

rainbow or brown trout) the impacts could be more substantial on the existing brook trout populations—not genetically, but more so through competition and predation.

Impacts to any life stage of existing fish populations due to competition and/or predation? None___ Minor__X__ Major

Comments:

See above

Impacts to other forms of aquatic life that may be caused by this introduction? None___ Minor__X__ Major

Comments:

See above

Potential for the proposed new species to reproduce in this location? None___ Minor___ Major

Comments:

Unknown

If necessary, would it be feasible to remove this species after it has been stocked?

Unknown

Would this introduction result in impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?

There are numerous such ponds in the Bitterroot Valley, and the cumulative effects are unknown.

Describe reasonable and prudent alternatives to this action, if any (including no action).

The proposal to renew this private fish pond license includes the stocking of fish. The application is for "brook trout". Current Montana FWP policy prevents the stocking of brook trout, so alternatives would include stocking other species:

Three (3) other potential trout species are:

1. Rainbow trout
2. Brown trout
3. Westslope cutthroat trout - (The westslope cutthroat that are commercially available do not originate from the Bitterroot and have a different genetic makeup than bitterroot fish.)

4. No action. Since Swamp Creek already has brook trout there is no reason to believe that the stocking of brook trout in this pond would have any adverse impact on these populations, so a no action alternative would serve no purpose.

Describe and evaluate mitigation, stipulations, or other control measures enforceable by the agency, if any.

Current laws regarding the transfer of live fish from one water body to another govern the legality of movement of fish planted in this pond to other waters. This movement of fish to other waters would be enforceable under this regulation.

List any other agencies or individuals that may be affected by the proposed introduction:

none

List all agencies and individuals who have been notified of this proposed introduction:

none

Based on this evaluation, is an EIS required? Yes/No If no, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for the proposed action.

No. The proposed action occurs on private lands. This issue can be handled at the EA level.

EA prepared by Larry Javorsky—acting Fisheries Biologist 05/30/00

Comments will be accepted until June 30, 2000

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