

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	BLM Portable Repeater Station Letter of Authorization
Proposed Implementation Date:	2022
Proponent:	Bureau of Land Management Miles City Field Office
Location:	N2 T1N-R39E-Sec 16
County:	Rosebud County

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The Bureau of Land Management Miles City Field Office, heretofore referred to as proponent, has requested of the DNRC Eastern Land Office permission to install a portable solar VHF (Very High Frequency) repeater site on the above-mentioned state owned tract.

This proposed repeater site should provide a more reliable means of radio communication in a geographic area that currently lacks adequate two-way radio communication. The installation of this repeater site should help overcome the current challenges posed by topography which hinder line-of-site communications. This should particularly benefit non-commercial wildland fire use (e.g. DNRC, BLM, County Govt.) and enhance wildland firefighter safety.

If installed, the site would be comprised of a shelter with the repeater and ancillary gear installed inside. The shelter would not need any foundational prep as it would sit on top of the ground with ballast weight to keep it stabilized. It would have one bay and two solar panels. There would be an option to install a DNRC repeater should the DNRC choose to do so.

Approximate dimensions of the site would be as follows: a width of 6 feet, a length of 7 feet, and a height of 8 feet, with a 20 foot tall mast. No fencing would be installed. The shelter would be delivered by helicopter to the site and brought online by one to two technicians. Installation should be completed in a day. Scheduled maintenance would be done annually and corrective maintenance should be done as needed depending on severity.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:

Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

The proponent has requested that the DNRC allow installation of a portable solar VHF repeater site on the above-mentioned state owned tract. The DNRC expects little to no environmental impact because of this project, and because of this, no public comment was sought.

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

Bureau of Land Management
Federal Communications Commission

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A- Grant request for the project.

Alternative B- No Action.

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.

Alternative A- No Impact

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- No Impact

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- No Impact

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- No Impact

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- No Impact

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- No Impact

Alternative B- No Impact

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

Alternative A- No Impact

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- No impacts expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- No Impacts expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

None

<p style="text-align: center;">IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION</p>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.</i>• <i>Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.</i>• <i>Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.</i> |
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14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

Alternative A- There may be risks to human health and safety during the project, but this activity should be done by qualified professionals. Safety concerns should be minimized with proper safety protocol employed by the workers.

Following the completion of the project, wildland firefighter safety should be enhanced as the repeater site should provide reliable two-way radio communication in the affected area.

Alternative B- No impact

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

Alternative A- No Impact

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- No impacts expected.

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- No Impacts expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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

Alternative A- The site would require annual maintenance and corrective maintenance should be done as needed depending on severity.

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- No Impacts expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- No impacts expected.

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- No Impacts expected

Alternative B- No Impact

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

Alternative A- No Impacts expected

Alternative B- No Impact

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

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

Alternative A- No Impacts expected

Alternative B- No Impact

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.

Alternative A- This proposal would not directly benefit the trust financially, but should provide reliable radio communication for an area that currently lacks adequate two-way radio communication coverage. The intended use of this project to provide reliable communications for wildland fire use should result in less acreage of School Trust Land being affected by wildfire activity in a notably wildfire prone area.

Alternative B- No Impact

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Seth Urick	Date: 11-22-2022
	Title: Land Use Specialist	

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Alternative A

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

The granting of a letter of authorization for the installation of a portable solar VHF repeater site on state owned trust lands should not result in nor cause significant environmental impacts. An environmental assessment checklist is the appropriate level of analysis for the proposed action.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

EIS

More Detailed EA

No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Scott Aye
	Title: ELO Land Program Manager
Signature: 	Date: 11-22-2022