

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Phillips ROW Easement Modification Proposed Implementation Date: 10-15-11

Proponent: Christa Phillips

Type and Purpose of Action: Easement ROW modification to enhance access and safety.

Location: T8N-R26E Sec.36 NE1/4 County: Musselshell

I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT	
1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.	Lessee
2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:	Musselshell County Road Dept
3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:	Various modified routes and County Rd. approaches. No Action

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?	[Y] Culvert to be placed in West Parrot Creek to ensure future stream flow and to keep vehicles out of the drainage. The current route runs approximately 300 ft. along the bottom of this intermittent drainage creating rutting and potential gullying during times of high precipitation.
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?	[N] West Parrot Creek at this location is an intermittent drainage, currently dry and other than the 2-track trail, it is overgrown with various grasses, shrubs and trees.

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
6. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?	[N]
7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?	[N] The proposal will disturb 0.31 acre and in return rehabilitate approximately 0.54 acres of the current route.
8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?	[N] Various species migrate through and temporarily use this area.
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?	[N] The primary concern is that of West Parrot Creek. This intermittent drainage is currently dry. The proposed action will have less influence on it than the current route does; keeping vehicles out of the drainage by providing a shorter crossing over a culvert compared to the existing route which runs approximately 300 ft. within the drainage bottom.
10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?	[N] The proposed route was walked several times and no cultural resources were found.
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?	[N] The modification should improve the overall aesthetics by eliminating traffic in the drainage bottom and shortening and straightening out the route.
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?	[N]
13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?	[N]

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 objective of the proposal is to enhance safety and improve accessibility by: relocating the county road approach to a location with improved site distance; straightening the route; and removing it from the drainage bottom.
15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	[N] The proposal will simplify access. As is, the current route makes it difficult for large vehicles such as cattle and hay trucks and various service vehicles to navigate sharp turns and that portion of the route in the drainage bottom.
16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.	[N]
17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?	[N]
18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed?	[N] This is a modification of an existing easement to improve and simplify access which upon completion will benefit among others, service, commercial, farm/ranch and fire equipment vehicles.
19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?	[N]
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?	[Y] This tract has high quality recreational value for various uses such as hunting, horseback riding, hiking etc. and is accessed by West Parrot Creek Road in the east half of the section.
21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?	[N]
22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	[N]

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	[N]
24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:	[N]

EA Checklist Prepared By: Gary Brandenburg SLO/LUS

IV. FINDING	
25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:	The modified easement ROW route was determined from a March 30, 2011 on-site inspection by SLO TLMD staff. Considerations in choosing the route were: Safety at the intersection of the county road and the easement, by providing an approach with the greatest sight distance to adequately see oncoming traffic along the county road; minimizing impacts to the West Parrot Creek drainage at its crossing; and the shortest and most direct route from the county road to the point of intersection with the existing easement. The total distance of this new route is approximately 450 ft versus the current route which is approximately 790 ft. This route will provide greater safety, less impact on the drainage, improved and simplified accessibility and less encumbrance to the State section.
26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:	Insignificant. This proposal is an overall improvement to the current situation.
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: Matt Wolcott SLO Area Manager
 Name Title

 /S/Matt Wolcott 9-1-11
 Signature Date