

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL
RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION



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<http://www.dnrc.state.mt.us/wrd/home.htm>

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AUG 20 2004

LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL
POLICY OFFICE

August 16, 2004

Cover Letter

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, 1424 9th Ave, P.O. Box 201601, Helena, MT 59620-1601
Regional Manager, DNRC Water Resources Division, Billings Regional Office, Airport Business
Park, 1371 Rintop Dr. Billings, MT 59105-1978.
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 1420 E. 6th Ave. Helena, MT 59620
Director's Office
Wildlife Division
Field Services Division, Lands Section
Regional Supervisor, DFWP Region 5 Office, 2300 Lake Elmo Dr., Billings, MT 59105
MT Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, P.O. Box 201202 Helena, MT 59620-1202
Stillwater County Commissioners, 400 3rd Ave. North, PO Box 970, Columbus, MT 59019-0970
Montana Environmental Information Center, P.O. Box 1184, Helena, MT 59624
Wildlife Federation, P.O. Box 1175, Helena, MT 59624
Trout Unlimited, P.O. Box 7186, Missoula, MT 59807
Northern Plains Resource Council, 2401 Montana Ave. Suite 200, Billings, MT 59101-2336
Montana Audubon Council, P.O. Box 595, Helena, MT 59624
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MT Field Office, 100 N. Park Ave. Helena, MT 59601

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The enclosed Finding of No Significant Impact / Decision Notice has been prepared for the Big Lake Land Transfer. Please feel free to contact Tim Kuehn at (406) 444-6655, e-mail tkuehn@state.mt.us should you have any questions or comments 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,

Handwritten signature of Jack Stults in cursive.

Jack Stults
Water Resources Division Administrator

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT/
NOTICE OF DECISION

August 16, 2004

Dear Reader:

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) released a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) on the Big Lake Land Transfer on July 6, 2004. The proposed action calls for the transfer of 1,531 acres of land currently owned by the DNRC to the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (DFWP). The land proposed for transfer is currently managed as part of the Big Lake Wildlife Management Area by the DFWP under a DNRC lease. The transfer is tentatively scheduled to occur in the fall of 2004. This property is located in Stillwater County Montana, T01N, R21E, Section 1; T01N, R22E, Section 6; T2N, R21E, Sections 24, 25 and 35. The overriding goal of this transfer is to eliminate the administrative tasks and costs for each agency related to this inter-agency lease. The transfer will allow the DFWP to continue to manage the property as part of the Big Lake Wildlife Management Area. No changes in management or land use will occur as a result of the transfer.

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality, DFWP, Montana Natural Heritage Program and the State Historic Preservation Office were contacted as part of the draft EA development. The public comment period closed on August 6, 2004, with no comments received.

Based on 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. 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:

Tim Kuehn
State Water Projects Bureau
DNRC, P.O. Box 201601
Helena, MT 59620-1601
(406) 444-6655
e-mail: tkuehn@state.mt.us

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,



Jack Stults
Water Resources Division Administrator