ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW OF FISH INTRODUCTION
PRIVATE POND APPLICATION

Name and address of applicant: Cliff Benjamin
200 S. Kraft Rd.
Shelby, MT 59474

Is approval of private pond permit application recommended? Yes.

Location of pond:

County: Toole
Legal description: T31N R01W Sec18 NENE

Name of the drainage where the pond would be located:

Pond is located three miles southeast of the town of Shelby on a bench above the Marias River. This area is heavily farmed; dryland wheat is the primary crop. The pond is situated among wheat fields. There is an ephemeral coulee approximately one mile to the south of the pond. This coulee is extends southerly then westerly for four miles before reaching the Marias River. Thus, the pond is located about five miles from the Marias River.

Does pond have legal water rights? (describe) Yes. Pond has stockwater rights.

Fish species proposed for introduction: Rainbow trout and brook trout.

Is this species legally present in the drainage? Yes, in the mainstem Marias River and tributaries of the upper Marias.

Species of Special Concern present in the drainage:

Westslope cutthroat trout are found in the headwaters of the Marias drainage in Badger Creek and associated tributaries.

RISKS:

Potential for impacts on genetic structure of existing fish populations: _X_ None ___ Minor __ Major

Comments: No significant impacts are expected. Escapement of fish from this pond is unlikely as any overland flow will spill onto wheat fields. Additionally, this pond is located five miles from the mainstem Marias River.

Impacts to any life stage of existing fish populations due to competition and/or predation?
___ None _X_ Minor __ Major

Comments: Because of the location of this pond, it is very unlikely stocked fish could ever reach the Marias River.

Impacts to other forms of aquatic life that may be caused by this introduction? __ None _X_ Minor __ Major

Comments: Fish will consume some invertebrates in pond.

Potential for the proposed new species to reproduce in this location: __ None _X_ Minor __ Major

Comments: It is very unlikely rainbow trout will successfully spawn in the pond. However, brook trout can successfully spawn in areas of groundwater upwelling. It is unknown if there is groundwater seepage into this pond, although it does not appear likely.

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

Would this introduction result in impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? No.

Describe reasonable and prudent alternatives to this action, if any (including no action). Do not stock.

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

Species restrictions can be identified in the permitting process

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. Impacts are expected to be very minor.

EA prepared by: Dave Yerk **Date:** April 8, 2004