purposes, including access to a single family residence on the property described on Tract 1, Exhibit A. The two track trail will only be used as an alternative access route. The applicant has an easement across private property owned by Triple DJ LLC in order to access the private property located in Exhibit A. The two track trail crosses approximately 2.66 miles or 9.67 acres of state land to access deeded property. The proposed easement will be 30' wide on the existing two track trail.

Township	Range	Section	Portion	Acres Affected	Trust
23N	8W	34	SE4SE4	0.93	CS
23N	8W	35	SE4NW4, SE4, NE4SW4, S2SW4	3.86	CS
23N	8W	36	ALL	4.88	CS
TOTALS				9.67	CS

II. 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
Diamond 4D, LLC-Surface Lessee, Lease #7327
Triple DJ, LLC-Adjacent Land Owners
E. Mark Hammond-Proponent

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

DNRC is not aware of any other agencies with jurisdiction or other permits needed to complete this project

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A (No Action) – Deny the proponent the requested easement.

Alternative B (the Proposed action) –Grant the proponent the requested easement.

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.*

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.

Soils and geology in this area are generally suitable for road use. The proponent will use an existing two track trail and minor road improvements will occur. These minor road improvements will consist of installing culverts in the low areas to minimize any erosion caused by vehicular traffic. Reclamation requirements are to re-contour and reseed any disturbed areas with the existing grass types and seeding rates that are listed in item 7 of this assessment. The existing road surface is rutted and covered with existing surface gravel. No grading and graveling of the existing two track trail will occur. Any minor road improvements will need to be preapproved by the Conrad Unit Office.

No cumulative effects to the soils are anticipated.

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.

No important surface or groundwater resources will be impacted by the proposed easement as the two track trail is existing and only minor road improvements will take occur.

Other water quality and/or quantity issues will not be impacted by the proposed action.

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.

The proposed easement will consist of only minor disturbance to soils, so no cumulative effects to air quality are anticipated.

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 vegetation within the proposed project area consists primarily of native rangeland grasses, forbs, and shrubs. An existing two track trail will be used and only minor road construction will take place, so only a minimal amount of existing vegetation will be disturbed. Any disturbed areas will be reclaimed and reseeded. The reseeding mixture will be as follows: Slender wheatgrass 30%, Idaho or Rough fescue 30%, Western wheatgrass 10%, Bluebunch wheatgrass 10%, Green needlegrass 15%, and Cicer milkvetch 5%. The seeding rate will be 7 lbs of PLS per acre and if broadcast the rate will be doubled.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted and there were no plant species of concern noted or potential species of concern noted on the NRIS survey.

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 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. The proposed action will not have long-term negative effects on existing wildlife species and/or wildlife habitat.

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.

This parcel is located in the NCD grizzly bear recovery zone. The proposal is to use an existing two track trail. Only minor improvements to the two track trail will take place.

A review of Natural Heritage data through the NRIS was conducted. There were ten animal species of concern and zero potential species of concern noted on the NRIS survey: Mammals-Gray Wolf, Wolverine, Canada Lynx, Fisher, and Grizzly Bear. Birds—Golden Eagle, Great Blue Herron, Clark's Nutcracker, and Sharp-tailed Grouse. Fish-Westslope Cutthroat Trout. These particular tracts of native rangeland do not contain many, if any of these species. Threatened or endangered species, sensitive habitat types, or other species of special concern or potential species of concern will not be impacted by the utilization of the existing two track trail.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:
Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

No historical, archaeological, or paleontological resources were identified along the two track trail. Only minor preapproved road improvements will take place to the two track trail, so no cultural resources will be impacted by this proposed easement.

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 state land does not provide any unique scenic qualities not also provided on adjacent private lands. The proposed easement will use an existing two track trail, so there would be no change to the aesthetics in either alternative.

No direct or cumulative effects to aesthetics are anticipated.

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.

The demand on environmental resources such as land, water, air, or energy will not be affected by the proposed action. The proposed action will not consume resources that are limited in the area. There are no other projects in the area that will affect the proposed action.

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.

There are no other projects or plans being considered on the tracts listed on this EA.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

- *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.*

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:
Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

The proposed easement will not impact human health or safety in the area.

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15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:
Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

The proponent will use an existing two track trail and only minor road improvements will occur. The use of this existing two track trail will not add to or alter agricultural activities or production on the leases.

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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.

The proposed action will not create any jobs as the two track trail is existing and only minor road improvements will take place.

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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.

There are no direct or cumulative effects to taxes or revenue for the proposed project.

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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

There will be no direct or cumulative effects on government services.

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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.

The proposed action is in compliance with State and County laws. No other management plans are in effect for the area.

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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.

These tracts of state land generally have a high recreational value for hunting and fishing. These tracts are legally accessible to the public via Deep Creek located on the North edge of Section 36, T23N, R8W. The proposed action is not expected to impact general recreational activities on this state land.

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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

The proposal does not include any changes to housing or developments.

No direct or cumulative effects to population or housing are anticipated.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

There are no native, unique or traditional lifestyles or communities in the vicinity that would be impacted by the proposal.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

The proposed action will not impact the cultural uniqueness or diversity of the area.

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.

This project will benefit the school trust in terms of the $50.00 fee generated from each of the 3 easement applications for a total of $150.00. The easement on the Common Schools trust land will affect 9.67 acres X $1,683.00 per acre equals $16,274.61 of revenue generated from the future easements. This is an existing two track trail and only minor road improvements will occur, so no cumulative economic or social effects are likely to occur.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	**Name:**	Tony Nickol	**Date:**	June 03, 2011
	Title:	Land Use Specialist, Conrad Unit, Central Land Office		

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Alternative B (the Proposed action) –Grant the applicant he requested easement.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

The applicant will be utilizing an existing road to access private property used for farm and ranch lands and to a single family residence. No new road improvements and/or road construction is planned. However, minimal road improvements, such as culvert installation to provide drainage and gravel in low areas may occur in the future. A stipulation will be added to the easement that states "any road improvements must receive prior DNRC approval. There are no other reasonable routes to provide access to this property. Significant impacts are not anticipated as a result of issuing these easements. The applicant will pay the school trust fair market value (estimated at $1,683.00 per acre or 16,275.61) for the easement.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

[ ] EIS [ ] More Detailed EA [X] No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	**Name:**	Erik Eneboe
	Title:	Conrad Unit Manager, CLO
Signature:		**Date:** June 6, 2011

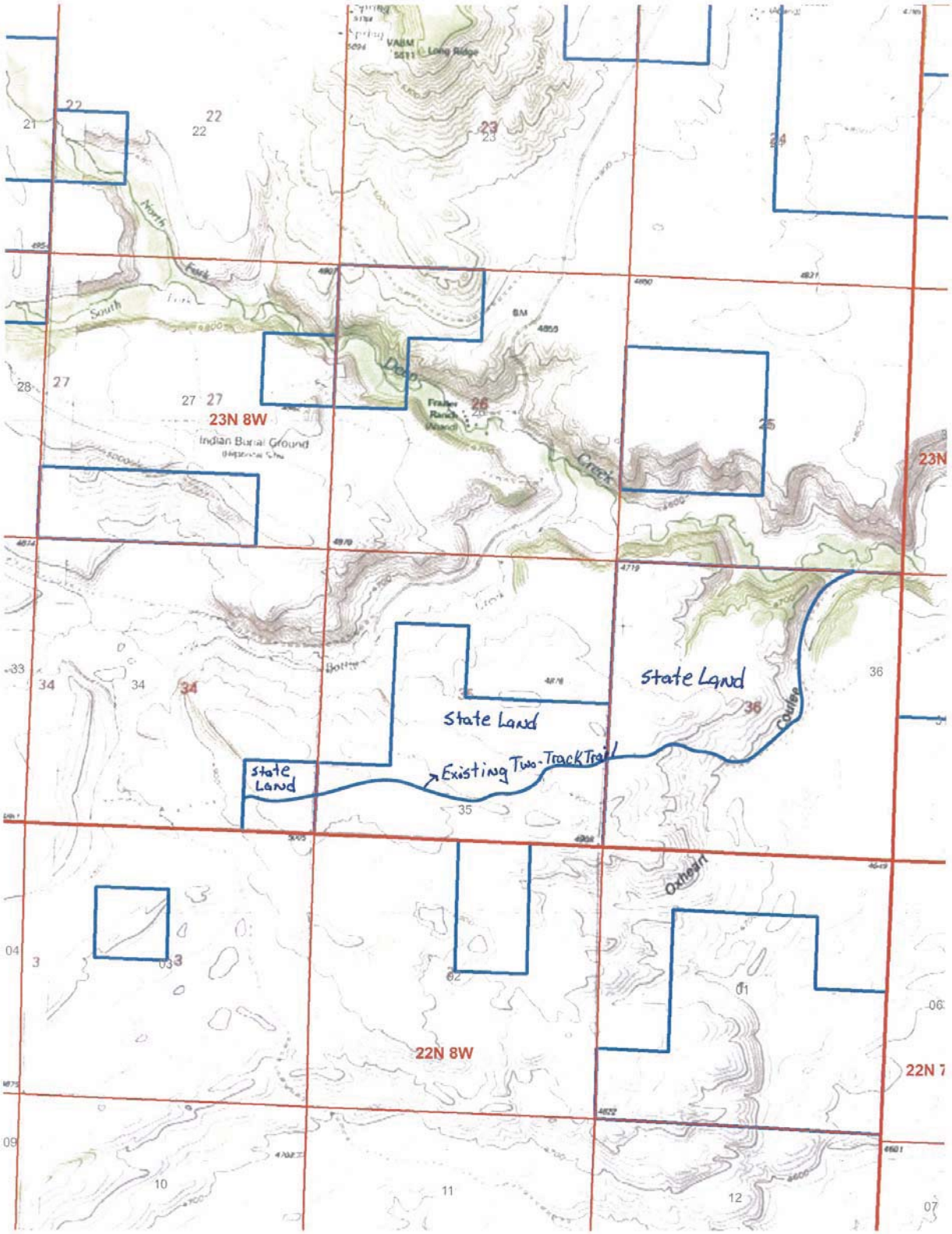
VABM
Long Ridge
North
Fork
South
Fork
Dry
Creek
Fraker
Ranch
23N 8W
Indian Burial Ground
State Land
State Land
State Land
Existing Two-Track Trail
Coulee
Orchard
22N 8W
22N 7
23N

EXHIBIT A

Tract 1

TOWNSHIP 22 NORTH, RANGE 8 WEST, M.P.M., TETON COUNTY, MONTANA
Section 5: SW¼SW¼
Section 6: SE¼SE¼
Section 7: E½NE¼; SE¼
Section 8: S½NE¼; W½; SE¼
Section 9: W½SW¼
Section 17: SE¼NE¼; N½NW¼; S½
Section 18: E½

Tract 2

Undivided one-third (1/3) interest in:

TOWNSHIP 22 NORTH, RANGE 8 WEST, M.P.M., TETON COUNTY, MONTANA
Section 20: E½; E½SW¼
Section 21: W½
Section 28: N½NW¼
Section 29: N½NE¼
EXCEPTING therefrom public roads and rights of way.

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