

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Installing an underground distribution Power Line	Proposed Implementation Date: 2014
Proponent: Norval Electric Cooperative, P O Box, 1130 US Highway 2 W, Glasgow, Montana 59230	
Type and Purpose of Action: Norval Electric Cooperative has submitted a Right of Way Easement Application to the Glasgow Unit Office to install a new underground power line to replace aging distribution facilities, of which portions will be located on State land in Valley County. The power line upgrade is necessary to maintain a reliable service to consumers on this portion of their system.	
Location: Sections NE4NE4,SW4SW4, Section 20 Township 31 North Range 40 East , N2N2, Section 21 Township 31 North Range 40 East, N2NW4, Section 22 Township 31 North Range 40 East	County: Valley

I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

<p>1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.</p>	<p>Norval Electric Cooperative has made a Right of Way Easement Application and submitted it to the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Glasgow Unit Office along with the survey plats for those State land tracts that will be crossed. The purpose of the requests is to place new buried power lines as part of a new power line project. The underground line will be placed in a manner as to not interfere with the lessee's surface activities. Also, the surface lessee's have been contacted by Norval Electric Cooperative in order for lessees to sign Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Notice of Settlement of Damages Form. There are some surface damages anticipated.</p>
<p>2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:</p>	<p>Valley County Commissioners, Valley County Conservation District and possible other government agencies that the writer of this document is not aware of.</p>
<p>3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:</p>	<p>Action Alternative: Grant Right of Way Easement to Norval Electric Cooperative to place a new buried power line on State owned land.</p> <p>No Action Alternative: Deny a Right of Way Easement requested by Norval Electric Cooperative to place new buried underground power line on State owned land.</p>

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

RESOURCE	POTENTIAL IMPACTS
<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>General Discussion: Very minimal native rangeland and dry land agriculture acreage will be impacted by this activity. There are no fragile, compactable, or unstable soils present or any unusual geologic features. The various soil types will continue to produce native vegetation and dry land crops.</p> <p>Action: This disturbance caused by the installation of the buried power line cable will be done using a static plow to install cable in less sensitive areas and by using a directional boring machine to install cable under roads and waterways.</p> <p>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>General Discussion: There are no surface water area associated with the project sites located on State of Montana land.</p> <p>Action: No impacts to the water quality, quantity, and/or distribution of surface and ground water resources on the State land.</p> <p>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>General Discussion: The project area is not located in an air quality regulation zone or airshed.</p> <p>Action: The air quality may or may not be temporarily reduced during installation. Small amounts of pollutants from machinery and particulates from the disturbance of the areas soil may be produced. The possible reduction in air quality will be minimal and will quickly return to normal by natural means.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to the 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>General Discussion: No rare plants or cover types are present within the project area. The project will occur in the late fall. There will be minimal impacts to the native rangeland vegetation. The dry land agriculture acreage will have been harvested and no impacts will occur to standing crops.</p> <p>Action: The plant communities will be dormant stages when installation occurs. The impacts to plant growth will be minimal and areas will see plant regeneration from exiting seed sources. No impacts to small grain crops as harvesting of dry land crops will be completed.</p> <p>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>General Discussion: This affected area is small in nature and located in a rural area. The area of impact has minimal habitat for wildlife and birds.</p> <p>Action: Impacts to terrestrial, avian, and aquatic habitat sources will be minimal. Area has no aquatic habitat on or near the project site.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts to terrestrial, avian, and/or aquatic life and habitats will occur.</p>

EA Checklist Prepared By: _____ /s/ _____
Randy Dirkson (Land Use Specialist)

Date: August 12, 2014

IV. FINDING	
25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:	Action Alternative.
26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:	Short-term and small-scale impacts to the native rangeland resource and dry land agriculture acreage located within proposed action area are expected. No Archaeological sites are present within the project area. This project will benefit the State Land Trust by generating additional revenue from the Right of Way Easement. Completion of the project will increase Valley county resident's ability to receive services from Norval Electric Cooperative Incorporated.
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: _____
S/Matthew Poole\S

Date: August 12, 2014

Matthew Poole, Glasgow Unit Manager