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DNRC - Trust Land Management Division

LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL  
POLICY OFFICE

**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DOCUMENTATION FOR  
DNRC FOREST MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY**

Project Name: Phillips – Lease # 2386 ( Precommercial Thinning ) Proposed  
Implementation Date: February 3, 2006 – April 30, 2006

Proponent: Department of Natural Resources – Northeastern Land Office

Type and Purpose of Action: The project is a NRCS - EQUIP project - thinning of noncommercial Ponderosa Pine to 17 feet spacing or 180 trees/acre to improve cattle access and timber growth and health on 40 acres of State land.

Location: E/2NE/4, sec.36, T17N, R17E County: Fergus

**Category (refer to ARM 36.11.447 for additional detail):**

- 1) Temporary Uses of Land with Negligible Effects
- 2) Plans and Policies
- 3) Leases and Licenses
- 4) Acquisition of Land or Interest in Land
- 5) Road Maintenance and Repair
- 6) Bridges and Culverts
- 7) Crossing Class 3 Streams
- 8) Temporary Road Use Permits
- 9) Road Closure
- 10) Material Stockpiles
- 11) Backfilling
- 12) Gathering Forest Products for Personal Use
- 13) Regeneration
- 14) Nursery Operations
- 15) Water Wells
- 16) Herbicides and Pesticides
- 17) Other Hazardous Materials
- 18) Fences
- 19) Waterlines
- 20) Removal of Small Trees
- 21) Removal of Hazardous Trees
- 22) Cone Collection
- 23) Timber Harvest (<100 MBF green or 500 MBF salvage)

By process of the adoption of the Administrative Rules for Forest Management on February 27, 2003, pursuant to ARM 36.2.523(5)(a), the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Trust Land Management Division, has adopted the above categorical exclusions for activities conducted on state forest lands. "Categorical

Exclusion" refers to a type of action that does not individually, collectively, or cumulatively require an EA or EIS unless extraordinary circumstances occur (ARM 36.2.522(5)).

**Extraordinary Circumstances:**

Will the proposed action affect one or more of the following resources or situations in the project area? If the resource or situation is present, but project design avoids potential adverse effects on the resource, the answer is "no". One "Yes" answer indicates that Categorical Exclusion is not appropriate for the project, and an EA or EIS must be conducted.

- | YES   | NO           |  |
|-------|--------------|--|
| _____ | <u>  x  </u> | 1) Sites with high erosion risk.   |
| _____ | <u>  x  </u> | 2) Federally listed threatened and endangered species or critical habitat for threatened and endangered species as designated by the USFWS.  |
| _____ | <u>  x  </u> | 3) Municipal watersheds.   |
| _____ | <u>  x  </u> | 4) The SMZ of fish bearing streams or lakes, except for modification or replacement of bridges, culverts and other crossing structures.  |
| _____ | <u>  x  </u> | 5) State natural area.   |
| _____ | <u>  x  </u> | 6) Native American religious and cultural sites.   |
| _____ | <u>  x  </u> | 7) Archaeological sites.   |
| _____ | <u>  x  </u> | 8) Historic properties and areas.  |
| _____ | <u>  x  </u> | 9) Several related projects that individually may be subject to categorical exclusion but that may occur at the same time or in the same geographic area. Such related actions may be subject to environmental review even if they are not individually subject to review. |
| _____ | <u>  x  </u> | 10) Violations of any applicable state or federal laws or regulations.   |

The project listed above meets the definition of the indicated categorical exclusion, including specified conditions and extraordinary circumstances, as provided in the Administrative Rules for Forest Management (ARM 36.11.447).

Prepared by: Ronald E. Buck 2/2/06  
(Name) (Date)

Decision by: Clive Rooney NELC Area Manager  
(Name) (Title)  
[Signature] 2/3/06  
(Signature) (Date)