

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.
41H-107416-00, G(P)061673-00, G(W)122634-00, G(W)122635-00.
2. **Applicant/Contact name and address:**
Big Sky County Water & Sewer District No. 363
% Ron Edwards, PO Box 160670
Big Sky, Mt. 59716
3. **Water source name:** Four Wells
4. **Location affected by action:** S2 Sec 25, Sec 26, 27, 33, SE Sec 34, Sec 35, 36, T6S R3E, N2 & N2SW Sec 31
T6S R4E, Sec 1, NE Sec 2 T7S R3E, Gallatin County
5. **Narrative summary of the proposed project and action to be taken:** The applicant proposes to be able to use any of the four existing wells anywhere within the service district. An additional flow of 985 gpm up to 1307.38 acre feet is being requested to supply buildout within the next 15 years.
6. **Agencies consulted during preparation of the environmental assessment:**
DEQ, subdivision review-Mark Peterson. Gallatin County subdivision review.

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?

Yes, Native plant species have been replaced with irrigated lawns. As this area is developed further, this practice will continue.

Air:

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

Yes, Air quality could deteriorate if wood stoves, and fireplaces, are used.

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?

Yes, This area was probably elk winter range before it was subdivided. The migration of wildlife was probably changed with this development.

Endangered Species:

Adverse effects on any unique or endangered species?

Yes, Grizzly bears are likely to be found near this area. Lynx may also inhabit the area.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Existing Land Use:

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

Yes, The existing sagebrush land will become residential property, which will increase profitability for the land developer

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?

Yes, New development will increase density and growth rate in the Big Sky area.

Transportation:

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

Yes, Traffic on Hwy # 191 will be increased as more people move to this area. This already dangerous highway may become worse with additional traffic.

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?

Yes, There will be additional demand for several governmental services.

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?

Yes, There will be new demand for additional utilities, with increased building.

Aesthetics:

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

Yes, New development may be offensive to some people.

Other:

NO

2. **Secondary and cumulative impacts:** NONE
3. **Reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative** Conserve water by limiting lawn irrigation, metering water, or fixing leaks in the distribution system. This should allow more water to be used for new hookups.

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: Jan Mack

TITLE: Water Right Specialist

DATE: [Automatic date code removed]