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

July 18, 1975

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John S. Anderson M.D.
DIRECTOR

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ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
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E. R. Isern, R.S., Co. San., Box 1150, Lewistown
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Department of Fish and Game, Helena
James K. Ross, Cooperative Extension Service, P. O. Box 740, Lewistown
Tom Glennie, Jr., Judith Gap

A NEGATIVE DECLARATION
FOR THE
ROSS RANCH

Pursuant to the Montana Environmental Policy Act, the following negative declaration has been prepared for the Department of Health and Environmental Sciences concerning the Ross Ranch and a request by Mr. James K. Ross for a waste discharge permit for this operation near Judith Gap, Montana.

The purpose of this negative declaration is to inform all interested governmental agencies and public groups of the Water Quality Bureau's intent not to write an environmental impact statement. This declaration will be circulated for a period of ten days at which time a decision will be made as to whether or not a waste discharge permit should be issued. If you care to comment on this application for a permit, please do so within that allotted time.

Mr. James K. Ross currently operates a confined swine operation located in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec. 20, T. 10 N., R. 18 E., of Wheatland County. The location of this operation is shown on the attached map. This operation currently has capacity for approximately 250 pigs which are confined in open lot areas. Mr. Ross proposes to expand this operation through the construction of a total confinement building which would be used as a finishing unit. After such modification, this facility would have capacity for approximately 500 pigs.

As previously indicated the majority of the pigs are fed in open lot areas. Waste material which accumulates on the feeding surface is periodically removed and disposed of on adjacent agricultural land. An area of approximately 15 acres is currently used for waste disposal. Waste material from the livestock in the proposed confinement building would be contained in liquid manure pits located beneath the building. The waste material which accumulates within this pit would be periodically removed and disposed of on the same agricultural land.

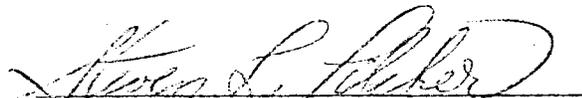
Ross Ranch
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Due to the relatively flat topography of the area, surface runoff from the open lot portion of this animal confinement facility would be prevented from reaching state waters. Likewise, with proper management, the disposal of the waste material removed from the liquid manure pit should not result in the discharge of livestock waste to state waters.

Flies around this animal confinement facility are controlled through a routine spraying program. Odors are minimized through frequent removal of waste material to prevent excessive buildup. Dead animals will be disposed of through burning or burial at an acceptable location.

Any animal confinement facility will have an effect on the surrounding environment, but adverse environmental effects can be minimized through adherence to a good waste management program. The waste control facilities and waste management program proposed in this application for a waste discharge permit should provide adequate protection to the environment.

The only alternatives available to Mr. Ross would be relocation of the existing facilities or maintain the facilities at their existing capacity. Our office has never received complaints of either air or water pollution from the existing animal confinement facility; and since the operation is located in an agricultural area, it is doubtful that the expansion would have significant adverse effects on the surrounding land.



Steven L. Pilcher
Agricultural Wastewater Specialist
Water Quality Bureau
Environmental Sciences Division

SLP:vlf
Attachment
cc: Ben Wake
Air Quality Bureau

109° 40'

109° 30'

R17 E

R18 E

T11 N

46° 40'

COUNTY

T10 N

VALLEY

GOLDEN

T9 N

46° 30'

Judith Gap 3 mi.

Ross Ranch



SHEET 2

R17 E

R18 E

109° 40'

109° 30'

