

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(P)042324-00
Petition or Other Action:
2. **Applicant/Contact name and address:** Zortman Mining Inc., PO Box 313, Zortman, MT 59546
3. **Water source name:** Groundwater Well
4. **Location affected by action:** SESWSE Sec. 7, T25N R25E, Phillips County
5. **Narrative summary of the proposed project and action to be taken:** The DNRC shall issue an authorization for change of appropriation if the applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-402, MCA, are met. The application is for a new replacement well located about 312 feet from the old well. The old well was completed in March, 1982, and filed on Water Right No. 40EJ-P042324-00. The well is used for industrial purposes with an appropriation of 500 gpm and 530 acre-feet. The old well was abandoned in March, 1995. The new well will be used for the same purpose as the old well. The wells are in the same aquifer as evidenced by the well logs. There will be no increase in flow rate or volume and the place of use will remain the same; only the diversion point is being changed.
6. **Agencies consulted during preparation of the environmental assessment:** Zortman Mining Inc.; DNRC Office in Glasgow

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

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

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 significant impacts from the replacement well have been identified. If an authorization is not issued, since the old well has already been permanently abandoned and cannot be used, the applicant would be forced to get a new water right. In this case, the historical use has already been established so this shouldn't be necessary.

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:

A Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Zortman and Landusky Mines, dated March 1996, was prepared by Montana Dept. Of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and is adopted herein. These agencies already evaluated and addressed the environmental concerns associated with expansion of mining and modification of reclamation plans at the mines. The change in diversion point of the well in this application will not further impact the area. The FEIS can be viewed at the MDEQ in Helena and BLM in Lewistown.

PREPARED BY:

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