

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 RIGHT PERMIT APPLICATION NO.
40J-G041519
2. **Applicant/Contact name and address:**
HOLMAN HEREFORD HOME INC.
FLOYD R. & ARLENE BLAIR
HC 76 BOX 45
DENTON, MT 59430
3. **Water source name:** GROUNDWATER
4. **Location affected by action:** SWSENE, SECTION 2, T30N, R27E, PHILLIPS COUNTY
5. **Narrative summary of the proposed project and action to be taken:** THIS CHANGE IS TO ADD 6 STOCK TANKS TO AN EXISTING SYSTEM TO INCREASE THE ABILITY TO ROTATE CATTLE BETWEEN PASTURES. THE POINT OF DIVERSION IS SWSENE, SECTION 2, T30N, R27E. THE ADDITIONAL PLACES OF USE ARE NESENW, SECTION 26; SWSWNE, SECTION 25; NWSESE, SECTION 36; SWSENE, SECTION 35; ALL WITHIN T31N, R27E AND SENENE, SECTION 1; SWSENW, SECTION 1; BOTH WITHIN T30N, R27E. THERE WILL BE NO INCREASE IN THE FLOW RATE OR VOLUME FROM PREVIOUS USE. THE DNRC SHALL ISSUE AN AUTHORIZATION TO CHANGE IF THE APPLICANT PROVES THE CRITERIA IN 85-2-402, MCA ARE MET.
6. **Agencies consulted during preparation of the environmental assessment:**
MONTANA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
MONTANA NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM

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?

THERE WILL BE NO CHANGE IN THE LAND USE. THE LAND WAS GRAZED IN THE PAST AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE CATTLE PASTURE.

Erosion:

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

THE WATER WILL BE PUMPED FROM AN EXISTING GROUNDWATER WELL TO THE NEW STOCK TANKS. NO PERENNIAL STREAMS OR LAKES ARE LOCATED WITHIN THE PLACE OF USE.

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?

THE LAND IS PASTURE AND THE ADDITION OF THE STOCK TANKS WILL NOT CREATE ANY CHANGE IN THE VEGETATION FROM PREVIOUS USE. WITH THE ADDITION OF THE TANKS, THE NATIVE VEGETATION MAY ACTUALLY BENEFIT AS THE CATTLE CAN BE ROTATED BETWEEN THE PASTURES. THE MONTANA NATURAL HERITAGE

PROGRAM WEBSITE LISTS NO "PLANT SPECIES OF SPECIAL CONCERN" LOCATED IN THE PROJECT AREA.

Air:

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

THE ADDITION OF THE STOCK TANKS WILL HAVE NO IMPACT ON THE AIR QUALITY.

Water:

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

THERE WILL BE NO INCREASE IN THE FLOW RATE OR VOLUME FROM PREVIOUS USE AND THERE ARE NO PERENNIAL STREAMS LOCATED WITHIN THE PLACE OF USE.

Floodplain:

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

THE ADDITION OF THE STOCK TANKS WILL HAVE NO IMPACT ON THE DRAINAGE PATTERNS OR FLOOD FLOWS.

Wildlife Habitat/Migration:

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

THERE ARE NO FISH WITHIN THIS AREA TO BE IMPACTED. THE TANKS WILL NOT CREATE A BARRIER TO MOVEMENT.

Endangered Species:

Adverse effects on any unique or endangered species?

A REPORT RECEIVED FROM THE MONTANA NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM INDICATES THERE IS ONE SPECIES OF SPECIAL CONCERN WITHIN THE GENERAL AREA OF THIS PROJECT. THE MOUNTAIN PLOVER IS LISTED AS PROPOSED THREATENED AND ITS HABITAT CONSISTS OF SHORT-GRASS PRAIRIE COVERING NUMEROUS TOWNSHIPS EXTENDING GENERALLY NORTH AND EAST OF THE FORT BELKNAP RESERVATION. THIS PROJECT IS TO ADD STOCK TANKS TO AN EXISTING SYSTEM WITH NO CHANGE IN THE LAND USE (GRAZING), AND SHOULD HAVE NO IMPACT ON THE MOUNTAIN PLOVER HABITAT.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Existing Land Use:

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

THE LAND USE HAS NOT BEEN CHANGED. THE ADDITION OF THE TANKS WILL PROBABLY INCREASE THE PRODUCTIVITY OF THE LAND BY ALLOWING THE APPLICANT TO ROTATE THE CATTLE BETWEEN PASTURES.

Historical Significance:

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

ACCORDING TO THE MONTANA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE, THERE ARE TWELVE PREVIOUSLY RECORDED SITES IN THE PROJECT AREA AND EIGHT CULTURAL SURVEYS HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED. AS THIS PROJECT IS LOCATED ON PRIVATE PROPERTY, NO RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY IS REQUIRED.

Populace:

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

THIS PROJECT WILL HAVE NO IMPACT ON THE POPULACE.

Transportation:

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

THE ADDITION OF THE STOCK TANKS WILL HAVE NO IMPACT ON TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES OR PATTERNS.

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?

THE TANKS ARE SUPPLIED BY AN EXISTING WELL AND NO ALTERATIONS TO OR ADDITIONAL UTILITIES WILL BE REQUIRED.

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 HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED. IF THE CHANGE AUTHORIZATION WERE NOT ISSUED, THE APPLICANT WOULD NOT HAVE THE BENEFIT OF BEING ABLE TO MANAGE HIS CATTLE IN A ROTATIONAL SYSTEM.

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:

AN EA IS ADEQUATE FOR THIS ACTION. THERE WILL BE NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS, THEREFORE, NO EIS IS REQUIRED.

PREPARED BY:

NAME: DENISE BIGGAR
TITLE: WATER RESOURCES SPECIALIST
DATE: [Automatic date code removed]