

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	George Carson Spring Development
Proposed Implementation Date:	2012
Proponent:	George Carson.
Location:	T19N-R55E-Sec 16
County:	Dawson

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The surface lessee George Carson. has developed an existing spring and installed a stock tank on the above mentioned tract to State Trust Land. This spring development project has provided a more reliable water source for livestock and wildlife on this section.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

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

Lessee will file a DS-405 improvement form once the expenditures are determined. Due to the small scope of the project no public comment was sought.

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

DNRC-Water Resources Division

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A: Approve construction of the water development on state land
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: The presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils was not noted in the area of development. Due to the small scope and footprint of the project minimal impact is expected. Soils mostly consist of heavy clays and gravel in the area of development.
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: Groundwater resources will be utilized for stock water purposes. This may have a small effect on available groundwater resources; any effect should be minimal in nature. No surface water resources should be affected by this project.

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: Pollutant and Particulate levels may be increased during the construction of the project; these levels should be minimal and return to normal levels after the completion of the project.

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: Some vegetation would be affected through this project. Dominant species in the area are Western Wheatgrass (*agropyron smithii*), Green Needle Grass (*stipa viridula*), Bluebunch Wheatgrass (*Agropyron spicata*), Needle and Thread (*stipa comata*), Blue Grama (*bouteloua gracilis*), Prairie Junegrass (*koleria pyramidata*), various forbs and shrubs. Any affect to the vegetative community should be minimal in nature during the construction phase of the project. After completion the vegetative community should return to pre-development states.

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: Construction of this project may disrupt wildlife activity in the area for a few days. Upon completion of the project the wildlife use and habitat should return to normal with the added benefit of a new water source.

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: A search of the Montana Natural Heritage website shows two sensitive species noted within the area of the project. The species are listed below.

Baird's Sparrow(*Centronyx bairdii*)

Golden Eagle(*Aquila chrysaetos*)

Long-billed Curlew(*Numenius americanus*)

Sharp-tailed Grouse(*Tympanuchus phasianellus*)

Snapping Turtle(*Chelydra serpentina*)

Northern Leopard Frog(*Lithobates pipiens*)

Northern Redbelly Dace(*Chrosomus eos*)

Sauger(*Sander canadensis*)

While these species may be present in the general project area, no significant impacts are expected due to this project. No sensitive species were observed during the field review of this project.

This project is not located within identified Greater Sage Grouse Habitat area, and spring developments are an exempted activity within EO-12-2015 and EO-21-2015. No consultation was sought from the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program.

Alternative B: No Impact

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

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

Alternative A: A Class I (literature review) level review was conducted by the DNRC staff archaeologist for the area of potential effect (APE). This entailed inspection of project maps, DNRC's sites/site leads database, land use records, General Land Office Survey Plats, and control cards. The Class I search revealed that no cultural or paleontological resources have been identified in the APE. No additional archaeological investigative work will be conducted in response to this proposed development. However, if previously unknown cultural or paleontological materials are identified during project related activities, all work will cease until a professional assessment of such resources can be made.

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: During construction of the project noise levels may be increased slightly but this should only last for a few days and return to normal levels. The project is located in a remote area of Custer County, visual impacts would consist of the addition of a stock water tank located near the spring.

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 Significant Impact

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.

Alternative A: No Impact

Alternative B: No Impact

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

- *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.*

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

Alternative A: There will be some risk involving worker safety during the construction of the project. Workers are trained in field specific safety practices, and accept the risk involved as occupational hazards. Through proper safety protocol any impact should be minimal.

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: The development of the water source will add to positive agricultural activities and production in the area.

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 significant impact

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 Significant Impact

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: No Impact

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 Impact

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 Significant Impact

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 Impact

Alternative B: No Impact

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

Alternative A: No Impact

Alternative B: No Impact

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

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

Alternative A: No Impact

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: No direct monetary return to the trust will be gained. The project will provide a reliable water source for livestock and wildlife in the area. This should aid in grazing distribution and benefit the resource.

Alternative B: No Impact

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Aaron Kneeland	Date: 6-14-2022
	Title: Land Use Specialist	

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Alternative A

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

The granting of the requested stock water well development on this tract of state-owned trust lands for the purpose of improving grazing distribution and wildlife habitat should not result in nor cause significant environmental impacts. The proposed action satisfies the trusts fiduciary mandate and ensures the long-term productivity of the land. 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: