

# CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Install and maintain road to access Sorenson USA 34-9H

Proposed Implementation Date: April 2012

Proponent: Marathon Oil Company, 3172 Highway 22 North, Dickenson, North Dakota, 58601

Type and Purpose of Action: Marathon Oil Company had made a Land Use License application to install and maintain an access road on this tract of State land. The purpose of this application is to access and oil well identified as Sorenson USA 34-9H. The State of Montana Lands that will be impacted by the Land Use License is 208.57 rods in length encompassing 4.02 acres. The area of impact is conservation reserve program acreage.

Location: N2N2N2, Section 16 Township 31 North Range 59 East

County: Sheridan County

## I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

Marathon Oil Company has made a Land Use License Application to construct and maintain a road on State of Montana land. Marathon Oil Company has contacted the surrounding land owners concerning this project. The surface lessee of the State land has been contacted and made aware of the impacts to their lease hold interest.

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, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Minerals Management Bureau Helena Office. United Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency. There may be other State or Federal agencies that may be involved with this project, that the writer of this document is not aware of.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Action Alternative: Grant a Land Use License to Marathon Oil Company to use 4.02 acres of State land for the purpose of access road to an oil well drilling site.

No Action Alternative: Deny a Land Use License to Marathon Oil Company to use 4.02 acres of State land for purpose of access road to an oil well drilling site.

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

RESOURCE	POTENTIAL IMPACTS
<p>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?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: This type of project will impact the sandy and sands soils on the State land. The impacts will be permanent on those areas that will be covered with road dirt and scoria. The areas that are disturbed will be reclaimed under a reclamation plan upon well site abandonment. Those soils that are reclaimed will produce tame grass vegetation upon reseeding of the road way route.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to the soils on the State land under this alternative.</p>
<p>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?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The project will have no impacts on the water quality, quantity and distribution associated with this tract of state land. The project area contains no surface water resources.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to water resources under this alternative.</p>
<p>6. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The project will have minimal impacts on the air quality of the land involved with the project. The project will produce some dirt particles to become air borne from the road construction equipment. The road construction and maintenance equipment will be moving various quantities of soils from overburden to below surface soils. The overburden will be left by the road edge for the purpose of reclamation.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to the air quality under this alternative.</p>
<p>7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The access road will be located on tame grass conservation reserve program acreage. The road way construction will destroy the use of this soil for production of tame grass plant species. The majority of the 4.02 acres used for the road</p>

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
	<p>way will be altered and no longer produce vegetation. The road way will be reclaimed upon well site abandonment.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to the vegetation under this alternative.</p>
<p>8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?</p>	<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. Some of the wildlife that inhabits this area, whitetail deer, bald and golden eagles, sharptail grouse, pheasant, song birds etc. The loss of habitat on the State land will have minimal impacts to wildlife and bird species.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to the wildlife habitat resources associated with the land under this alternative.</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?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The project area contains no known unique, endangered, fragile or limited environmental resources. The area of impact contains no known threatened or endangered species. The conservation reserve program area of impact contains some habitat resources for wildlife, upland birds and song birds. The road maintenance will have minimal impacts to the habitat resources associated with the conservation reserve program acreage. The loss of habitat on the State land will be only 4.02 acres.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to the environmental resources under this alternative.</p>
<p>10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: There are no known historical or archaeological sites on or near the area to be impacted by the road way construction. The state land was inspected by Randy Dirkson, Land Use Specialist, Glasgow Unit Office, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. The on-site inspection</p>

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
	<p>found no historical or archaeological sites on this tract of State land.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to historical or archaeological sites under this alternative.</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?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The road construction and maintenance will be visible to the general public. The road construction will be visible from a county road located west of project site. The road way construction maintenance will have minimal impacts to the aesthetic values associated with the state land.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the aesthetics associated with the land under this project.</p>
<p>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>	<p>Action Alternative: The use of the State land for an access road will place no demands on environmental resources of land, water, air or energy.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the environmental resources of land, water, air or energy under this alternative.</p>
<p>13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The construction and maintenance of an access road will have no impacts to other projects or plans that may be occurring on the 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
<p>14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?</p>	<p>Action Alternative; The construction and maintance of an access road have various types of human health and safety risks. The human health and safety risks are identified as</p>

	<p>occupational hazards by employee and employer.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to human health or safety under this alternative.</p>
<p>15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?</p>	<p>Action alternative: The access road construction maintenance will have minimal impact to the agricultural activities that are occurring on the land. The current agriculture activities occurring on this tract are conservation reserve program acreage.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the agricultural activities under this alternative.</p>
<p>16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The project may create some local jobs for maintenance of the access road. Those jobs would be for various activities, including heavy equipment operation that requires operator licensing.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the quantity and distribution of employment under this alternative.</p>
<p>17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The project will not create additional tax revenue for Sheridan County. The writer of this document is not aware of taxes levied for oil well access road construction.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the local and state tax base under this alternative.</p>
<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>	<p>Action Alternative: The project will place no demands for government services.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts for government services under this alternative.</p>
<p>19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The project will not impact locally adopted environmental plans and goals.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to locally adopted environmental plans and goals under</p>

	this alternative.
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 or hiking recreational values associated with the State. There will also be no impacts to the surrounding deeded lands near the access road construction and maintainance zone.</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 near this rural area.</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.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There will be no impacts to the social structures under this alternative.</p>
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 State land.</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 may provide some economic benefit to the local community businesses. The benefits would be the sale of supply products to the company that will be doing the access road construction and maintenance.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the social and economic circumstances under this alternative.</p> <p>.</p>

EA Checklist Prepared By: \_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_ Date:

Randy Dirkson

Land Use Specialist

IV. FINDING	
25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:	Action Alternative was selected: Grant a Land Use License for an access road encompassing 4.02 acres of State land. The purpose of the Land Use License will be to allow Marathon Oil Company access across State land to an oil well site. This Land Use License will benefit the applicant as well Montana School Trust. The School Trust will receive monies generated from the issuance of the Land Use License.
26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:	The project will have no significant impacts to the natural resources associated with this tract of 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:

Name

Title

Date:

Signature