

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.
43D-P107177-00
2. **Applicant/Contact name and address:**
REX KOCH
RT 1 BOX 1184
BRIDGER MT 59014
3. **Water source name:** BRIDGER CREEK
4. **Location affected by action:** NENENE SECTION 11, T7S, R23E, CARBON COUNTY
5. **Narrative summary of the proposed project and action to be taken:** THE DNRC SHALL ISSUE A WATER USE PERMIT IF AN APPLICANT PROVES THE CRITERIA IN 85-2-311, MCA ARE MET. THIS APPLICATION IS TO USE 100 GPM UP TO 12.5 ACRE-FEET FOR 5 ACRES OF IRRIGATION.
6. **Agencies consulted during preparation of the environmental assessment:**
State Historic Preservation Office
Montana Natural Heritage Program
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

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, the applicant plans to irrigate previously irrigated land.**

Erosion:

Alteration of erosion or siltation patterns which modify stream beds or lake shores? **There should be no significant erosion from this proposed 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 Montana Natural Heritage Program identified two sites in the area where the Gray's Milkvetch may be impacted. This proposed development is not expected to affect these areas.**

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? **Bridger Creek in this area is not a fishery. The creek is mainly fed from irrigation runoff in the summer and is fed by spring flow at other times of the year. This proposed use should also have no significant adverse affect on wildlife in the area.**

Endangered Species:

Adverse effects on any unique or endangered species? **The Montana Natural Heritage Program identified the White-Tailed Prairie Dog as an endangered species in this area. It stated that in 1995 there was no evidence of the colony seen. This proposed use is not expected to have any affect on the prairie dog population. They also identified the Gray’s Milkvetch as sensitive. This use should have no potential to adversely impact that plant population.**

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Existing Land Use:

Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area? **NO, this was previously irrigated land.**

Historical Significance:

Destruction or alteration of a natural area of scientific or educational value or prehistoric or paleontological importance? **The State Historic Preservation Office identified a historic road in the area. The University of Montana Department of Anthropology provided a map of the historic road site. This proposed use is not expected to impact that old road site.**

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, this water use should enhance the aesthetics of the area.**

Other: NO

2. Secondary and cumulative impacts: **NONE**

3. Reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative: **No action alternative. The proposed water use would not take place.**

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: MARTY VAN CLEAVE
TITLE: WATER RESOURCES SPECIALIST
DATE: [Automatic date code removed]