

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

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| Project Name: Bibeau Fence | Proposed Implementation Date: May 2013 |
| Proponent: Edward Bibeau, 27499 HWY 191 S, Malta, MT 59538 | |
| <p><u>Type and Purpose of Action:</u> Edward Bibeau requested to replace the existing fences along the north and east boundary of State lease #10532. He plans to use woven wire and steel posts to construct a fence capable of containing sheep on his State lease during the summer grazing season. Since woven wire sheep fences disrupt the movement of antelope, Mr. Bibeau agreed to install additional gates around this State lease and annually open all gates (excluding gates necessary to contain livestock on adjacent property that is not part of the proponents operation) from October 1st - April 1st to allow antelope and other wildlife to migrate freely if this project is approved.</p> | |
| Location: LAND LYING W. OF HWY 191 S in Section 36 - T27N - R27E. | County: Phillips |

I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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| <p>1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.</p> | <p>The proponent, Gene St. John, has submitted an improvement request form to the Glasgow Unit Office (GUO) of the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. The request will be reviewed by DNRC staff.</p> <p>FWP was contacted and Scott Thompson, Region 6 Biologist, FWP met with both the proponent and Matthew Poole, Unit Manager, DNRC onsite on April 6th, 2013.</p> <p>NRCS assisted the proponent with a fencing plan for this tract and his adjacent deeded lands.</p> |
| <p>2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:</p> | <p>DNRC is not aware of any other agencies with jurisdiction or other permits needed.</p> |
| <p>3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:</p> | <p>Action Alternative: Grant proponent permission to replace the existing fences along the north and east boundary of State lease #10532.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Deny proponent permission to replace the existing fences along the north and east boundary of State lease #10532</p> |

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

| RESOURCE | [Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS |
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| | <p>N = Not Present or No Impact will occur. Y = Impacts may occur (explain below)</p> |

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

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| <p>4.GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are fragile, compactable or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations?</p> | <p>Action: No impacts geology and/or soil characteristics are anticipated. No Action: No impacts to the geology or soil characteristics will occur.</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: No impact the water quality, quantity, and/or distribution of surface water are anticipated. No Action: No impacts to the water quality, quantity, and/or distribution will occur.</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: No impacts to air quality are anticipated. No Action: No impacts to air quality will occur.</p> |
| <p>7.VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?</p> | <p>A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program identified 0 plant species of concern and 0 potential plant species of concern. Action: No impacts to the vegetation cover, quantity, and/or quality are anticipated. No Action: No impacts to the vegetation cover, quantity, and/or quality will occur.</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>Several antelope have been observed on this tract of State land and they are known to migrate through this area when transitioning to and from summer and winter ranges. Replacing the current strands of wire with woven wire would create a barrier for migrating antelope. No substantial impacts to the areas wildlife would occur from this small scale project and impacts would be mitigated by opening gates to allow free movement and migration of wildlife from October 1st to April 1st each year. Action: No impacts to terrestrial, avian, and/or aquatic life and habitats are anticipated. No Action: No impacts to terrestrial, avian, and/or aquatic life and habitats will occur.</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>A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program identified 9 animal species of concern and 5 potential animal species of concern. The Greater Sage Grouse is a listed species. The Greater Sage Grouse is known to be impacted from fences due to collisions with the fences while in flight. Replacing the existing fence should not increase or decrease this impact because it would be located along the existing fence line. None of the other species listed would be impacted by the installation of the fence. Action: No impacts to unique, endangered, fragile, or</p> |

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

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| | <p>limited environmental resources are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources will occur.</p> |
| <p>10.HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?</p> | <p>The proposed fence would be installed directly along the existing fence line.</p> <p>Action: No impacts to the areas historical, archeological, and/or paleontological resources are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the areas historical, archeological, and/or paleontological resources will occur.</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: No impacts to the areas aesthetics are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the areas aesthetics will occur.</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: No impacts to the demands of environmental resources such as land, water, air, and/or energy resources are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the demands of environmental resources such as land, water, air, and/or energy resources will occur.</p> |
| <p>13.OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?</p> | <p>Action: No impacts to studies, plans, and/or projects are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to studies, plans, and/or projects will occur.</p> |

III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

| RESOURCE | [Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES |
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| <p>14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?</p> | <p>Action: No impacts to human health and/or safety risks are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to human health and/or safety risks will occur.</p> |
| <p>15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?</p> | <p>Action: No impacts to industrial and commercial activities are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the industrial, commercial, and/or agricultural activities and production will occur.</p> |
| <p>16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.</p> | <p>Action: No impacts to quantity and distribution of employment are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to quantity and distribution of employment will occur.</p> |
| <p>17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX</p> | <p>Action: No impacts to the state tax base and/or tax</p> |

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| REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue? | revenues are anticipated. No Action: No impacts to the state tax base and/or tax revenues will occur. |
| 18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed? | Action: No impacts to the level of demand for government services are anticipated. No Action: No impacts to the level of demand for government services will occur. |
| 19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect? | Action: No impacts to local environmental plans and goals are anticipated. No Action: No impacts to local environmental plans and goals will occur. |
| 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? | Action: No impacts to recreational or wilderness activities are anticipated. No Action: No impacts to the quality of recreational and wilderness activities will occur. |
| 21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing? | Action: No impacts to the density and/or distribution of population and housing are anticipated. No Action: No impacts to the density and/or distribution of population and housing will occur. |
| 22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible? | Action: No impacts to the areas social structures and/or traditional lifestyles are anticipated. No Action: No impacts to the areas social structures and/or traditional lifestyles will occur. |
| 23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area? | Action: No impacts to the areas cultural uniqueness and/or diversity are anticipated. No Action: No impacts to the areas cultural uniqueness and/or diversity will occur. |
| 24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES: | Action: No impacts to the social and economic circumstances are anticipated. No Action: No impacts to the social and economic circumstances will occur. |

EA Checklist Prepared By: s/Matt Poole/s
Matthew Poole (Unit Manager)

Date: April 11, 2013

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| IV. FINDING | |
| 25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED: | Action |
| 26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS: | NSI |

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27. Need for Further Environmental Analysis:

EIS More Detailed EA No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By: Clive Rooney NELO Area Manager
Name Title

s/Clive Rooney/s Date: April 11, 2013
Signature

Instructions for Completing the Form

The checklist form is designed to cover the minimum requirements for an EA, but the rules should be reviewed frequently to assure that the requirements are being met (ARM 26.2.645 and 26.2.646). Just like other EAs, copies of all checklists must be sent to the Forest Management Bureau. The Forest Management Bureau is responsible for forwarding those EAs on to the Department's Environmental Coordinator. The Coordinator keeps a record of all EAs and forwards copies of the EAs to the Environmental Quality Council.

The format for this checklist follows the same topics and process as with regular EAs and EISs.

Complete the form as follows:

Project Name--Enter the name of the project proposal--
"Jones Lease", "Wherzitat Timber Permit," etc.

Proposed Implementation Date--Date you expect the
actual work on the project to start.

Proponent--Lessee, company, State department and
division that are proposing the action, and department
that is reviewing it.

Type and Purpose of Action--Briefly identify or
describe the proposed action in a few sentences or
paragraphs, including an idea of the scope of the pro-
posal. (e.g., "Clear and excavate a gravel pit on
State land. The project would cover 4 acres and
include a temporary crusher site. Approximately 4,000
yards of gravel would be crushed and hauled. After
the gravel is removed in about three months, the site
would be reclaimed and grass-seeded. See attached map
and
reclamation plan.")

Location/County--Section(s), Township, Range and county
name.

SECTION I: PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Item 1, Public involvement, Agencies, Groups or Indi-
viduals contacted--This item should be primarily a
list of individuals and groups who contributed to the
analysis. Private parties, State specialists, adja-
cent landowners and managers that were contacted, etc.
should be listed. The level of public involvement
will vary based on the level of interest. If much
controversy is associated with the project, more
extensive documentation is probably needed.

Item 2, Other Governmental Agencies with Jurisdiction,
List of Permits Needed--List those agencies or govern-
ing bodies that have some legal authority or control
over the project. Include the Dept. of Fish, Wildlife
and Parks for stream crossings, Air Quality Bureau,

Water Quality Bureau, etc. Also list permits that are needed to complete the project.

Item 3, Alternatives considered--The MEPA rules require "a description and analysis of reasonable alternatives to a proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternative would be implemented." A brief description of alternatives considered, including the "no action" alternative, should be entered here.

SECTION II: IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Items 4-13, Impacts on the Physical Environment--The capitalized words in the boxes are elements listed in the Administrative Rules that require an evaluation of direct, cumulative and secondary impacts. The questions in the box are likely effects that should be considered when evaluating the particular resource. The Yes and No check box should not be used as an "answer" to these questions.

Put an "N" in the box if no impacts would occur to the listed resource, or if the resource is not involved in the action. Put a "Y" in the box if the listed resource may be affected by the proposal. Typically, whenever you apply mitigation to avoid potential impacts you will answer "Y."

If a "Y" is entered, some explanation of what the effects will be should be entered in the POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES box. This explanation should help the decision-maker determine whether environmental effects have been satisfactorily mitigated, or if more analysis is needed. Statements such as "insignificant effect" DO NOT convey this information. Appropriate scales, measures and illustrations should be used to display the effects. Include a list of mitigations needed to limit impacts. The form can be expanded on the computer or more pages attached if extra room is needed. If many long and involved explanations are needed, a different type of EA may be appropriate.

Examples:

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| <p>1. 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>[Y] Lacustrine soils are present, Operations will only be allowed when soil moisture is less than 20% at a 6 inch depth.</p> <p>(ILLUSTRATES MITIGATION MEASURE)</p> |
| <p>5. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there significant use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?</p> | <p>[Y] The area is white tailed deer summer range. The project area is not an important use area for deer. Hiding cover will be reduced and forage will be increased on 4 acres out of a 590-acre parcel.</p> <p>(ILLUSTRATES UNIMPORTANT EFFECT)</p> |

SECTION III: IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

Items 14-24, Impacts on the Human Population--These blocks should be completed the same way as for Items 1-10, except that the effects are to the human population rather than the physical environment. Actions that do not cause changes to the affected resource but continue to support traditional occupations and lifestyles would be answered with an "N". Actions producing noticeable change would be answered with "Y."

Item 19, Locally Adopted Environmental Plans and Goals--This block should include reference to the State Forest Land Management Plan. The following language can be used in this block: *In June 1996, DNRC began a phased-in implementation of the State Forest Land Management Plan (Plan). The management direction provided in the Plan comprises the framework within which specific project planning and activities take place. The Plan philosophy and appropriate Resource Management Standards have been incorporated into the design of the proposed action.*

EA Checklist Prepared By--All those actually preparing the EA should sign and date on this line.

SECTION IV: FINDING

Item 25, Alternative Selected--List selected alternative.

Item 26, Significance of Potential Impacts For Selected Alternative--The approving officer should write a statement about the environmental effect of the overall proposal based on the entire EA. The conclusion should be based on the criteria for determining the significance of impacts in the MEPA rules (ARM 26.2.644). The statement should illustrate why effects are insignificant (or that more analysis is needed) and lead to the conclusions in Item 26. This may be drafted by the preparers of the EA with the decision-maker's consent.

Item 27, Need for Further Environmental Analysis--The decision maker should check the appropriate box based

on an overall review of the EA and supporting documents.

Decision By--The decision maker should sign and date after completing Items 25 and 26.