

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL
RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION



JUDY MARTZ
GOVERNOR

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HELENA, MONTANA 59620-1601

Cover Letter

September 10 2002

TO: Governor's Office, Barbara Ranf, Rm. 204, State Capitol, P.O. Box 200801, Helena, MT 59620-0801
Environmental Quality Council, Capitol Building, Room 106, P.O. Box 201704, Helena, MT 59620
Dept. of Environmental Quality, Metcalf Building, P.O. Box 200901, Helena, MT 59620-0901
Director's Office
Dept. of Natural Resources and Conservation, US F&G Bldg. 1625 11th Ave. Helena, MT 59620
Director's Office
Information Services Section
Water Resources Division, 48 N. Last Chance Gulch, P.O. Box 201601, Helena, MT 59620-1601
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 1420 E. 6th Ave. Helena, MT 59620
Director's Office
FWP Region 2 Office, 3201 Spurgin Road, Missoula, MT 59804
Wayne Hadley, MT Dept. of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, P.O. Box 1, Deer Lodge, MT 59722
MT Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, P.O. Box 201202 Helena, MT 59620-1202
MT State Library, 1515 E. Sixth Ave., P.O. Box 201800, Helena, MT 59620
Montana Environmental Information Center, P.O. Box 1184, Helena, MT 59624
Montana Audubon Council, P.O. Box 595, Helena, MT 59624
Ed Lord, Flint Creek Water Users Association, Box 4796 Skalkaho Rd., Philipsburg, MT 59858
Granite County Commissioners, P.O. Box 929, Philipsburg, MT 59858-0925
Northern Plains Resource Council, 2401 Montana Ave. Suite 200, Billings, MT 59101-2336
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 301 S. Park Ave. Drawer 10014, Helena, MT 59626-0014
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, MT Field Office, 100 N. Park Ave. Helena, MT 59601
Wildlife Federation, P.O. Box 1175, Helena, MT 59624
Trout Unlimited, P.O. Box 7186, Missoula, MT 59807

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The enclosed Finding of No Significant Impact / Decision Notice has been prepared for the Marshall Canal Siphon Replacement Project. Please feel free to contact James P. Domino at (406) 444-6622, e-mail jdomino@state.mt.us should you have any questions about the Finding of No Significant Impact / Decision Notice or the Final EA. Copies of the Final EA are available upon request. The Final EA can also be viewed on the DNRC website at www.dnrc.state.mt.us. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jack Stults".

Jack Stults
Water Resources Division Administrator

STATE WATER PROJECTS
BUREAU
(406) 444-6646

WATER MANAGEMENT
BUREAU
(406) 444-6637

WATER OPERATIONS
BUREAU
(406) 444-0860

WATER RIGHTS
BUREAU
(406) 444-6610

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT/
NOTICE OF DECISION
September 10 2002

Dear Reader:

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) released a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) on the Marshall Canal Siphon Replacement Project on August 9 2002. The Marshall Canal is a component of the Flint Creek Water Project. The siphon is located in Granite County, T6N, R 14W, NW ¼, NW ¼ of section 10. It consists of an underground 36" steel pipe, approximately 550 feet in length. The siphon was constructed in 1939. The Marshall Canal and siphon are owned by the DNRC, while the surrounding lands are privately owned. The DNRC possesses an easement for access to the canal and siphon. The siphon is severely corroded along its length and approaching imminent failure. It ruptured on May 22 of this year, which necessitated the shutdown of the irrigation-canal system for the west side of the Philipsburg Valley. The emergency repair involved welding a steel-plate patch. The repair was a temporary measure taken to return the siphon into service for the current irrigation season. The DNRC evaluated two alternatives for the replacement of the siphon. The preferred alternative would involve the excavation and removal of the old steel pipe, and installation and backfilling of a new 3' X 550' piping system (replacement alternative). The original concrete inlet and outlet structures would still be utilized. A coated steel pipe with galvanic corrosion protection, plastic pipe, PCV pipe, concrete pipe, and fiberglass pipe are various options available for the replacement alternative. It is anticipated that the new pipe would have a service life of 75 to 100 years, and cost from \$100,000 to \$120,000 depending on the material used. The disturbed area for the excavation would extend along the length of the pipe and about three feet on either side, with an existing gravel road used to access the work site. A tracked excavator and backhoe would be used for the project. Any disturbed areas would be reclaimed and reseeded upon completion of the project. A second alternative would be to repair the existing steel pipe with the installation of a plastic liner. This option would be more expensive, about \$165,000, and have an anticipated service life of less than 20 years. This option would involve less on-site physical disturbance. Construction is tentatively planned to begin on September 30 2002 and be completed in the spring of 2003, before the irrigation season begins. The Montana Department of Environmental Quality, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Montana Natural Heritage Program, State Historic Preservation Office and the Army Corps of Engineers were consulted as part of the draft EA development. The public comment period closed on September 9 2002, with one comment received. An individual was concerned about the DNRC interfering with the delivery of water to the Water Users. It was explained that the proposed project would enhance the delivery of water and not cause any interference. The individual was not opposed to the project. Based on comments received, the EA's disclosure and analysis of potential impacts, the DNRC concludes that the proposed action will not result in any significant impacts. The DNRC will adopt the draft EA as the final EA and proceed with the project as planned, with the preferred replacement alternative. Copies of the Final EA are available upon request. The Final EA can also be viewed on the DNRC website at www.dnrc.mt.us. Please direct any questions to:

James P. Domino
State Water Projects Bureau
DNRC, P.O. Box 201601
Helena, MT 59620-1601
(406) 444-6622
e-mail: jdomino@state.mt.us

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely
Jack Stults
Water Resources Division Administrator