

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT	
Project Name: WBI Gas Line Extension Project	Proposed Implementation Date: Summer 2022
Proponent: WBI Energy Transmission; 1250 West Century Avenue, Bismarck, North Dakota, 58503	
Type and Purpose of Action: The applicant has applied for a single Land Use License (LUL) and two Right of Ways (ROWs) to install and maintain a natural gas pipeline.	
Location: S1/2 NW1/4; S1/2 Sec. 16, Twp. 31N, Rge. 34E, N1/2; S1/2 Section 16, Twp. 31N Rge. 33E Sec. 16	County: Phillips

I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT	
1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.	Michael Johnson of WBI Energy submitted two ROW applications and a Land Use License application to the Glasgow Unit Office staff. WBI Energy submitted their proposed project to the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program.
2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:	The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) has jurisdiction over the land surface within the area of impact.
3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:	Action Alternative: Grant the applicant the requested Right of Way easements and issue a Land Use License authorizing a temporary workspace on School Trust land. No Action Alternative: Deny the Right of Way and Land Use License applications.

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

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RESOURCE	POTENTIAL IMPACTS
<p>4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are fragile, compatible or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations?</p>	<p>The soils within the area of impact consist of: Bowdoin clay, harlake clay, Neldore-elloat complex, and Weingart complex of soils with 0-25% slopes. These soils are not fragile or unstable. No unusual geographic features are present.</p> <p>Action Alternative: There would be some soil compaction with heavy equipment operation during use of the workspace.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no changes to soils on the School Trust land.</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>There are no important surface water resources present within the area of impact.</p> <p>Action Alternative: The proposed project would have no impact on water quality, quantity or distribution.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative, there would be no impacts to water quality, quantity and distribution.</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>This project is not influenced by any air quality regulations or zones. Air quality in the area is generally high quality.</p> <p>Action Alternative: This type of project on the School Trust land would have no impact on air quality.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no impacts to air quality.</p>

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7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?

The current vegetative community consists of irrigated hayland and both native rangeland and non-native grasses used for grazing. It is managed for typical agricultural activities such as livestock grazing and annually producing hay. There are no rare plant species present.

Action Alternative: Impacts to the vegetation would occur within the workspace. A reclamation requirement of the LUL would be that the applicant re-seed using a seed mix determined by Glasgow Unit Office staff, reflecting the vegetation currently present.

No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no impacts to the plant communities on the School Trust land.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?

The School Trust land provides habitat for deer, upland birds and grassland birds.

Action Alternative: During installation of the line and use of the workspace, the noise and increased activity going may deter wildlife from using the area. After installation and reclamation of the area, wildlife use of the area should return to normal.

No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no impacts to the possible use of the School Trust land as wildlife habitat.

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?

The area of impact does not contain fragile or limited environmental resources. The following species of concern may seasonally use the area: Sprague's Pipit, Great Blue Heron, Chestnut-collared Longspur, Greater Sage-Grouse, Baird's Sparrow, Long-billed Curlew, Brewer's Sparrow,

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Ferruginous Hawk, Bobolink, and Loggerhead Shrike.

WBI submitted the project to the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program.

Action Alternative: The area of impact has seen disturbances in the past with installation of a nearby pipeline, annual cattle grazing, and annual irrigation and harvesting of the hay crop. There would likely be a slight degradation of habitat until re-seeded vegetation takes hold.

No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no impacts to the environmental resources on this School Trust land.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?

A Class III cultural resources inventory was conducted of the area of potential effect on state land. During the inventory, three cultural resources (24PH3008 [Great Northern Railroad route], 24PH3464 [U.S. Highway 2], and 24PH3541 [single tipi ring]) were located on state land. Because all three resources are outside of the pipeline route, the proposed project would result in *No Effect to Antiquities* as defined under the Montana State Antiquities Act. A formal report of findings has been prepared and is on file with the DNRC and the Montana State Historic Preservation Officer.

Action Alternative: The project would have no impact on historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

No Action Alternative: There would be no impact to historical or

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	archaeological sites under this alternative.
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>The School Trust land is legally accessible and visible to the public.</p> <p>Action Alternative: This project would not significantly change the aesthetics of the tract.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no impacts to aesthetics associated with the School Trust land.</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>Environmental resources in the area are not limited and are not affected by the proposed project. No nearby activities would affect the project.</p> <p>Action Alternative: The proposed project would place no demands on environmental resources in the area.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no demands placed on environmental resources of land, water, air or energy.</p>
13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?	<p>There are no other known studies, plans or projects currently taking place on these two tracts of School Trustland.</p> <p>Action Alternative: This project would not impact environmental plans or studies.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no impacts to the plans or studies that DNRC has on this School Trustland.</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 operation and movement of heavy equipment and vehicles has inherent risks. Use of the additional workspace authorized by the LUL would allow for increased room for operation of the heavy equipment used in installation of the pipeline.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no impacts to human health or safety.</p>
<p>15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?</p>	<p>The project area is currently leased for grazing and irrigated agriculture. The addition of a natural gas pipeline is not really a significant change as the area contains the Bowdoin gas field with thousands of natural gas wells and pipelines.</p> <p>Action Alternative: The annual production of vegetation for livestock grazing and grasses for hay production would be temporarily reduced. Production levels should return to current levels once the areas are reclaimed. The addition of the pipeline would be a benefit to WBI and the community of Saco, but it is not a measurable increase to the natural gas production. The pipeline would simply be a means of transportation for natural gas being produced from existing wells/sources.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no impacts to the School Trust Lands.</p>
<p>16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.</p>	<p>Slight increase in labor demand during installation/construction of the pipeline. No lasting impacts to quantity or distribution of employment.</p>

	<p>Action Alternative: The project would not create nor negatively impact jobs in the area.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to 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 would have no impacts on the local and state tax base and tax revenues.</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>The pipeline route crosses roads, but the pipeline would be bored in these locations and not disrupt the flow of traffic. The route is primarily located away from roads and residential areas.</p> <p>Action Alternative: There would be no additional demand for governmental services.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be no additional demand for government services.</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>There are no known special management plans on the School Trust land. It is managed for typical agricultural activities.</p> <p>Action Alternative: No impacts to locally adopted environmental plans and goals are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Under this type of alternative there would be no impacts on locally adopted environmental plans and goals.</p>
<p>20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or</p>	<p>Primary recreational activity taking place on the involved project area is seasonal hunting. No changes to access</p>

<p>recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract?</p>	<p>or recreation activities would result from the project. Wildlife may be dispersed during construction, but wildlife should return to normal patterns once construction is completed.</p> <p>Action Alternative: No changes to the recreational potential associated with the project are anticipated.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the recreational values associated with the School Trust land under this alternative.</p>
<p>21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The project would not impact the density and distribution of population and housing.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the density and distribution of population and housing.</p>
<p>22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The project would not disrupt the traditional lifestyles of the local community.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the social structures under this alternative.</p>
<p>23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The project would not impact the cultural uniqueness and diversity of this rural area.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the cultural uniqueness and diversity under this alternative.</p>
<p>24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:</p>	<p>Action Alternative: The installation of this pipeline on School Trust land would help supply the nearby city of Saco with natural gas.</p>

	No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to the economic circumstances under this alternative.
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EA Checklist Prepared By: s/Luke Gunderson\ Date: 4/19/22
 Luke Gunderson Land Use Specialist

IV. FINDING	
25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:	Action alternative.
26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:	No lasting negative impacts anticipated. The city of Saco will benefit from the natural gas that will be supplied through the new pipeline.
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: Matthew Poole Glasgow Unit Manager
 Name Title

s/Matthew Poole\s Date: April 20, 2022
 Signature