



Department of Health and Environmental Sciences
STATE OF MONTANA HELENA, MONTANA 59601

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MAR 27 1975

John S. Anderson M.D.
DIRECTOR

March 28, 1975

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Enclosed is an agency impact determination that has been prepared for Wild Horse Meadows, a proposed subdivision in Granite County.

Subdivision plans and specifications have been submitted to the Department of Health and Environmental Sciences for approval of water supply, sewage disposal, and solid waste disposal systems.

*Haven Cabri Terrace
January EIS*

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This determination defines the project and specifies those conditions under which the subdivision will receive approval without the development of an environmental impact statement. This determination is intended to assure all interested governmental agencies and public groups that this approval is being sought within the intent of both the Montana Environmental Policy Act and the Montana subdivision laws.

Sincerely yours,



D. G. Willems, P.E., Chief
Water Quality Bureau
Environmental Sciences Division

DGW:APK:sh

Enclosure

cc: Ben Wake

Terry Carmody

Dan Vichorek

Dear Mr. Clark —

Important not to miss [unclear] [unclear]
[unclear]

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

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ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
CONTROL

March 28, 1975

An Agency Impact Determination
for
Wild Horse Meadows,
a proposed subdivision in Granite County, Montana

Pursuant to the Montana Environmental Policy Act, Section 69-6405 (b) (3); the act controlling both public and private water supply and sewage disposal for subdivisions, Section 69-5001 through 69-5009; and the act to control water pollution, Section 69-4801 through 69-4827, the following agency impact determination is prepared by the Department of Health and Environmental Sciences, Environmental Sciences Division, Water Quality Bureau, concerning Wild Horse Meadows, a proposed subdivision in Granite County, Montana, for which a submittal has been received requesting subdivision plat approval.

The purpose of this agency impact determination is to inform all interested governmental agencies and the concerned public of the Water Quality Bureau's intent not to prepare a full environmental impact statement. This document will be circulated for 15 days.

Location

The proposed subdivision is located approximately 11 miles west of Drummond and about a mile up to Bear Creek Road. It occupies a portion of the Elfer Placer Mineral Survey No. 3271 located in Section 10 and 11, Township 11 North, Range 14 West, MPM. The subdivision consists of 27.8 acres would be divided into 17 lots of one acre or more. It is anticipated that the subdivision would be used for cabin sites.

Water Supply

Individual wells would be used as a water supply. Two wells have been drilled on the property and indicate a sufficient supply of water. Laboratory tests of the well water show it to be biologically safe for human consumption and of good chemical quality.

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Sewage Disposal

Sewage would be treated in individual septic tanks and disposed of through subsurface drainfields. Soil profile descriptions, percolation tests and groundwater elevations indicate the soils are suitable for this purpose.

Solid Waste Disposal

It is proposed that Skagg's Disposal Service will collect solid waste. Disposal was to have been in the Drummond landfill. However, the Drummond landfill is severely limited with respect to future capacity. The town of Drummond is presently considering several possibilities to alleviate the solid waste disposal problem:

- (a) Purchase additional land for extension of the existing site.
- (b) Form a lower valley disposal district.
- (c) Have solid waste transported to an out-of-county site.

In any case, the problem must be resolved before the department could issue a certificate. A solution is expected in the near future.

Services

DISTANCE?
Ambulance service is available in Drummond, and hospital service is available in Philipsburg, Deer Lodge, and Missoula.

Environmental Assessment

Since this property is not agriculturally productive in nature or a key wildlife area, the usual environmental impacts associated with the residential subdivision of land will be minimized. Restrictive covenants relating to construction will aid in reducing visual impacts. At full development and 1.5 vehicles per unit and a use factor of four trips per day per unit, approximately 100 vehicle trips per day would be generated. Most vehicles would travel in the direction of Drummond or Missoula and would use old U. S. Highway 10 or Interstate 90 and the county road up to Bear Creek.

The location of the proposed subdivision and the economic climate of the area dictate that most potential residences would be seasonal, therefore, creating little direct effect on the school system.

Since the 27.8 acres is presently taxed as placer mining property, little tax revenue is generated. After reclassification as subdivided land, tax revenue will increase many-fold.

The primary non-mitigable adverse effect on the proposed development would be the irreversible and irretrievable commitment of natural resources in the form of materials, energy, and water in the construction and use of second homes.

Alternatives Available to the Developer

One alternative always available is to leave the land in its present state and use. At present, it is a placer mining property that is not productive for agriculture, timber, or key wildlife habitat.

Another alternative would be to lessen the lot density of the development and lessen the adverse impacts of the present plan.

Alternatives Available to the Department

There are two basic alternatives available to the department. They are to issue a certificate of subdivision plat approval or not to issue a certificate. From the data submitted, it appears that plans and specifications for the individual sewage disposal systems and water supply systems are now in compliance with department standards and can satisfy department laws and regulations. When the question of where the refuse hauler can dispose of solid waste material is resolved, then plans for solid waste disposal will be in compliance with department standards.

Conclusion

A certificate of subdivision plat approval can be issued when the problems associated with solid waste disposal are resolved.

This agency impact determination has been prepared by Alfred P. Keppner, B.S.F., M.S., Water Quality Bureau, from information supplied by Eli & Associates, town of Drummond, and the developer.



STATE OF MONTANA

**DEPARTMENT OF
FISH AND GAME**

Helena, Montana 59601
April 21, 1975

APR 22 1975

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Mr. Don Willems, Chief
Water Quality Bureau
Department of Health and Environmental Sciences
Helena, Montana 59601

Dear Don:

As requested in your letter of March 28, we have reviewed the agency impact determination for Wild Horse Meadows, a proposed subdivision in Granite County.

Enclosed for your use and information is a copy of a memo prepared by our regional office subsequent to that review.

Sincerely,

James A. Posewitz, Administrator
Environment and Information Division

JAF/sd
Enc

cc: Environmental Quality Council
Robert Rothweiler

STATE OF MONTANA
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
HELENA, MONTANA

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APR 17 1975
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Office Memorandum

TO : Wes Woodgerd Attn: Jim Posewitz DATE: April 16, 1975
FROM : Jim Ford By: Robert Rothweiler
SUBJECT: Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Statement Wild Horse Meadows Subdivision, Granite County, Montana

The statements made in the environmental assessment concerning wildlife are contradictory. Question (1), Wildlife category, asks, "What major species of fish and wildlife use the area to be affected by the proposed subdivision?" The developer indicates, "The subdivision occupies a portion of a winter game range. Mule deer are the principal big game that use this area." Question (2) requests, "On a plat or sketch map of the proposed subdivision locate any known critical or "key" wildlife areas, such as big game winter range, waterfowl nesting areas, habitat for rare or endangered species, and wetlands." He answered this, "Not applicable."

In Montana, all winter deer ranges are critical or "key" deer ranges. The location of these areas and the forage condition determine the populations of big game in the area - in this area, mule deer.

Snow and inclement weather forces deer to concentrate on restricted range areas during the winter. Winter ranges are generally south-facing slopes of foothills of mountain ranges. During milder seasons, deer may disperse over relatively larger areas and higher mountain elevations. The available forage on the relatively smaller winter range limits the size of deer populations. Game biologists of the Department of Fish and Game base their management of big game on forage plant conditions. The fundamental requirements for deer, as with all forms of life, are food and cover or shelter. Game biologists attempt to maintain game populations compatible with the forage available on the winter ranges. These plants should be properly utilized, but not overused even during severe winters. They have found that in Montana and other states that allow deer numbers to increase until they are able to overuse or destroy their winter forage only leads to disaster for the herds themselves. The development of this subdivision will displace deer that would use it in winter. These animals would then be forced to compete with other deer on other restricted winter range areas. We could expect to see a reduction in deer numbers in this area.

Even if the area is not a critical winter range but is adjacent to winter range, there will be an impact on big game populations. The development of these subdivisions for recreational properties place additional people in the vicinity of game populations and there are impacts from this increased human use.

RR/pgm

Rocky