

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION  
WATER RESOURCES DIVISION  
WATER RIGHTS BUREAU  
**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION**

1. **Type of action:** Water use permit application no.  
Water right change application no. 40EJ-G(C)031281-00  
Petition or Other Action:
2. **Applicant/Contact name and address:** ZORTMAN WATER USERS ASSN, PO BOX 210, ZORTMAN, MT 59546
3. **Water source name:** GROUNDWATER WELL
4. **Location affected by action:** SWSESE SEC. 16, T25N R25E, PHILLIPS COUNTY
5. **Narrative summary of the proposed project and action to be taken:** DNRC shall issue an authorization for change of appropriation if the applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-402, MCA, are met. Applicant is requesting to change the purpose of this water right from commercial to municipal use and to change the place of use to include the entire Town of Zortman and other users on the water distribution system. The well was developed in 1981 and was used at a store, post office and cabins around Zortman. In 1985, the well was hooked up to Zortman's distribution system and has been used as the town's backup well ever since. However, the applicant failed to file for an authorization for change at that time. This change application is for this purpose.
6. **Agencies consulted during preparation of the environmental assessment:** None

**PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

1. Environmental Impact Checklist:

**PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

**Soils/Geologic Features:**

Degradation of soil quality or alteration of soil stability, moisture content, geologic substructure, unique geologic features, archeological sites?

NO

**Erosion:**

Alteration of erosion or siltation patterns which modify stream beds or lake shores?

NO

**Vegetation/Noxious weeds:**

Change in or adverse affect on diversity and production of local plant species including any unique or endangered species (including trees,

shrubs, grass, and aquatic plants)? Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?

NO

**Air:**

Deterioration of air quality, or adverse effects on vegetation due to increased air pollutants.

NO

**Water:**

Alteration of surface water or groundwater quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity or quantity or distribution?

NO

**Floodplain:**

Changes in drainage patterns, course or magnitude of flood flows, or exposure of people/property to hazards (flood)?

NO

**Wildlife Habitat/Migration:**

Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat? Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of fish or wildlife?

NO

**Endangered Species:**

Adverse effects on any unique or endangered species?

NO

<b>HUMAN ENVIRONMENT</b>
--------------------------

**Existing Land Use:**

Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?

NO

**Historical Significance:**

Destruction or alteration of a natural area of scientific or educational value or prehistoric or paleontological importance?

NO

**Populace:**

Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area? Alteration of social structure of community?

NO

**Transportation:**

Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?

NO

**Safety:**

Creation of any health hazard or affect on existing emergency response or evacuation plans?

NO

**Public Services:**

Have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? Have an effect upon local or state tax base?

NO

**Utilities:**

Creates need for new or altered facilities for any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?

NO

**Aesthetics:**

Alteration of any scenic vista or recreation opportunity or creation of an aesthetically offensive site to the public?

NO

**Other:**

NO

- 
2. **Secondary and cumulative impacts:** None
  3. **Reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative:** No impacts have been identified.

If an authorization is not granted pursuant to the statute referenced above, the Zortman Water Users Assn. will not have an alternate water source for the Town of Zortman and other users in the event their main well breaks down. Their main well is filed on Water Right No. 40EJ-C053271. However, per 85-2-113(3), MCA, the Department can authorize a temporary emergency appropriation if the need arises.

**PART III. CONCLUSION**

Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? No

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action:

There will be no significant impact on the environment, therefore, no EIS is required.

PREPARED BY:

NAME: Dixie Brough  
TITLE: Water Resource Specialist  
DATE: October 9, 1996