

Development Project User Guide

Montana Sage-Grouse Habitat Conservation Program

Website for Development Projects

Website Version SGv3.0 (<https://sagegrouse.mt.gov/>)

BACKGROUND

The Development Project User Guide describes the process for submitting development projects for review (e.g., consultation) with the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program (hereafter, Program) through the Program's website (<https://sagegrouse.mt.gov/>). This guide will be useful to anyone undertaking a new or amended land use or activity in sage-grouse habitat which receives state funding or is subject to state agency review, approval, or authorization. Those entities are responsible for consulting with the Program by submitting a project through the Program's website to determine necessary avoidance, minimization, reclamation, and compensatory mitigation requirements.

For more information regarding the Mitigation System, consult the Montana Mitigation System Policy Guidance Document for Greater Sage-Grouse (Version 1.0, October 2018) and the Montana Mitigation System Habitat Quantification Tool Technical Manual for Greater Sage-Grouse (Version 1.0, October 2018) available at the Program's website (<https://sagegrouse.mt.gov/Team>).

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1. INTRODUCTION

The greater sage-grouse (hereafter, sage-grouse) was once a candidate species for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act (hereafter, ESA) across its range in 11 western states. Montana and 10 other western states developed conservation strategies to conserve sage-grouse and address threats caused by habitat fragmentation, development, and loss of sagebrush. These state commitments led the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to finding that sage-grouse did not warrant listing under the ESA on October 2, 2015¹.

Montana's Sage Grouse Conservation Strategy (hereafter, Montana's Conservation Strategy) is based on the collaborative work of the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Advisory Council and supported by diverse stakeholders². The 2015 Montana State Legislature passed the Greater Sage-Grouse Stewardship Act (hereafter, Stewardship Act) and Executive Orders 12-2015³ and 21-2015⁴ (collectively hereafter, EO; <https://sagegrouse.mt.gov/About>). Taken together, the Stewardship Act and the EO establish Montana's Mitigation System and require the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program (hereafter, Program) to review all proposed activities in sage-grouse habitat designated as Core Area, General Habitat, or Connectivity Area (collectively hereafter, designated sage-grouse habitat).

Montana's goals provide for a flexible approach that allows those engaged in Montana's Greater Sage Grouse Mitigation System (hereafter, Mitigation System) to take creative approaches to either conserving sage-grouse habitat or offsetting impacts to development in service to Montana's Conservation Strategy. Mitigation credits are created by removing or limiting threats to sage-grouse habitat through preservation or by improving habitat quantity and/or quality through restoration or enhancement actions.

The EO applies to all programs and activities of state government, including permitting, grant programs, and technical assistance. Through a consultation process, the Program will work with project proponents to first avoid impacts, minimize impacts, and restore impacted areas. Compensatory mitigation may be required for impacts that can't be avoided, minimized, or restored.

Once the Program has thoroughly reviewed the proposed project, the Program will provide the proponent a consultation letter and/or Mitigation plan. These documents should be reviewed and provided to necessary permit agencies. The consultation process should be completed prior to submitting a permit application to the permitting agency. If the proposed disturbance will take place outside of designated sage-grouse habitat or within exempted areas such as incorporated cities and towns, Program consultation is not required.

¹ 80 FR 59857 (Oct. 2, 2015).

² Montana Sage-Grouse Work Group (FWP). 2005. Management Plan and Conservation Strategies for Sage Grouse in Montana – Final Rev. 2-1-2005.

³ State of Montana Office of the Governor Executive Order No. 12-2015 (Sept. 8, 2015).

⁴ State of Montana Office of the Governor Executive Order No. 21-2015 *Erratum* (Dec. 21, 2015).

1.1 Development Project Consultation Process

This user guide is intended to describe the process for submitting a development project using the Program’s website at <https://sagegrouse.mt.gov/>. For more information regarding Montana’s approach to the Mitigation System, consult the Montana Mitigation System Policy Guidance Document for Greater Sage-grouse⁵ (Version 1.0, October 2018; hereafter, Policy Guidance Document) and the Montana Mitigation System Habitat Quantification Tool Technical Manual⁶ (Version 1.0, October 2018; hereafter HQT Technical Manual). You can find the HQT Technical Manual and the Policy Guidance Document here: <https://sagegrouse.mt.gov/Team>.

For term definitions please refer to the [Development Project User Guide Glossary \(page 33\)](#).

The Program website creates an orderly, consistent way for the applicants to provide information to the Program and for the Program to receive and process requests for consultation. See Figure 1. Providing complete information will help the Program review projects more efficiently and shorten consultation times. Your information will be kept secure, is not viewable by others, and will not be sold or disseminated.

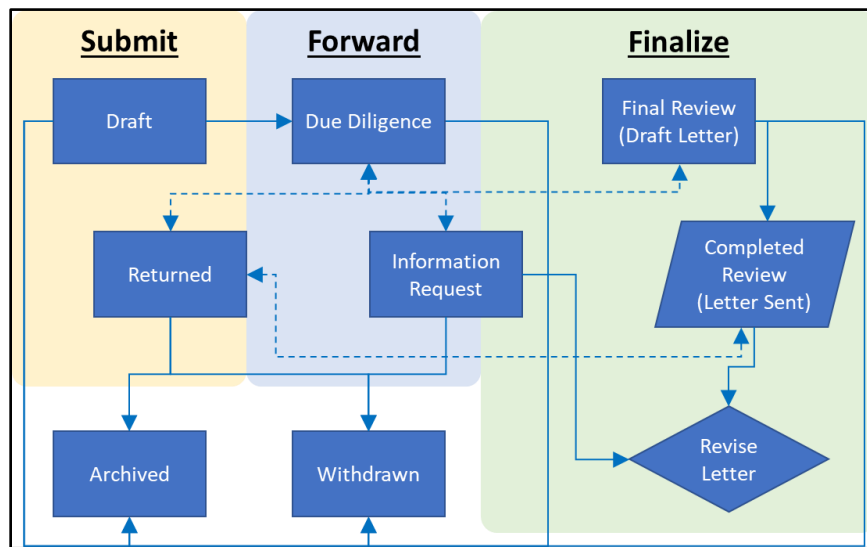


Figure 1. Review process flowchart illustrates the components of the consultation process and their relationship to each other.

⁵ Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program. 2018a. Montana Mitigation System Policy Guidance Document for Greater Sage-Grouse. Version 1.0. Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Helena, MT. Available at: https://sagegrouse.mt.gov/documents/1_Final_MT_Policy_Guidance_October4-2018_compressedV11.pdf (4/8/2022)

⁶ Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program. 2018b. Montana Mitigation System Habitat Quantification Tool Technical Manual for Greater Sage-Grouse. Version 1.0. Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Helena, MT. Available at: https://sagegrouse.mt.gov/documents/MT_HQT_Oct2018v1p0_09Oct2018.pdf (4/8/2022).

1.2 Determining if Consultation is Necessary

The Program's website can be accessed without having to login. When you visit the Program's website, you will see links at the top of the webpage that will take you to informational pages about the Program, Montana Sage Grouse Oversight Team (MSGOT), Grants (i.e., Stewardship Account Grants), Frequently Asked Questions (under the Help tab), and a map of designated sage-grouse habitat (Map tab). These informational pages can also be accessed by clicking on the links under the images located at the center of the home page.

To determine whether your development project would occur in designated sage-grouse habitat, please review the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Map (hereafter, Habitat Conservation Map) by clicking on the **'Map'** link located at the top of the Program's website. The Habitat Conservation Map allows you to zoom in on your area of interest by using the **'Zoom'** buttons (+, -) on the upper left side of the map. Use the mouse cursor and hover over each button to see a pop-up window with a description of each button's function. You can search for your proposed project area by using the **'Search'** bar above the **'Zoom'** buttons. This allows for searching by area name (e.g., Glasgow, MT), by Township, Range land parcels by entering "<township number><township direction> <range number><range direction>" (e.g., 2S 4W), and by latitude and longitude by entering "<latitude>, <longitude>" (e.g., 46.8174, -109.3773).

You can select different map backgrounds (e.g., basemaps, views) by clicking on one of the background layers from the legend on the top right side of the map (☰). The available backgrounds are Aerial, Street, and Terrain views.

If you determine that your project is outside of designated sage-grouse habitat, you are encouraged to either take a screen shot of the map location or print the map for documentation to submit to the state permitting agencies, if required. To print the map, click on the **'Print'** button (🖨). You will have the ability to choose between Landscape, Portrait, or Custom Extent. The printed map will exhibit the layers you have currently selected and displayed on the map. You can then attach this map along with your state permit application.

1.3 Determining if a Project is a Development Project or a Conservation Project

Program consultation is necessary for all projects when located entirely or partially on state or federally designated sage-grouse habitat *and* that require a state or federal permit. Within the Mitigation System, there are two primary types of projects:

- **Conservation Projects:** projects which remove or limit threats to sage-grouse habitat quantity and/or quality through preservation, restoration, or enhancement actions. **Conservation projects should not be entered as development projects.**
- **Development Projects:** projects which include the conversion of formerly suitable habitat to grasslands, croplands, mining, well pads, roads, or other physical disturbance that renders the

habitat unusable for sage-grouse. Not all projects which require Program consultation create disturbance. Many projects which do not create physical surface disturbance are still required to receive state permit authorization and must undergo Program consultation. The Program considers these types of projects to be disturbance projects.

If you are unsure if your project is a conservation or development project, please see our Conservation Quick Start Guide located at <https://sagegrouse.mt.gov/> or contact the Program at 406-444-6340 and/or sagegrouse@mt.gov.

1.4 Logging in to the Program Website

If consultation with the Program is necessary because your project is at least partially located within designated sage-grouse habitat and you either and you need to obtain a state permit or authorization, you will need to enter project information into the Program’s website. This will require setting up a secure login to access the development project side of the website. It is strongly recommended that you access and use the Program’s website on a desktop or laptop computer. Mobile devices are not recommended due to screen resolution limitations. No special software is needed. If you have a problem entering information or saving data on the site, try using a different browser such as Chrome or Firefox.

Information Security Notice

The Program’s website does not contain any Personally Identifiable Information or classified information.

The Program’s website **is access protected** (through ePass and Okta), and along with role assignment of users, prevents users from accessing other users’ information.

Users’ information will never be sold.

1.5 Create a Secure Login Account for Montana.gov through the <https://sagegrouse.mt.gov/> website.

To access the project application side of the Program’s website, you will need to login with a secure account. If this is your first-time logging into the Program’s website, you will need to create an Okta account for <https://login.mt.gov> through the Program’s website. Through this secure login, the State of Montana provides a convenient and secure service with the following benefits to Montana’s businesses and citizens:

- Allows access to all authorized government services with one username and password,
- Provides customization options for <https://login.mt.gov> to personalize the services page,

- Shows customers other government services that may be useful to them, and
- In the future, will grant customers access into authorized federal government services.

Creating an account is easy and allows you to manage your project information in a secure environment using one username and password. Save this information and keep it handy as you will need it to login each time you return to the Program's website. If you forget your username or password, you can request a new password or get username hints on the login site. This information will be sent to the email identified when you created your account.

If you currently have an ePass account:

1. Click on the '**Login**' button on the dark gray menu bar in the upper right corner of the Program's website
2. Activate your new Okta account by entering your ePass username and password when prompted.
3. Your username is the same email address previously used with your ePass account.
4. You will then receive an email containing a link to create a new password for your newly activated Okta account.

If you do not have a login account:

1. Click on the '**Login**' button on the dark gray menu bar in the upper right corner of the Program's website.
2. Click the '**Sign Up**' link to create an Okta account.
3. You can also visit <https://login.mt.gov> to create an account or login via Microsoft, Google, or Facebook identity providers.

MONTANA.GOV
OFFICIAL STATE WEBSITE

SIGN IN

Username
State Employees use your state network username, all others use email address

Password

Remember me

Sign In

Need help signing in?

Don't have an account? [Sign up](#)

NOTE: After activating or creating your new Okta account, you may need to return to the Program's website and login again.

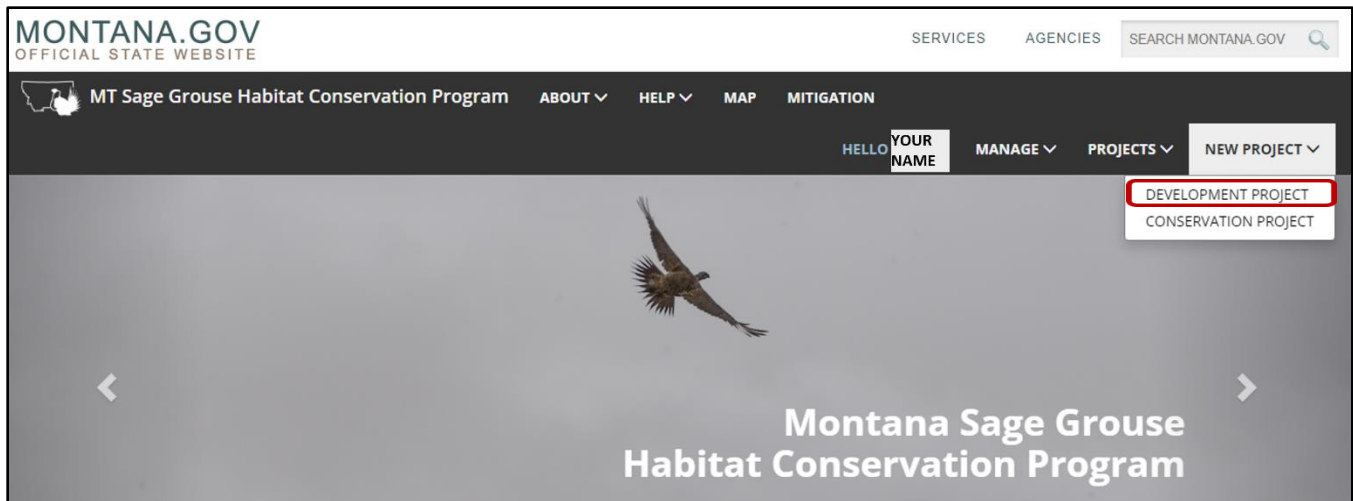
Please contact the Program at sagegrouse@mt.gov for assistance.

2. CREATING A NEW DEVELOPMENT PROJECT USING THE WEBSITE

After you are logged into the Program's website, you will see additional tabs appear in the dark gray menu bar at the top of the website. These tabs will be helpful in accessing your account and project submission information.

2.1 How to Create a New Development Project

1. After logging in with your Username and Password, click on 'New Project' in the upper right corner of the menu bar to be able to select a development project.
2. Click 'Development Project' shown in the screenshot below.
3. You will be directed to the development project application page "**Propose a development project in designated sage-grouse habitat**" webpage.



2.2 Overview of the Development Project Submission Process

The following outlines the main pages you will encounter during the application process for your proposed project:

1. Instructions

- The Instructions page helps guide you through the project submission/application process
- You can return to this page for guidance at any time during the application process by clicking on the **'1. Instructions'** tab along the left side of the page.
- There are links to many helpful documents on this page, including an [FAQ](#) and [Information About the Montana Mitigation HQT Basemap](#).

2. Basics

- The Basics page allows you to information about your proposed project, such as project type and a detailed description of the project's proposed disturbances.
- You will also provide additional contact information such as an agency representative assisting you with the project; Permit Agencies; and information regarding the surface disturbance, reclamation, and funding status of the project.

3. Disturbances

- The Disturbances page allows you to submit the location and type of your project's proposed disturbances through an interactive map.
- You will also enter some additional information for each proposed activity.
- A proposed project can have one or more disturbances.

- For example, you may be proposing a communications project that includes a road, a buried cable, and a tower. In this case, you would have three disturbances.

4. Questionnaire

- The Questionnaire page allows you to answer specific questions based on the disturbance types you selected on the Disturbances page.
- The Questionnaire page is dynamic, and the content is driven by the content entered on the Disturbances page.

5. Attachments

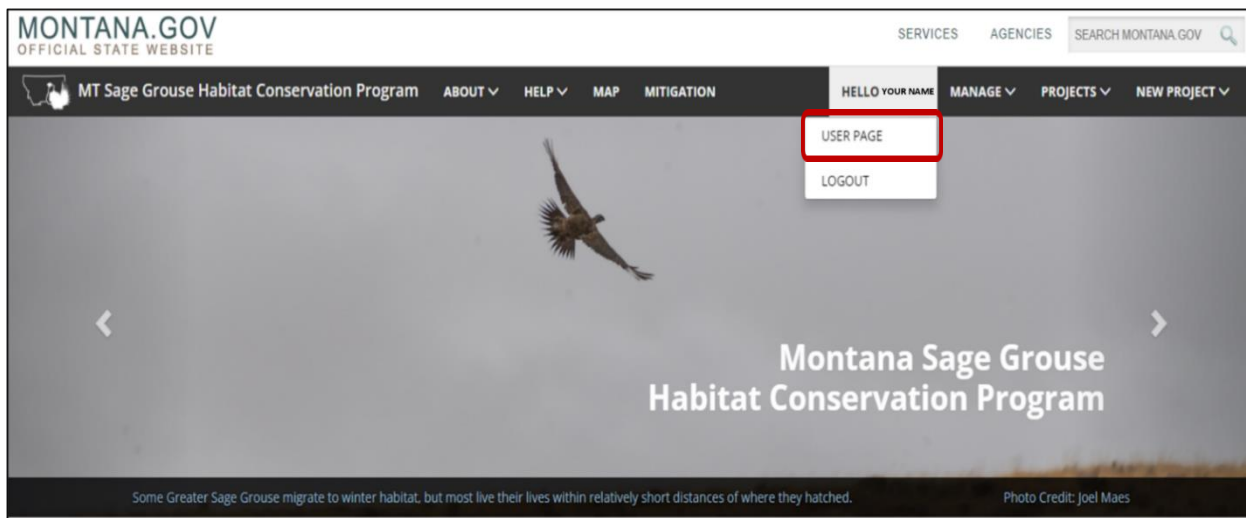
- The Attachments page allows you to add supporting files, such as documents, photos, or permit applications, to provide more information about your project.

6. Review & Submit

- The Review & Submit page provides you an opportunity to review a summary of your proposed project before you submit it for review.

NOTE: As long as you click ‘Save’ before leaving each page of the project application, you do not need to complete the application in one session. Your work will be saved and available to you the next time you login.

HELP: If you run into any problems or have questions, please contact the Program at 406-444-6340 or email the Program at sagegrouse@mt.gov.



Accessing an Existing Project: To view prior projects you have submitted to the website, go to the **User Page**. Here you can view your contact information and a table of any projects you have entered

previously. You can click on the project or click **'Edit'** to continue work on a draft project submission that you saved.

The User Page can be found by clicking on **'Hello <Your Name>'** on the menu bar located at the top of the home page. Once you click, a drop down will appear. Click **'User Page'**.

2.3 STEP #1: Instructions Page

The Instructions page will help guide you (i.e., the project applicant) through the submission process. There are links to many helpful guides including the [FAQ](#) and [Information About the Montana Mitigation HQT Basemap](#) (see screenshot below).

You can return to this page for guidance at any time by clicking on the **'1. Instruction'** button on the left side of the page. Once you have reviewed the Instructions page, click the blue **'Continue'** button on the lower right side of the page to proceed to the Basics page.

1. Instructions

2. Basics

3. Disturbances

4. Questionnaire

5. Attachments

6. Review & Submit

Instructions

NOTE TO USERS:
Efforts to improve the Program's website are underway. Updates will be rolled out periodically. Click on [What's New](#) to learn more about each change and get updated instructions. You can view online, download, or print the What's New document. It will be updated periodically.

The project proposal submission process has a few parts:

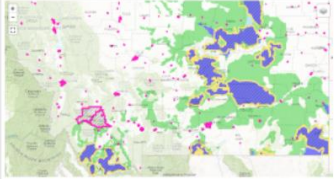
Basic Information About Your Project
Describe your project involving permitted activities proposed in sage grouse habitats designated as core (blue), general (green), or connectivity (light-blue) habitats. If you're not sure which habitat zone your project is in, click the map to the right before entering Basic Information. For program details please see our [FAQ](#).

Disturbances: Project Construction and Type of Disturbance
After entering the Basics, draw or upload your project's location and proposed disturbances on a map, and then enter some additional information for each disturbance. Note that a project can have one or more disturbances: for example, you may be proposing a communications project that involves a road, buried cables, and towers, in which case you would have three disturbances.

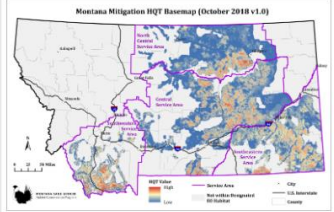
Questionnaire: Project and Disturbance Description Details
Once your proposed disturbances are mapped and described, you will need to answer some questions based on your disturbance types.

Save Your Project for Later, Save and Continue, or Submit for Review
You'll have a chance to review a summary of your proposed project before you submit it for consultation. You do not need to complete your submission in one session - your work will be saved and the next time you log in, you'll be able to resume where you left off.

Help
[Quick Start Guide for submitting projects](#)
[Information About the Montana Mitigation HQT Basemap](#)
If you run into any snags or have questions, please contact us.



Make sure your project is in sage grouse habitat



Mitigation HQT Basemap (October 2018 v1.0)

Continue

2.4 STEP #2: Basics Page

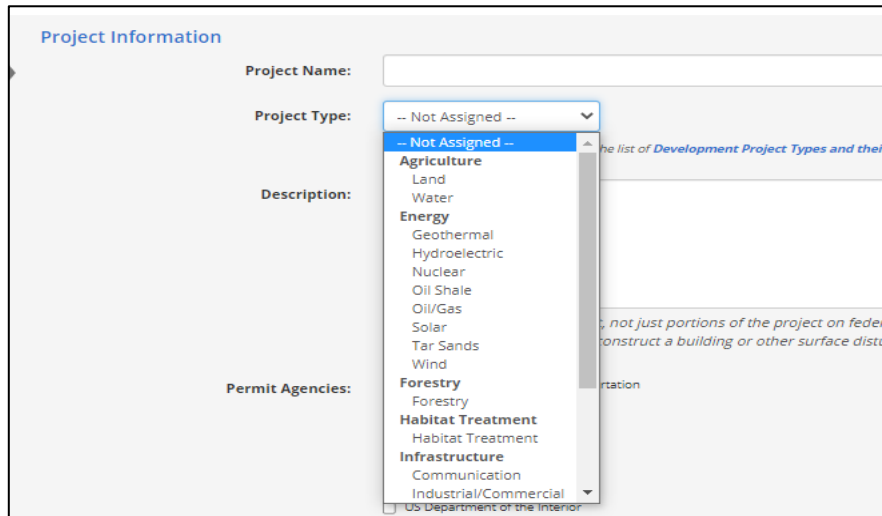
The Basics page begins the process of describing and documenting your proposed project. It is important to be as thorough as possible in your answers to avoid the need for submitting additional information at a later date, which will slow down the consultation process.

On this page you will be able to: give your project a name; assign it a project type; write a project description; provide additional contact information such as an agency representative assisting you with the project; permit agencies; and information regarding the surface disturbance, reclamation, and funding status of the project.

2.4.1 Selecting a Project Type

Selecting your project type is very important. Based on the project type you select, the website will tailor the questions presented throughout the application process, including the list of available disturbance types from which you'll be able to pick. If you select the wrong project type, you will be asked to answer potentially non-relevant questions about your project, and you may miss out on questions required for an accurate review of your project. This may result in a prolonged consultation of your project while Program staff track down necessary information in a continued effort to coordinate the consultation of your project. You may be required to correct the project type you selected in order to provide accurate and relevant information for the Program. This may also require

you to re-enter all information due to the information being specifically related to a given project type. Therefore, it is critically important that your project's project type be categorized correctly at the onset of your project submission process.

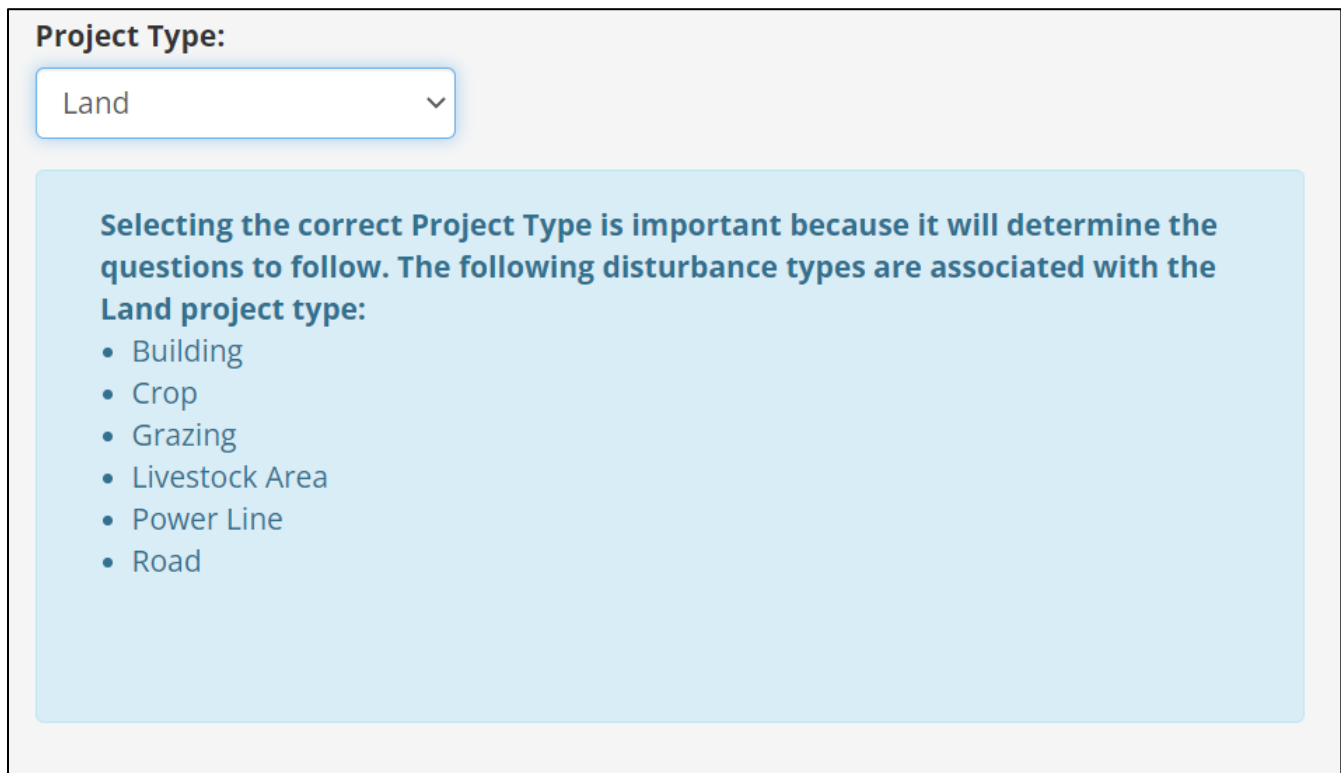


The screenshot shows a web form titled "Project Information". It has several fields: "Project Name:" with an empty text box; "Project Type:" with a dropdown menu currently set to "-- Not Assigned --"; "Description:" with a text area; and "Permit Agencies:" with a list of agencies. The dropdown menu for "Project Type" is open, showing a list of categories: Agriculture (Land, Water), Energy (Geothermal, Hydroelectric, Nuclear, Oil Shale, Oil/Gas, Solar, Tar Sands, Wind), Forestry, Habitat Treatment, Infrastructure (Communication, Industrial/Commercial), and US Department of the Interior.

Click on **Project Type** to open the dropdown list to see the list of project types available and to select the one most representative of your project. See screenshot below. There is a link located just below this box that allows you to view and download an Excel table of all project types and their related disturbance types for reference.

Once you select a project type, a blue box will appear that lists

the disturbance types associated with that project type. See screenshot below. If you don't see an appropriate disturbance type listed, consider selecting a different project type. The Program encourages you to call the Program if you need assistance selecting a project type before proceeding with the application.



The screenshot shows the "Project Type:" dropdown menu with "Land" selected. Below the dropdown is a light blue informational box with the following text: "Selecting the correct Project Type is important because it will determine the questions to follow. The following disturbance types are associated with the Land project type:" followed by a bulleted list: Building, Crop, Grazing, Livestock Area, Power Line, and Road.

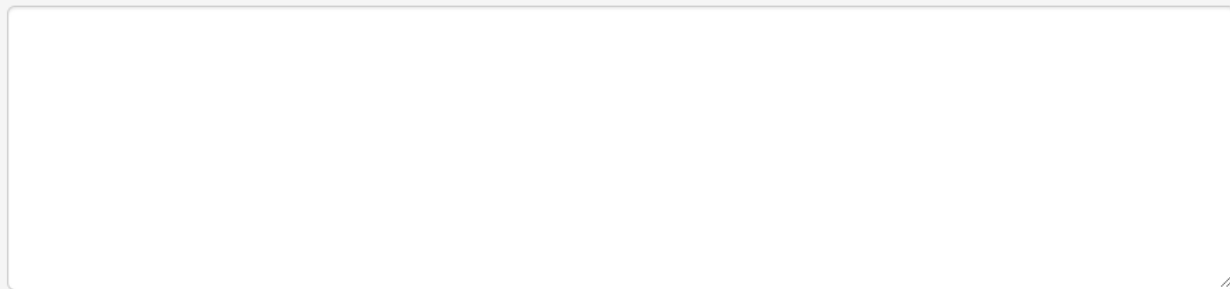
2.4.2 Project Description

The Program encourages you to be as descriptive as possible when detailing your proposed project. The Program needs to understand what surface disturbance is proposed and for how long this surface disturbance will remain on the landscape. More information is always better than less information. If the Program is not provided with sufficient information, the project will be returned to you and the Program will ask you to provide the missing information.

For a streamlined process, the Program recommends your project description to include the following items:

- Describe the purpose of the project and its proposed disturbances
- Describe the methods and machinery that will be used during construction and/or operations phases
- Describe all surface disturbances associated with the project and whether you will be reseeding or reclaiming disturbed areas (as required by the state)
- Describe the current landscape and post-project implementation landscape
- Describe the expected time frame for the construction and/or operations phases
- Provide information about the necessary permits for your project implementation
- Provide information about any permit amendments
- Describe any new roads or if use of existing roads will suffice

Description:



Describe your complete project, not just portions of the project on federal or state land. Be sure to include all associated and foreseeable future development. If the project involves a septic or subdivision permit, include information about any plan to install a septic system, construct a building or other surface disturbing activity in the future associated with the permit.

2.4.3 Project Contact Information

Your contact information should be auto-filled by the website using the information you provided for your login access. In the Project Contact Information section (see screenshot below), please provide additional contact information the Program staff can use if additional questions arise during the consultation process. Contact information represents the person whom the Program corresponds with throughout the consultation process and ultimately the person who will be addressed on the final consultation letter.

Project Contact Information

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Mailing Address:

City -- State -- Zip

Additional Contact Info:

Describe and provide phone/email for people other than yourself that we might need to coordinate with while reviewing your project

2.4.4 Responsible Party

The Program requests contact information for the party (or entity) who will be responsible for any mitigation obligation that may be associated with your project. In many circumstances the proponent information given under the Project Contact Information section and the Responsible Party are the same. However, if you are a contractor, it is likely the project contact and Responsible Party will be different. Please make sure that the

- Responsible Party represents the party providing any potential mitigation obligation and
- the Project Contact Information is the proponent whom the Program will contact for all project questions and correspondence.

If you or your company have previously entered any type of project (development or conservation) through the Program website, the name will be shown in the drop-down list of Customers. Click on

the desired name and the information will be auto filled. If you are a new Customer, you can add your name to the list by checking the box and typing your name or company name in the text bar. The name will be stored and available in the list for your future project proposals.

Responsible Party

Customer:

Select a customer from the dropdown list. If your desired option is not available, please add it to the list by checking this box

Additional Contact Name (Optional):

Email (Optional):

Phone (Optional):

Mailing Address (Optional):

Additional Contact Info (Optional):

Describe and provide phone/email for people other than yourself that we might need to coordinate with while reviewing your project

2.4.5 Additional Information

The following screenshot shows some basic questions that apply to all projects, regardless of the project type selected. The information in this section gives the Program a better understanding of any vegetation removal and/or anticipated reclamation associated with your project.

Additional Information

Is vegetation removal associated with the project? Yes No

Is reclamation of surface disturbing activity included in project? Yes No

What seed mix is proposed?

When will reclamation occur?

Is this project funded through state or federal funds? Yes No

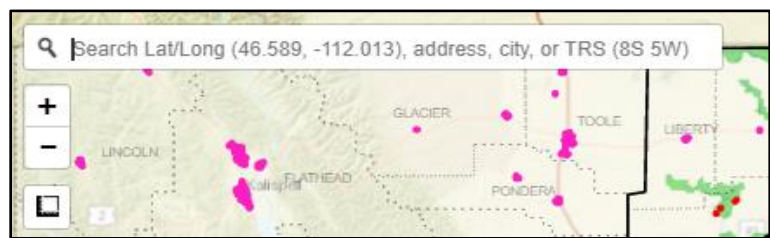
Once you have completed the Basics page, click ‘**Save**’. Once saved, the project is stored within a Draft stage. See Figure 1 for project review stages. At this point, you’ll be able to log out and return at a later time to complete your project entry. If you want to continue entering project information, click

‘Save & Continue’ to proceed to the Disturbances page. Once information is saved in the Draft stage, a Project ID number will be assigned to the project. The Project ID number is helpful for tracking purposes.

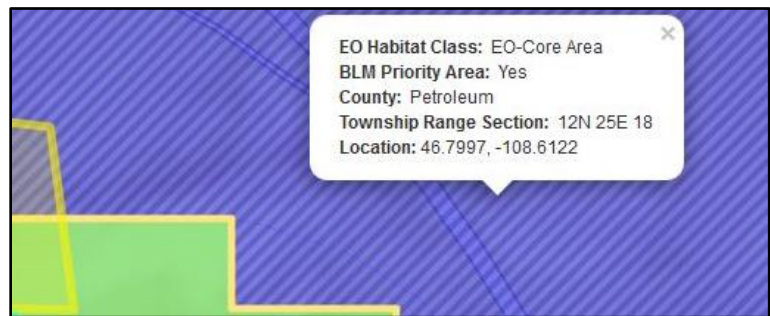
2.5 STEP #3: Disturbances Page

On the Disturbances page, you will be prompted to enter the spatial data for your project. Spatial data is required in order for the Program to analyze the location, type and size of the project disturbances. The accuracy of the information entered on the Disturbances page is very important for the Program to assess the project’s potential impact to sage-grouse habitat. If the project footprint drawn is larger than what is actually proposed, the consultation will determine there is a higher level of surface disturbance to sage-grouse habitat.

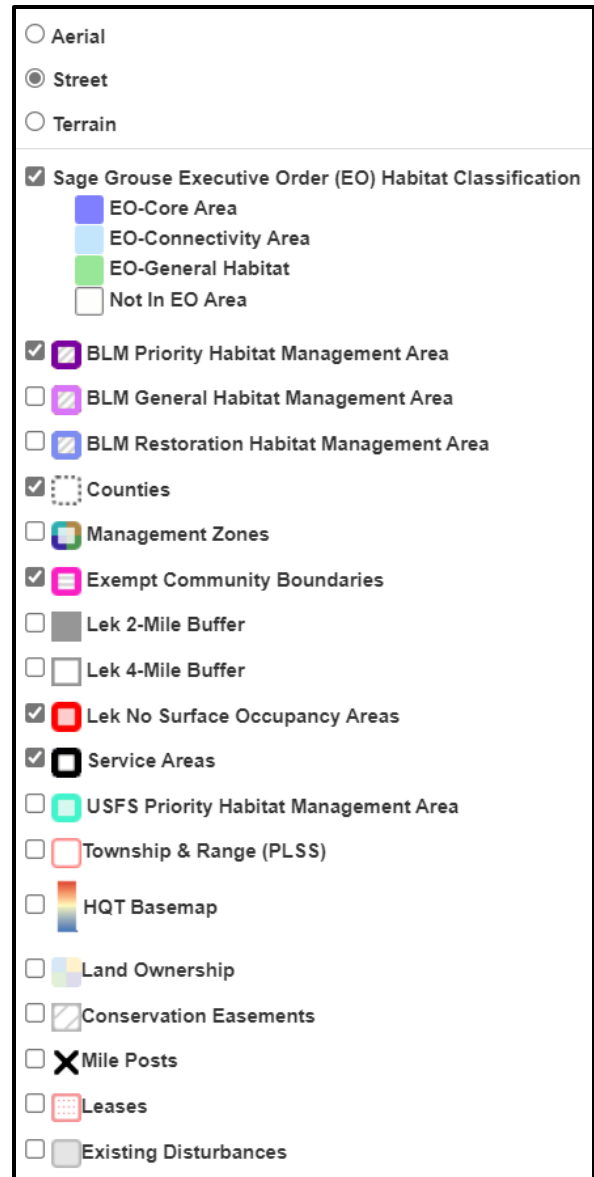
1. Within the Disturbances page map, navigate to your project’s general location by using the ‘Search’ bar in the upper left corner and the ‘Zoom’ buttons. You can search by street address, Township and Range (PLSS), town name, etc.



2. **NOTE:** the mouse cursor can be used to display information for a given location on the map by clicking your mouse anywhere on the map. The information displayed in the pop-up window is not for a given feature but is based on the where the cursor is located.



3. Get to know the Disturbances page map to customize your data entry experience:
 - a. There are many data layer options to help you locate your proposed project. Hold your cursor over the ‘Layers’ button (☰) at the top right corner of the map to open the legend and layers window. In this window, you can select layers to display on the map. The first three radio-button selections (Aerial, Street, and Terrain) offer different background basemap options. In some cases, viewing topographical details might be easier if other data layers are switched off.
 - b. The Program encourages you to experiment to find the combination of data layers that best suits your map viewing preferences and data entry purposes.
 - c. Additional data layers in the menu that can be toggled on and off are shown in the screenshot to the right.



2.5.1 Entering Spatial Data

Once you have located your project on the map and determined it is within designated sage-grouse habitat, the next step is to enter the project’s spatial data. There are two options for entering spatial data depicting your proposed project disturbances:

1. Upload GIS files (e.g., upload spatial data)
2. Draw proposed disturbances using the ‘**Drawing Tools**’

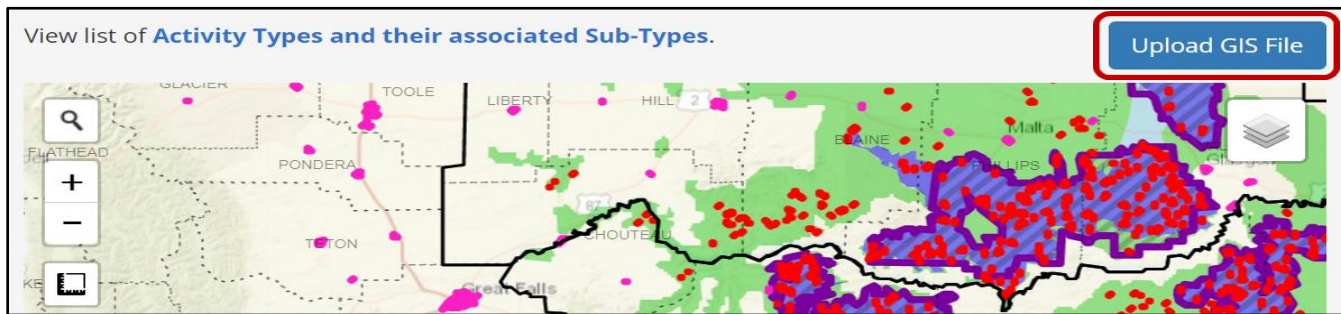
2.5.1.1 Option 1: Uploading Spatial Data

Uploading spatial data allows you to submit your proposed project’s spatial data by uploading shapefiles or geodatabases generated using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software (e.g.,

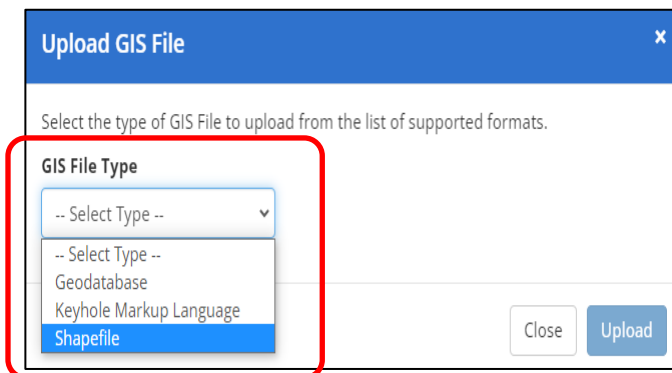
ArcGIS, QGIS). Spatial data files need to be compressed (i.e., zipped) before uploading. After successfully uploading the compressed file(s), the spatial data will be displayed on the map. Note: accepted GIS file types that can be uploaded in compressed files include Geodatabase, Keyhole Markup Language, or Shapefile.

The following example starts with a compressed file of a shapefile created using ArcGIS Pro. A single feature requires several files to display. For this reason, spatial data must be compressed to ensure all necessary associated files are included in the upload for proper display of the uploaded shapefile.

1. Click the blue **'Upload GIS File'** button above the map

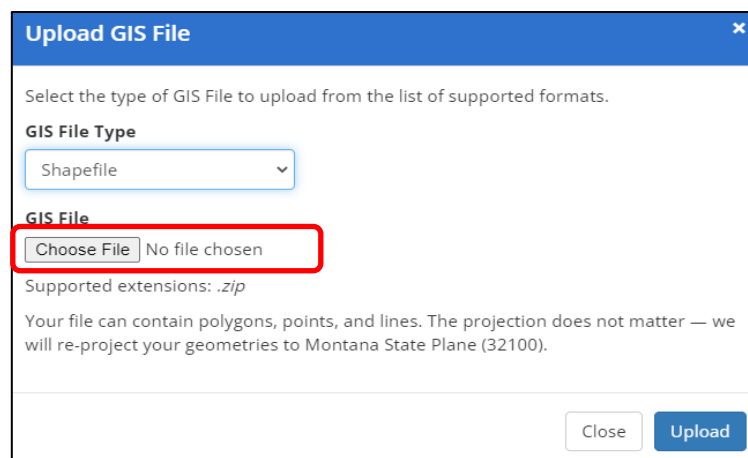


2. In the **'Upload GIS File'** pop-up window, select the **'GIS File Type'** from the drop-down list that represents the format of the GIS file you intend to upload.

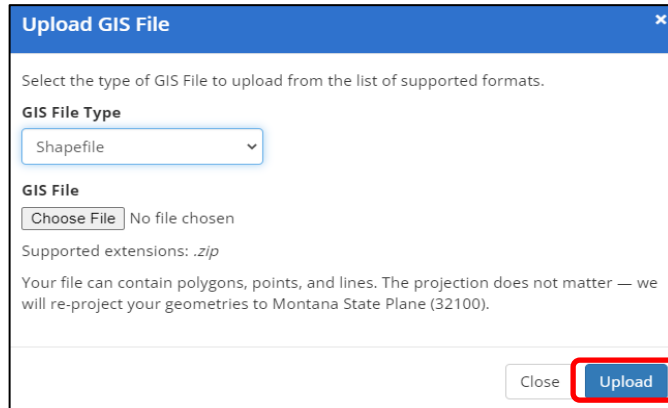


3. Click on **'Choose File'**.

4. Locate where you saved your data to select it for upload



- Click the blue **‘Upload’** button in the bottom right of the pop-up window.



- Once uploaded your project will display as a blue-hatched polygon on the Disturbances page map (see screenshot below).
- In the box under **‘Name’**, provide a name for the polygon feature.
- Click on the **‘Select type’** drop-down list to select the most appropriate disturbance type for your proposed disturbance.
- If applicable, provide any notes in the **‘Notes’** column.
 - Width (ft) is required only for line features (e.g., pipeline, road). A minimum default of 10 feet is necessary in order for the line feature to be adequately captured during the HQT analysis.

View list of **Development Project Types and their associated Disturbance Types.** Upload GIS File

| Disturbance Name | Feature | Type | *Width (ft) | Length (ft) | Area (acres) | EO Habitat Classes | Counties | TRS | Ownership | Notes |
|---|---------|--|---------------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------|----------|-----|-----------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="text" value="House"/> | Polygon | <input type="text" value="Building"/> | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="text" value="Drainfield"/> | Polygon | <input type="text" value="Septic System"/> | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="text" value="Driveway"/> | Line | <input type="text" value="Road"/> | <input type="text" value="10"/> | | | | | | | <input type="text" value="Gravel"/> |

Steps 6-9 above

10. Once you have completed the Disturbances page, click the blue **‘Save & Continue’** button on the lower right side of the page to proceed to the Questionnaire page.
11. NOTE: if you receive an error after attempting to upload the compressed GIS file (see screenshot below), make sure that the compressed folder contains at least the four mentioned file types: **‘.shp’**, **‘.prj’**, **‘.shx’**, and **‘.dbf’**. Make sure to compress just the GIS files and *not* the file folder that contains them.

There was a problem with the format of your Shapefile SHPFolder.zip, it must contain at least one matching set of files including a .shp, .prj, .shx, and .dbf

2.5.1.2 Option 2: Drawing your Disturbances

This option allows you to use the Disturbances page map to create your project’s spatial data directly within the map. The Disturbances page map contains drawing tools located on the left side of the map. The drawing tools are designed to provide opportunities to draw the features of proposed disturbances using lines (↗), polygons (⬠), and points (📍). The full suite of map tools includes a **‘Search’** bar, **‘Zoom’** buttons (+, -), **‘Measurement’** tool (📏), **‘Print’** tool (🖨️), **‘View Fullscreen’** map option (🗨️), **‘Edit disturbance geometries’** tool (✎️), and **‘Remove Disturbance geometries’** tool (🗑️).

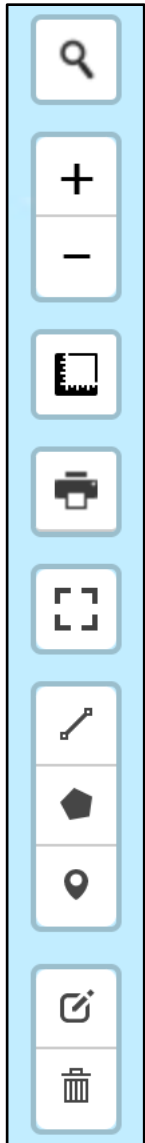
NOTE: While it is possible to draw the boundaries of your proposed project using the **‘Draw any disturbance as a polygon’** tool (⬠) within the Disturbances page map, it may be difficult to accurately depict the boundaries. Therefore, using Desktop GIS software (e.g., ArcGIS, QGIS) is recommended to create accurate GIS data to upload.

If you choose to draw the boundaries of your proposed project within the Disturbance page map using the **‘Draw any disturbance as a polygon’** tool, refer to the **‘Disturbance Page Map Tools’** section below.

Please consult the Program at sagegrouse@mt.gov for assistance.

2.5.2 Disturbances Page Map Tools

The Disturbances page map tools are found on the left side of the map (see diagram below). They are designed to allow you the opportunity to draw the geometries of your proposed project disturbances using lines, polygons, and points. In doing so, proponents unable to upload a GIS file illustrating their proposed project can use the page map tools instead to include the required spatial data for their disturbances. Each tool and its description are described in further detail below for ease of use.



- ⇐ **Search Tool:** type a location, click enter to navigate map to specified location
- ⇐ **Zoom Tool:** click the ‘+’ or ‘-’ buttons to zoom map in or out
- ⇐ **Measurement Tool:** measure distances from point to point
- ⇐ **Print Tool:** print the map view
- ⇐ **View Fullscreen Tool:** expand the map view from embedded within the Disturbances page to a fullscreen view
- ⇐
- ⇐ **Drawing Tools:** draw geometries representing disturbances associated with a proposed project.
 - The **Line Tool** for roads, pipelines, fences, etc.
 - Use the **Polygon Tool** for buildings, well pad, storage yards, area, etc.
 - Use the **Point Tool** for bore holes.
- ⇐ **Edit Geometries Tool** or **Remove Geometries Tool:** edit or remove, respectively, any of the drawn geometries

2.5.3 Reviewing Your Disturbance(s)

A table with information on each entered disturbance will be populated below the map. Please provide descriptive names and comments for each listed disturbance. The table will auto-populate certain attributes depending on the feature type (point, line, or polygon) you entered. These attributes include geometry fields (width [feet], length [feet], area [acres]) and location description fields (EO habitat classification, county, township, range, and section [TRS], and land ownership). For any linear features (lines or polylines), please provide the anticipated width of the entered disturbance in feet.

| Disturbance Name | Feature | Type | *Width (ft) | Length (ft) | Area (acres) | EO Habitat Classes | Counties | TRS | Ownership | Notes |
|------------------|---------|---------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------|----------|--|------------------------------------|------------|
| House | Polygon | Building | | | 0.132 | EO-Core Area | Madison | Township 8 South, Range 5 West, Section ... More | Montana State Trust Lands | |
| Drainfield | Polygon | Septic System | | | 0.057 | EO-Core Area | Madison | Township 8 South, Range 5 West, Section ... More | Montana State Trust Lands, Private | Drainfield |
| water pipeline | Line | Pipeline | 10 | 117.6 | 0.029 | EO-Core Area | Madison | Township 8 South, Range 5 West, Section ... More | Montana State Trust Lands, Private | Pipeline |

Project type has a specific list of associated disturbance types. See a list of the project types and associated disturbance type in the [Appendix](#). AppendixThe Program requests you select a disturbance type that accurately represents your disturbance. For development consultation, there can only be one project type, but that project could consist of multiple disturbance types, each with a different level of habitat impact and timeframe. For example, a gravel pit (project type: Mining) could have several disturbance types with different impacts (disturbance type: Pit, Access Road, Transmission Line, Water Well, Railroad). The gravel pit may last for 20 years and then be reclaimed, while the road and transmission line may be permanent.

If you are unsatisfied with the physical representations of your project disturbance(s), you can edit them. Click on the **‘Edit’** button located above the **‘Remove Geometries’** button in the map. You will notice vertices (small points along the line or polygon boundary) have popped up on all your disturbances. Click on the vertices to move and reshape the disturbance. Once complete, click the **‘Save’** option next to the **‘Edit’** button on the map.

| Disturbance Name | Feature | Type | *Width (ft) | Length (ft) | Area (acres) | EO Habitat Classes | Counties | TRS | Ownership | Notes |
|------------------|---------|----------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------|----------|---|-----------|-------|
| House | Polygon | Building | | | 2.362 | EO-General Habitat | Custer | Township 10 North, Range 45 East, Section... More | Private | |
| Gravel Driveway | Line | Road | 10 | 1,495.6 | 0.345 | EO-General Habitat | Custer | Township 10 North, Range 45 East, Section... More | Private | |

*Enter Width of proposed construction area. The DDCT calculation will use this width.

To delete or revise a disturbance, select the feature on the map to highlight the correct disturbance row in the table below the map. Use the **‘Remove Geometries’** button to delete that feature. You can then redraw or upload new GIS files to start over with that disturbance. The revised information will then be saved when you click the **‘Save’** or **‘Save & Continue’** buttons at the bottom of the page.

| Disturbance Name | Feature | Type | *Width (ft) | Length (ft) | Area (acres) | EO Habitat Classes | Counties | TRS | Ownership | Notes |
|------------------|---------|------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|------------------------------------|----------|--|---|-------------------|
| Powerline | Line | Power Line | 15 | 46,616 | 52.665 | EO-General Habitat | Fergus | 22N 17E, Section 15, 22N 17E, Section 16... More | Montana State Trust Lands, US Bureau of Land Management | Distribution line |
| Building | Polygon | Substation | | | 181.75 | EO-General Habitat | Fergus | 22N 17E, Section 4, 22N 17E, Section 8... More | US Bureau of Land Management | Main substation |
| Road | Line | Road | 24 | 12,894.2 | 23.308 | EO-General Habitat, Not in EO Area | Fergus | 22N 17E, Section 10, 22N 17E, Section 11... More | Montana State Trust Lands, US Bureau of Land Management | Access road |

*Enter Width of proposed construction area. The DDCT calculation will use this width.
Disturbance Type you're looking for not listed? Make sure you selected the most appropriate Project Type on the Basics page.

2.5.4 Density Disturbance Calculation Tool Analysis

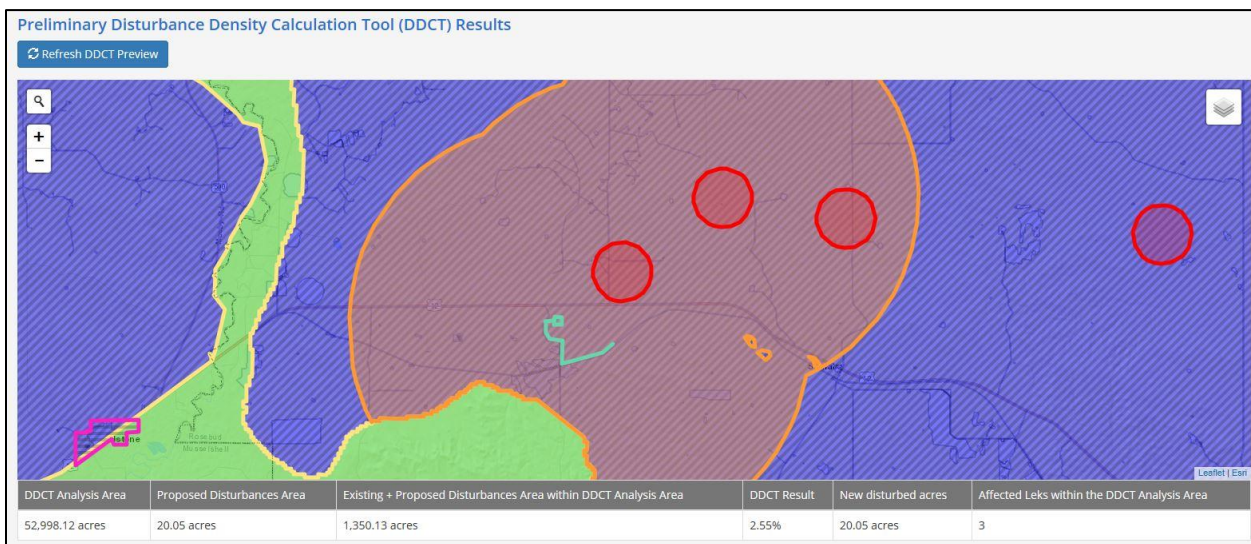
If your proposed project occurs in a Core Area or U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Priority Areas, then a Disturbance Density Calculation Tool (DDCT) analysis will be auto generated to determine the amount of disturbance within the analysis area around your proposed project.

The DDCT is a tool that analyzes the existing disturbances on the landscape (as represented by the Existing Disturbance layer in the website map). There are some land cover types, such as waterbodies >10 acres, that are excluded from the analysis as they are considered Unsuitable Habitat. If land cover types classified as Unsuitable Habitat exist within your proposed project’s DDCT analysis area, the land cover types will be visible on the map as highlighted polygons. To view the NSO (No Surface

Occupancy) area information on the map, zoom into your proposed project area and the red circles symbolizing NSOs will appear.

Surface disturbance will be limited to 5% of suitable sage-grouse habitat averaged across the area affected by the project. Further details on DDCT analyses are provided in [Section 2.8](#). The preliminary DDCT results include a table with metrics representing disturbed acreages, newly disturbance acreages, and a percentage of disturbances within the DDCT analyses area. The final DDCT results, which may be different from the preliminary DDCT results, will be included in your completed review documentation.

The following screenshot is an example of how the DDCT calculation map and results are displayed for your project.



2.6 STEP #4: Questionnaire Page

The Questionnaire page is determined based on the specific disturbance type(s) you selected in the previous step to represent the proposed disturbances associated with the project. Answer each question listed.

First, enter the start and end dates for the Construction and Operations Phases for the proposed disturbance. The project phases are defined as follows:

- *Construction Phase:* How long will construction take? Enter the date construction activities will start and stop. Construction Phase dates should not overlap Operations Phase dates.

- *Operations Phase:* How long will the project be on the landscape or how long will the disturbance occur? Enter the date the project transitions from construction to regular operations or activities stop.

There will be additional questions to answer based on the disturbance type selected for the proposed disturbance(s). There may also be questions regarding associated infrastructure, rights-of-way, contracting dates, and whether certain proposed disturbances are new or being upgraded. If power poles are proposed, the questionnaire will ask for the type of avian protection measures that will be implemented.

2.6.1 Date Ranges for Mining/Gravel Pit Projects

The following provides more specific guidance for mining operations and gravel pits. This project type typically having no Construction Phase. Instead, they directly enter into the project’s Operations Phase.

Mining activities (i.e., mining operations) can begin at the site as soon as the necessary permits are obtained. Therefore, mining and gravel pits typically do not have a Construction Phase. The first day the mining activity is proposed to start will be the beginning of the Operations Phase.

If you select mine or gravel pit as the disturbance type for your proposed disturbance, the website will automatically gray-out the Construction Phase start and end dates for you.

Questions:

Construction Phase:
How long will construction take? Enter the date construction activities will start and stop. Construction Phase dates should not overlap Operations Phase dates.

Start:

End:

Construction dates are not applicable for mines and gravel pits. Please make sure to enter the Operations dates below.

- *Operations Phase - Start date:* enter the date (month, day, year) of the first day you propose to start mining.
- *Operations End Date:* This is the day you intend to provide to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Opencut Program as your final reclamation end date. Enter the month, day, and year corresponding with the intended reclamation end date. The total number of years of Operations must match the time span for the life of the DEQ Opencut permit, including the **DEQ Opencut permit final reclamation end date**.

An important note: The size of the proposed mining operation in acres (and spatial data) submitted to the Program for consultation **must** match the information provided to the DEQ Opencut Program.

2.6.2 Date Ranges for Buried Pipelines/Cable or Other Buried Utilities

Buried features, such as oil/gas pipelines, fiber optic cable, buried electrical lines, and agricultural water lines, can be fully implemented (i.e., constructed) within one calendar year, with no permanent infrastructure remaining on the landscape. Once the disturbance is buried, no above-ground infrastructure will remain on the landscape, for that disturbance. Therefore, buried features only have a Construction Phase and no Operations Phase.

To address the case of buried features that are implemented within one calendar year and have a Construction Phase, but no Operations Phase:

- *Construction Phase Start date:* enter the date (month, day, year) corresponding to the date you anticipate initiating the construction associated with burying the disturbance.
- *Construction Phase End date:* enter the date (month, day, year) corresponding to the date you expect to have the disturbance completely buried.

The website recognize you have no Operations Phase after you answer the first question for the feature: “Will the pipe, powerline, or cable be above ground?” When you select ‘**Buried**’, the Operation Phase dates will then gray out and display a message indicating no operations dates are required.

Operations Phase:

How long will the project be on the landscape or how long will the activity occur? Enter the date the project transitions from construction to regular operations and the date regular operations or activities will stop. Construction Phase dates should not overlap Operations Phase dates.

Start: 

End: 

The following screenshot is an example of questions asked for a above ground distribution power lines. Once you have completed the Questionnaire page click ‘**Save**’ or ‘**Save & Continue**’ at the bottom of the page.

| | |
|---|--|
| Is a permit required for this project? | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| Will proposed disturbance be wholly within the existing permitted mine boundary? | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| How many acres are included in your Opencut permit application for this gravel pit? | <input type="text"/> |
| Describe the anticipated route trucks will take to haul product from this site. | <input type="text"/> |
| Is this a new Opencut pit or mine? | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| What will the material be used for? | <input type="text"/> |
| When will the gravel be excavated, crushed, and/or hauled off site? | <input type="text"/> |
| What is the expected life of the gravel pit or mine (in years) or permitted years? | <input type="text"/> |

2.7 STEP #5: Attachments Page

The Attachments page provides functionality to attach supplemental documentation associated with your proposed project. To do so, browse your computer to upload relevant documents to your project record on the website. All attached documents are secured behind the State’s IT firewall so they cannot be seen by anyone other than the proponent and the Program. As with all other information you submit, and the attachments will never be disseminated. The Program encourages you to attach any draft permits, maps, and/or reports that may assist the Program’s understanding of the special nuances of your proposed project. If you have multiple attachments to add at the same time, upload an attachment and then click the Save button, then upload the next attachment. See screenshot below for allowable attachment formats. Once all attachments have been uploaded, click **‘Save’** or **‘Save & Continue’**.

Attachments

Please upload documents pertinent to your proposed project, including Plans of Development, EAs, or other documentation identifying original boundaries. Multiple attachments can be uploaded at a time.

New Attachments

Attachment No file chosen

Use CTRL + Click (PC) or Command + Click (Mac) to select multiple files at once. You must select a type. Click Save at the bottom of the page to upload all files.

Type

Additional attachment types have been added.

Title

Description

Visible to Proponent? Yes No

Existing Attachments

There are currently no attachments uploaded for this project.

Save

Save & Continue

Correspondence (DOC, DOCX, PDF)
Permit documentation (DOC, DOCX, PDF)
Environmental Assessment (DOC, DOCX, PDF)
Plan of Development, Project Design Files or Maps (DOC, DOCX, PDF)
Final Letter Package (DOC, DOCX, PDF)
Stewardship Account Contribution Forms (DOC, DOCX, PDF)
Spreadsheet (XLS, XLSX)
3rd Level Data (ZIP – can contain shp, ascii, gdb, geotiff, etc)
Photos (JPG, PNG, GIF, TIFF)
Credit Monitoring Report (DOC, DOCX, PDF)
Stewardship Account Grants (DOC, DOCX, PDF)
Other

2.8 STEP #6: Review & Submit Page

Before submitting, please carefully review your project to ensure you have 1) an accurate spatial representation of your entered disturbance(s), 2) a thorough description of the proposed project, and 3) identified all aspects of the proposed project. See image below. To assist with your review prior to submitting, the website will summarize your project for you. Please allow several weeks for Program consultation prior to submitting for an agency permit application. Allow more time for larger or more

complicated projects to make sure the consultation process can be completed within the overall project schedule.

Propose a development project in sage grouse habitat: Testing Res (Draft)

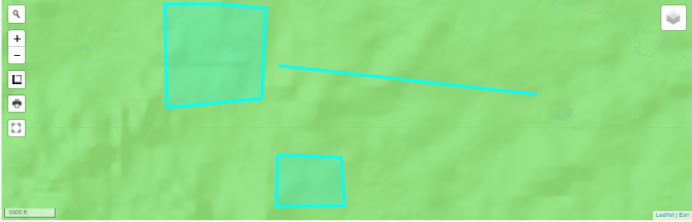
1. Instructions
2. Basics
3. Disturbances
4. Questionnaire
5. Attachments
6. Review & Submit

Project Basics

Project ID: 4744
 Name: Testing Res
 Type: Infrastructure - Residential
 Description: House

Contact Information

Proponent: Lunny, Ella
 Email: ella.lunny@mt.gov
 Phone: (781) 210-2387
 Mailing Address: 1539 Eleventh Ave, Helena, MT, 59601



Preliminary DDCT Results

| DDCT Analysis Area | Proposed Disturbances Area | Existing + Proposed Disturbances Area within DDCT Analysis Area | DDCT Result | New disturbed acres | Affected Leks within the DDCT Analysis Area |
|--------------------|----------------------------|---|-------------|---------------------|---|
| 0 acres | 0 acres | 0 acres | 0.00% | 0 acres | 0 |

Disturbances

| Name | Type | Width (ft) | Length (ft) | Area (acres) | EO Habitat Classes | Counties | TRS | Ownership | Notes |
|---------------|---------------|------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------|----------|--|---------------------------|---|
| House | Building | | | 85.494 | EO General Habitat | Custer | Township 6 North, Range 51 East, Section 29 | Private | Optional notes field is blank, consider adding notes to this Disturbance. |
| Gravel Road | Road | 10 | 5,067.2 | 1.166 | EO General Habitat | Custer | Township 6 North, Range 51 East, Sections 28, 29 | Private | driveway |
| Septic System | Septic System | | | 23.462 | EO General Habitat | Custer | Township 6 North, Range 51 East, Section 32 | Montana State Trust Lands | Optional notes field is blank, consider adding notes to this Disturbance. |

Questionnaire

Questionnaire is complete.

DISTURBANCES WITHIN 4 MILES OF A LEK

The table below is generated when DDCT Results are calculated.

Currently viewing 0 of 0 Disturbances within 4 miles of a Lek.

| Disturbance Name | Disturbance Type | Lek Name | Lek Status | Miles to Lek Point | Intersects with Lek NSOIA Program? | Within DDCT Analysis Area? | Lek Area Count | Last Survey Year | EO Habitat Class (if the Lek is within 0.5 Mile Priority Area?) |
|--|------------------|----------|------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|------------------|---|
| No files have been attached to this project. | | | | | | | | | |

Attachments

| File Name | Title | Type | Description | Uploaded By | Uploaded On | Visible to Proponent? |
|--|-------|------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| No files have been attached to this project. | | | | | | |

After submitting your proposed project, you will receive an automated email response with a unique Project ID verifying that the information was received by the Program. The Program may contact you to get more information or discuss the proposed disturbance.

If a proponent decides to modify their project, those individuals can gain access to their project from the same account they used to create the project on the website at <https://sagegrouse.mt.gov/>.

If your submission has discrepancies, is lacking any critical information, or in some way is determined to be incomplete, the Program may return the project to you with instructions on how to provide the necessary information to complete the consultation. Collaboration between the proponent and the Program will allow submitted projects to be modified. You will receive an automated email notifying you that your project has been returned and what additional information is needed. Once you have included the additional information, please save and resubmit your project. Once resubmitted, the Program will continue reviewing your project. Once the consultation process is completed, the Program will provide complete documentation to project proponents. You will always have access to your project through the Program’s website for future reference.

3. PROGRAM CONSULTATION

3.1 Core Area

If the proposed project is anticipated to occur entirely or partially within a designated Core Area, the Program will calculate the density of disturbance levels within the project area using the DDCT. The results will be compared to allowable thresholds set forth in the EO. The Program will also determine whether the project complies with other components of the EO. The review process is detailed in Figure 2.

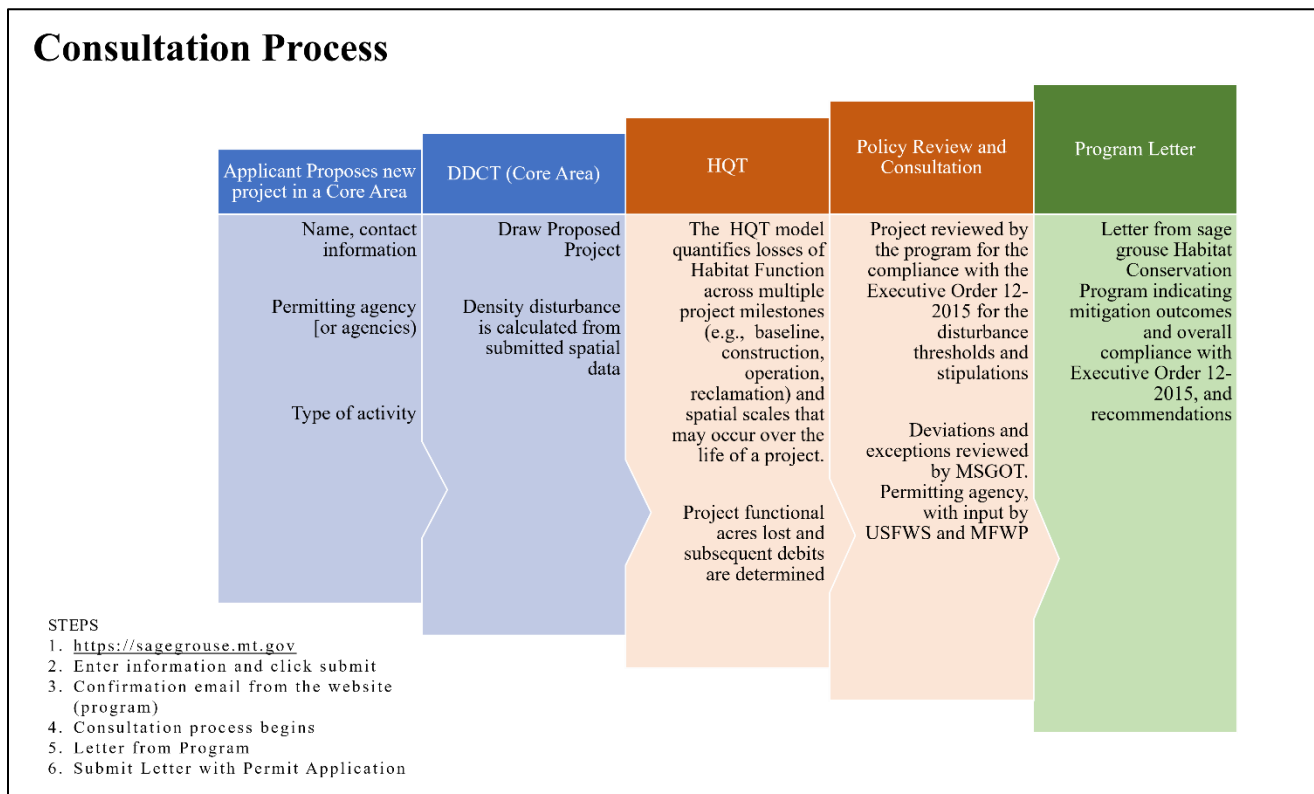


Figure 2. Consultation process for development projects occurring in a Core Area.

3.2 General Habitat

The health of General Habitat is a critical element in the effort to maintain the abundance and distribution of sage-grouse in Montana. Development scenarios in General Habitat are more flexible than in Core Areas but should still be designed and managed to maintain populations, habitats, and essential migration routes, since Montana’s Conservation Strategy requires habitat connectivity and movement between populations in a Core Area. There are no specific surface

disturbance limits in General Habitat, meaning that the DDCT 5% threshold is not applicable to proposed projects in General Habitat. However, as a standard management practice, surface disturbance should be minimized through measures such as co-locating new disturbances with existing structures.

3.3 Connectivity Area

Connectivity Area includes sage-grouse habitat that provides important linkages among populations of sage-grouse, particularly between Core Area or Priority populations in adjacent states and across international borders. At this time, only one Connectivity Area has been identified (Montana--Saskatchewan Connectivity Area in Valley County). Additional Connectivity Areas may be designated based on continued research on genetic characteristics of sage-grouse subpopulations. The Program continues to collaborate with MSGOT to assess the stipulations necessary in Connectivity Area to prevent declines in sage-grouse population numbers. In the interim, the Valley County Connectivity Area shall be subject to the same stipulations implemented for General Habitat.

3.4 Habitat Quantification Tool Summary

The State of Montana and a multi-agency, multi-disciplinary, citizen-based stakeholder group developed the Habitat Quantification Tool (HQT) for purposes of quantifying gains and/or losses of sage-grouse habitat caused by development, and alternatively to estimate conservation benefits resulting from activities which restore, enhance, or preserve sage-grouse habitat. You can find the HQT Technical Manual here: <https://sagegrouse.mt.gov/Team>.

The Montana HQT is a scientific approach for assessing habitat function and conservation outcomes for sage-grouse in Montana. The HQT considers the biophysical attributes of sage-grouse seasonal habitats to provide a measure of habitat function across multiple spatial and temporal scales. These measures of habitat function expressed as Functional Acres (summed to equate the Raw HQT Score) are used for calculating conservation benefits (i.e., credits) from mitigation projects as well as project impacts (i.e., debits) from development projects. Functional Acres provide a common “habitat currency” that can be used for both credit and debit projects to ensure accurate accounting of habitat gains and losses within designated sage-grouse habitat in Montana. A development project will be required to be submitted for Program consultation if it seeks to undertake a new land use or activity, in designated sage-grouse habitat on state, lands and private, and federal lands in greater sage-grouse habitat that receive state funding or are subject to state agency review, approval, or authorization (unless otherwise directed by MSGOT and described in the Policy Guidance Document). A development project may be subject to an HQT calculation and associated mitigation depending on the project type and specific project details. The Raw HQT Score results may be subsequently adjusted, as discussed in the Policy Guidance Document, to incentivize or disincentivize conservation or development practices.

3.5 What Happens after My Project is Submitted?

When the consultation process is complete, the Program will provide a letter with supporting documentation, if required, to be included with the application submitted to the permitting agency. Your entire project, along with supporting documentation attached during the submission process, will remain on the website and can be accessed at any time.

3.6 Confidentiality and Security

All information submitted to through the Program's website is securely stored behind the State's firewall. It can only be viewed by the proponent who submitted the project through the Okta password protected entry into the Program's website and by the Program.

4. GLOSSARY

BLM Habitat Management Areas: The BLM has identified areas as having the highest value to maintaining sage-grouse populations and habitat. These areas are classified as Priority Habitat Management Areas (PHMA), General Habitat Management Areas (GHMA), and Restoration Habitat Management Areas (RHMA). Land use measures in PHMA are designed to minimize or avoid sage-grouse habitat disturbance.

Connectivity Area: An area that provides an important linkage among populations of sage-grouse, particularly between Core Areas or priority populations in adjacent states and across international borders.

Core Area: An area that has the highest conservation value for sage-grouse and has the greatest number of displaying male sage-grouse and associated sage-grouse habitat, as presently delineated by Executive Order 21-2015.

Credit: A defined unit of trade representing the accrual or attainment of resource functions or values at a proposed project site.

Debit: A defined unit of trade representing the loss of resource functions or value at an impact or project site. The unit of measure is the same as that for a credit within a specific mitigation system.

DDCT analysis area: Four-mile buffer surrounding a proposed project footprint that is analyzed by the DDCT.

Disturbance Type: Development activities associated with each project type that create surface disturbance.

Due Diligence: The project consultation process conducted by the Program for proposed projects.

Exempt Community Boundary: A geographically limited exception to the consultation requirements and stipulations for any activity that would wholly occur within the boundaries of incorporated cities and towns as of March 28, 2016, consistent with the most recent available data. Cities and towns do not provide habitat for sage-grouse – the land has already been converted to human-related land uses. Loss of habitat, surface disturbance, and human activity levels already exceed tolerance thresholds for sage-grouse.

Existing disturbance: A layer displayed on the Program's website map that spatially delineates existing surface disturbances on the landscape. This map layer is used to inform the DDCT calculations for a proposed project area.

Functional Acre: A single unit of value that expresses the assessment of quantity (acreage) and quality (function) of habitat or projected habitat through the quantification of a set of local and

landscape conditions. A Functional Acre is the metric for outputs from the HQT (summed to equal the Raw HQT Score) and forms the basis for quantifying, expressing, and exchanging credits and debits within the Montana Sage Grouse Mitigation System. One Functional Acre gained or lost is equivalent to one credit or debit, in the mitigation marketplace, respectively.

General Habitat: Suitable habitat containing sage-grouse that is designed and managed to maintain populations, habitats, and essential migration routes to meet the Montana’s Conservation Strategy requirement for maintaining habitat connectivity and movement between populations in Core Areas.

Habitat Quantification Tool (HQT): The scientific method used to evaluate vegetation and environmental conditions related to the quality and quantity of sage-grouse habitat and to quantify and calculate the value of credits and debits.

Permanent: As defined by the Program, ‘permanent’ refers to impacts from any disturbances that will be on the landscape for ≥ 25 years.

PLSS: Public Land Survey System which uses the Township, Range, and Section grid system to describe a location.

Polygon: A computer map drawing tool used to create dimensional features of a project, such as a building.

Polyline: A computer map drawing tool used to create linear features of a project, such as a road.

Program: Montana Sage-Grouse Habitat Conservation Program.

Proponent: A person or entity that submits a proposed project for review by the Program.

Reclamation: Reclamation should re-establish native grasses, forbs, and shrubs during interim and final reclamation. The goal of reclamation is to achieve vegetation cover, species composition, and life-form diversity commensurate with the surrounding plant community or desired ecological condition to benefit sage-grouse and replace or enhance sage-grouse habitat to the degree that environmental conditions allow. Landowners should be consulted on the desired plant mix on private lands. The operator is required to control noxious and invasive plant species, including cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) and Japanese brome (*Bromus japonicus*).

Responsible Party: Individual or company responsible for any compensatory mitigation obligation associated with a proposed project.

Stipulations: Conditions for proposed projects recommended by the Program necessary for preventing a decline in sage-grouse populations.

Spatial data: Spatial representation of a proposed project's disturbances that are used to create a map of the project location and size on the landscape.

Surface Disturbance: Any conversion of formerly suitable habitat to grasslands, croplands, mining, well pads, roads, or other physical disturbance that renders the habitat unusable for sage-grouse caused by proposed activities submitted to the Program for review.

Suitable Habitat: Sage-grouse habitat located within designated sage-grouse habitat.

Unsuitable Habitat: Land within the historic range of sage-grouse that has not, does not, and will not provide sage-grouse habitat due to natural ecological conditions, such as badlands or canyons.

Withdrawn: An action taken to remove a proposed project from the Program's review process.

APPENDIX A. DEVELOPMENT PROJECT DISTURBANCE TYPES

Table 1. Development project types and their available corresponding disturbance types.

| Project Type | Associated Disturbance Types |
|------------------------|--|
| Agriculture - Land | Building, Crop, Grazing, Livestock Area, Power Line, Road |
| Agriculture - Water | Bore Hole, Building, Irrigation, Pipeline, Power Line, Reservoir, Road, Soil Storage Pile, Stock Pond, Stock Tank, Water Diversion, Water Right Change/Clerical, Water Supply Well |
| Energy - Geothermal | Building, Facility Boundary, Pipeline, Power Line, Power Plant, Road, Storage Yard, Substation, Trench, Water Supply Well |
| Energy - Hydroelectric | Building, Facility Boundary, Maintenance Activities, Pipeline, Pond, Power Line, Power Plant, Road, Spillway, Storage Yard, Substation, Trench |
| Energy - Nuclear | Building, Facility Boundary, Pipeline, Pond, Power Line, Power Plant, Road, Storage Yard, Substation, Trench |
| Energy - Oil Shale | Building, Facility Boundary, Open Pit, Pipeline, Pond, Power Line, Processing Facility, Railroad, Road, Storage Yard, Well Pad |
| Energy - Oil/Gas | Building, Central Battery System, Collection Facility, Compressor, Field Boundary, Gas/Oil Well, Maintenance Activities, Monitoring Well, Pipeline, Plug and Abandon, Pond, Power Line, Power Plant, Railroad, Road, Soil Storage Pile, Storage Yard, Temporary Abandonment, Underground Storage Tank, Water Supply Well, Well Pad |
| Energy - Seismic | Buggy Lines, Cultural Survey, Facility Boundary, Road, Seismic Shot Hole/Probe Route, Storage Yard |
| Energy - Solar | Building, Facility Boundary, Field, Pipeline, Power Line, Power Plant, Road, Storage Yard, Substation, Water Supply Well |
| Energy - Tar Sands | Building, Facility Boundary, Gravel Pit, Pipeline, Pond, Power Line, Processing Facility, Railroad, Road, Storage Tank, Storage Yard |
| Energy - Wind | Building, Cable, Facility Boundary, Met Tower, Pipeline, Power Line, Power Plant, Road, Storage Yard, Substation, Trench, Turbine Pad |
| Forestry | Culvert, Firebreak/Dozer Line, Road, Timber Harvest |
| Habitat Treatment | Fire, Mechanical, Restoration |

| | |
|--|--|
| Infrastructure - Communication | Bore Hole, Building, Facility Boundary, Guy Wire, Met Tower, New Cable Route, Power Line, Replacement Cable Route, Road, Storage Yard, Tower Pad |
| Infrastructure - Industrial/Commercial | Building, Drone Path, Facility Boundary, Gravel Pit, Landfarm, Landfill, Laydown Yard, Parking Area, Pipeline, Pond, Power Line, Road, Septic/Sewer, Storage Yard, Stormwater, Underground Storage Tank, Water/Soil Sample, Water Supply Well, Water System |
| Infrastructure - Military | Base, Building, Gravel Pit, Parking Area, Pipeline, Power Line, Range, Road, Storage Yard, Water Supply Well |
| Infrastructure - Pipeline (Major) | Bore Hole, Building, Compressor, Facility Boundary, Laydown Yard, Pigging Facility / Launcher, Pipeline, Pond, Power Line, Road, Soil Storage Pile, Storage Yard, Trench, Water Supply Well |
| Infrastructure - Recreation | Building, Cable, Campground, Motorized/OHV Road, Motorized/OHV Trail, Park, Parking Area, Pipeline, Pond, Power Line, Septic/Sewer, Soil Storage Pile, Water Supply Well |
| Infrastructure - Residential | Building, Cable, Park, Parking Area, Pipeline, Pond, Power Line, Road, Septic System, Stormwater, Subdivision Area, Water Storage, Water Supply Well |
| Infrastructure - Transmission Line | Bore Hole, Guy Wire, Laydown Yard, Power Line, Road, Storage Yard, Substation, Tower |
| Infrastructure - Transportation | Airport Radio Tower, Airport Runway, Blasting, Bore Hole, Borrow Pit, Bridge, Building, CORS Site, Culvert, GeoProbe, Guard Rail, Interstate Highway, Laydown Yard, Parking Area, Pile Driving, Pipeline, Power Line, Railroad Mainline, Railroad Spur, Road, Signage, Spill/Remediation, Storage Yard, Underground Storage Tank |
| Mining | Building, Core Hole, Gravel Pit, Mine, Monitoring Well, Permit Boundary, Pipeline, Pond, Power Line, Power Plant, Railroad, Road, Shaft, Storage Yard, Stormwater Discharge Outlet Pipe, Trench, Underground Storage Tank, Waste Rock / Tailings / Overburden, Water Supply Well |

APPENDIX B. LIST OF ACRONYMS

BLM – U.S. Bureau of Land Management

DDCT – Density Disturbance Calculation Tool

DEQ – Department of Environmental Quality

EO – Executive Orders 12-2015 and 21-2015

HQT – Habitat Quantification Tool

MSGOT – Montana Sage-grouse Oversight Team

NSO – No Surface Occupancy

PLSS – Public Land Survey System