



Montana Department of  
**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

Brian Schweitzer, Governor

P.O. Box 200901 • Helena, MT 59620-0901 • (406) 444-2544 • www.deq.mt.gov

**RECEIVED**

June 16, 2006

JUN 20 2006

Dave Jones, Chairman  
Hill County Water District  
P.O. Box 808  
Havre, MT 59501

**LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL  
POLICY OFFICE**

RE: Fresno Surface Water Treatment Plant  
Hill County, Montana

Dear Mr. Jones:

Enclosed are copies of the state's Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and Environmental Assessment (EA) for the district's Fresno surface water treatment plant. Please print the enclosed "Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact" in one publication of your local paper under legal advertising and return the proof of advertising to me at the address listed above. You do not have to print the EA or FONSI.

Please note that because you are receiving STAG funding, the Environmental Protection Agency must also issue a FONSI and will require publication of a notice in your local newspaper. Therefore, I recommend that you wait to advertise until you receive EPA's request for publication and then do them together. I forwarded the EA to David Rise of EPA Region VIII this week and am hopeful we will get a quick response. Upon publication of the notice, you should allow for a 30-day comment period.

If you have any questions, please give me a call at (406) 444-7838.

Sincerely,

Gary J. Wiens, P.E.  
Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Loan Program  
Technical and Financial Assistance Bureau

Enc. EA, FONSI, and Notice of FONSI

cc: Ray Armstrong, P.E., HKM Engineering, Inc.  
Rick Duncan, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation  
David Rise, EPA Region VIII, Montana Office

## Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact

### TO ALL INTERESTED GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND PUBLIC GROUPS

As required by state and federal rules for determining whether an Environmental Impact Statement is necessary, an environmental review has been performed on the proposed action below:

Project: Hill County Fresno Surface Water Treatment Plant  
Location: Hill County, Montana  
Project #: Not yet assigned  
Total Cost: \$1,479,202

The Hill County Water District is proposing to construct a new water treatment plant and pumping facilities. The purpose of this project is to bring the district into compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act and ensure that drinking water meeting state and federal regulations is provided to all homes and farms in the district.

The recommended alternative is to install two skid-mounted 400-gpm membrane filtration systems, accompanied by liquid chlorination facilities and a chlorine contact basin, and construct a new pump station. The proposed treatment facility and pumping station will be located adjacent to the district's open earthen reservoir in Kremlin. Federal and State grant and loan programs will fund this project.

The following agencies have prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) and corresponding Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI):

1. Montana Department of Environmental Quality, Planning, Prevention and Assistance Division, 1520 East Sixth Avenue, P.O. Box 200901, Helena, Montana 59620-0901
2. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region VIII, Montana Office, 10 West 15th Street, Suite 3200, Helena, MT 59626.

The environmental review record, including the EA and FONSI issued by each agency, is available for public examination on the Department of Environmental Quality website at [www.deq.mt.gov](http://www.deq.mt.gov) and during normal working hours at the following locations:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Dept. of Environmental Quality<br>1520 East Sixth Avenue<br>P.O. Box 200901<br>Helena, Montana 59620-0901 | Hill County Water District<br>335 Fourth Avenue<br>P.O. Box 808<br>Havre, Montana 59501 |
|---|---|

Comments supporting or disagreeing with this decision may be submitted for consideration by each agency. After evaluating the comments received, the agency will make a final decision. However, no administrative action will be taken on the project for at least 30 calendar days after release of the Finding of No Significant Impact.

June 15, 2006

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

TO ALL INTERESTED GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND PUBLIC GROUPS

As required by state and federal rules for determining whether an Environmental Impact Statement is necessary, an environmental review has been performed on the proposed action below:

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Project        | Hill County Fresno Surface Water Treatment Plant |
| Location       | Hill County, Montana                             |
| Project Number | Not yet assigned                                 |
| Total Cost     | \$1,479,202                                      |

The Hill County Water District is proposing to construct a new water treatment plant and pumping facilities. The purpose of this project is to bring the district into compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act and ensure that drinking water meeting state and federal regulations is provided to all homes and farms in the district.

The recommended alternative is to install two skid-mounted 400-gpm membrane filtration systems, accompanied by liquid chlorination facilities and a chlorine contact basin, and construct a new pump station. The proposed treatment facility and pumping station will be located adjacent to the district's open earthen reservoir in Kremlin. Federal and State grant and loan programs will fund this project.

Environmentally sensitive characteristics such as wetlands, floodplains, threatened or endangered species, and historical sites are not expected to be adversely impacted as a result of the proposed project. Public participation during the planning process demonstrated no opposition to the selected alternative. No significant long-term environmental impacts were identified. An environmental assessment, which describes the project and analyzes the impacts in more detail, is attached to this Finding of No Significant Impact.

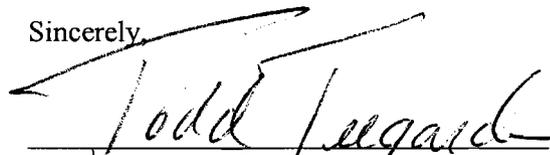
These documents are available for public scrutiny at the following locations:

Department of Environmental Quality  
1520 East Sixth Avenue  
P.O. Box 200901  
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Hill County Water District  
335 Fourth Avenue  
P.O. Box 808  
Havre, Montana 59501

Comments supporting or disagreeing with this decision may be submitted for consideration by the Department of Environmental Quality. After evaluating the comments received, the agency will make a final decision. However, no administrative action will be taken on the project for at least 30 calendar days after release of the Finding of No Significant Impact.

Sincerely,



Todd Teegarden, Bureau Chief  
Technical and Financial Assistance Bureau  
Planning, Prevention & Assistance Division

HILL COUNTY WATER DISTRICT  
FRESNO SURFACE WATER TREATMENT PLANT

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

I. COVER SHEET

A. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Applicant: Hill County Water District  
Address: P.O. Box 808  
Havre, MT 59501  
Project Number: XP-(not yet assigned)

B. CONTACT PERSON

Name: Dave Jones, Chairman  
Hill County Water District  
Address: P.O. Box 808  
Havre, MT 59501  
Telephone: (406) 397-2328

C. ABSTRACT

The Hill County Water District was formed in 1963 to provide potable water to the communities of Kremlin, Hingham, Inverness, Joplin, Gildford and Rudyard. Since then, the district has been expanded to serve the rural water systems of East Kremlin, North Hingham, South Hingham, Boucher and Aspevig Water Users, North Rudyard, South Rudyard, Brandt, Elling and Moog Water Users, Rambo Wilson, North Inverness, South Inverness and North Joplin. The district currently serves 2100 users, including more than 40 farmsteads.

The district's distribution system has over 500 miles of water transmission lines. Raw water is obtained from the Fresno Reservoir and an infiltration gallery on the Marias River. No water treatment other than chlorination is provided. In 1993, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality notified the district that the Fresno surface water source was in violation of the Safe Drinking Water Act because adequate treatment was not being provided. In December 2001, the department issued an administrative order establishing a schedule of actions the district must complete in order to bring the water system back into compliance with state and federal drinking water requirements.

As a result of deficiencies discovered during an inspection conducted by the department in July 2005, a second administrative order was issued, which included requirements for improved treatment and disinfection of the water supply. The second order requires the district to have an acceptable treatment system in operation by November 1, 2006.

The recommended alternative from the February 2006 preliminary engineering report includes the following improvements:

- Demolition of the existing Kremlin pump house.
- Construction of a new pre-engineered metal building to house the treatment facilities.
- Installation of two skid-mounted 400-gpm membrane filtration systems, accompanied by liquid chlorination facilities and a chlorine contact basin.
- Construction of a new 100,000-gallon elevated storage tank 3.7 miles west of Kremlin.
- Construction of a new pump station in Kremlin with a wet well and three 40-hp constant-speed vertical turbine pumps, each with a pumping capacity of 225 gpm.

The proposed water treatment system improvements will bring the district into compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act and will ensure that drinking water meeting state and federal regulations is provided to all homes and farms in the district.

The project will be funded by a federal State and Tribal Assistance Grant and a State Revolving Fund loan. Environmentally sensitive characteristics such as wetlands, floodplains and threatened or endangered species are not expected to be adversely impacted as a consequence of the proposed project. No significant long-term environmental impacts were identified.

#### D. COMMENT PERIOD

Thirty (30) calendar days.

## II. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

### A. EXISTING WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM

The existing water system was constructed between 1963 and 1965, with operation commencing in 1966. The district relies on two water sources, the Fresno Reservoir and Marias River. Surface water from the Fresno Reservoir is pumped to a three-cell open earthen reservoir at Kremlin, then on to a 300,000-gallon steel water tank at Hingham. A booster pump at Hingham delivers water to Rudyard and on to Inverness, where it is stored in a second 300,000-gallon storage tank. A booster pump at Inverness supplies water to Joplin, where it is stored in a 100,000-gallon storage tank constructed in 1978 and a 500,000-gallon storage tank constructed in 2003.

The other water source, an infiltration gallery near the banks of the Marias River, was developed in 1987 to meet peak demands on the eastern end of the system. Water from the infiltration gallery is pumped north to a booster pump station, then on to a 15,000,000-gallon earthen pond at Inverness. The Marias source is typically used only during high demands from June to September.

The only water treatment provided is disinfection with chlorine. The lack of an acceptable filtration system violates Montana law and rule (Section 75-6-112(s) MCA and ARM 17.38.208). As a consequence of these violations and the results of sanitary surveys and bacteriological sampling, the department has placed the system under a health advisory and issued administrative orders to install adequate filtration by November 1, 2006.

## B. PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed project includes the following improvements:

1. Demolition of the existing Kremlin pump house
2. A new pre-engineered metal building to house the treatment facilities
3. Installation of two skid-mounted 400-gpm membrane filtration systems
4. An enclosed chlorine contact basin
5. A new 100,000-gallon elevated storage tank
6. A new pump station with a wet well and three 40-hp constant-speed vertical turbine pumps, each with a pumping capacity of 225 gpm

Proper water treatment is essential for the protection of public health and safety. Without this, inadequately treated water will continue to be delivered to the users of the system and public health and safety will continue to be at risk.

## III. ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

### A. WATER TREATMENT SYSTEM ALTERNATIVES

Five alternatives for addressing the district's water treatment needs were considered:

1. No action
  2. Conventional mixed media gravity filter
  3. Regional solution (connect to the Havre Water System)
  4. Membrane filtration
  5. Pre-engineered water treatment plant
1. **NO ACTION** – This alternative would involve making no improvements to the existing water system. Consequences would be the continued threat to public health from contaminated drinking water and enforcement action by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality against the district. This alternative does not address the immediate issues facing the community and is therefore not recommended.
  2. **CONVENTIONAL MIXED MEDIA GRAVITY FILTER** – This alternative would consist of two treatment trains, each with chemical addition facilities, coagulation and flocculation tanks, a settling tank, followed by a mixed media filter and chlorination for disinfection. Although capable of providing adequate treatment, this alternative was found to be more expensive than membrane filtration.
  3. **REGIONAL SOLUTION (CONNECT TO THE HAVRE WATER SYSTEM)** – This alternative would involve the construction of a pump station in Havre and a transmission pipeline from Havre to Kremlin. Completion of this alternative would take several years to complete and would subject the district's residents to a public health threat and enforcement action by the state.
  4. **MEMBRANE FILTRATION** – This alternative would involve the construction of a small, efficient and easily-operated treatment plant with low operation and maintenance cost and minimal chlorine needs. Since chlorine can react with

organic compounds in water to produce potentially harmful disinfection byproducts, reducing the need for chlorine is advantageous.

5. **PRE-ENGINEERED WATER TREATMENT PLANT** – This alternative involves the installation of a mobile membrane filtration water treatment unit that could be relocated when service from the North Central Montana Regional Water System is available. Although capable of providing adequate treatment, the building footprint is the smallest of the treatment alternatives, offering little work area for operation and maintenance. During review of the alternatives by the district, concerns were expressed about the potential for freezing of the exposed piping of a mobile treatment plant.

## B. KREMLIN PUMP STATION ALTERNATIVES

Four alternatives for addressing the district's pumping needs were considered:

1. No action
  2. Suction lift, self-priming pumps with wet well and dry well
  3. Vertical turbine pumps with wet well
  4. Vertical turbine pumps with suction manifolds
1. **NO ACTION** – This alternative would involve making no improvements to the existing pumping facilities. Possible consequences of no action would be pump flooding, confined space safety hazards and non-compliance with state regulations governing the design of pump stations. The no action alternative would also make connection to the North Central Montana Regional Water System impossible without expensive modifications and is therefore not recommended
  2. **SUCTION LIFT, SELF-PRIMING PUMPS WITH WET WELL AND DRY WELL** – This alternative would involve the construction of a structure housing a wet well and dry well and the installation of horizontal centrifugal pumps.
  3. **VERTICAL TURBINE PUMPS WITH WET WELL** - This alternative would involve a structure to house vertical turbine pumps that would draw water from a wet well directly connected to the Kremlin reservoir. Although this alternative does not include the suction manifolds needed to connect to the North Central Montana Regional Water System, they could be easily added in the future when other system modifications are made as part of the connection construction.
  4. **VERTICAL TURBINE PUMPS WITH SUCTION MANIFOLDS** – This alternative is identical to the previous alternative except it would include pump suction manifolds necessary to eventually connect to the North Central Montana Regional Water System. Since construction of the suction manifolds can be deferred until the connection is made, this alternative was not given any further consideration.

C. COST COMPARISON - PRESENT WORTH ANALYSES

The present worth analysis is a method of comparing alternatives in present day dollars and may be used to determine the most cost-effective alternative. Capital cost is determined by estimating the cost of designing and constructing facilities. The present worth value of annual operating and maintenance costs is calculated assuming a 5.0% interest rate over the planning period. The present worth of the annual operation and maintenance costs is then added to the capital cost to provide the total present worth cost of each alternative. These values are compared to determine the most cost-effective alternative.

1. Table 1 provides a summary of the present worth analyses of the water treatment system alternatives. Since the no action alternative is not considered viable, only Alternatives 2, 3, 4 and 5 are presented.

**Table 1. Present Worth Analyses of Water Treatment System Alternatives**

|  | Water Treatment System Alternatives                     |   |                                  |   |
|--|---|---|----------------------------------|---|
|  | Alt. 2<br>Conventional<br>mixed media<br>gravity filter | Alt. 3<br>Regional<br>solution<br>(connect to the<br>Havre Water<br>System) | Alt. 4<br>Membrane<br>filtration | Alt. 5<br>Pre-engineered<br>membrane<br>filtration water<br>treatment plant |
| Capital Cost (2006)                          | \$2,018,725   | \$8,117,675   | \$1,684,531                      | \$1,621,176   |
| Annual O&M Costs                             | \$34,546  | \$10,055  | \$12,269                         | \$16,250  |
| Present Worth of<br>Annual O&M Costs<br>(5%) | \$530,443   | \$147,455   | \$179,922                        | \$238,313   |
| Total Present Worth<br>Cost                  | \$2,549,168   | \$8,265,129   | \$1,864,454                      | \$1,859,489   |

Based on the present worth analyses for the wastewater system alternatives, Alternatives 4 and 5 are the least costly. Given that the difference in cost between the two top-ranked alternatives is insignificant, the district chose Alternative 4, membrane filtration, since it offers operational advantages and lower annual operation and maintenance costs.

2. Since the feasible pump alternatives are close in cost, a present worth analysis was not completed for each alternative. Instead, ranking criteria were evaluated to determine the best pump choice. Table 2 provides a comparison of the two feasible pump station alternatives. For each criterion the superior alternative was assigned a ranking of 1 and the inferior alternative a ranking of 2; if neither alternative was better than the other, then both were given a ranking of 1. The lowest score identifies the best alternative, assuming equal weighting of all the criteria.

**Table 2. Pump Alternative Comparison Ranking**

| Ranking Criteria  | Pump Alternatives         |                               |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
|   | Alt. 2<br>Suction<br>Lift | Alt. 3<br>Vertical<br>Turbine |
| Technical Feasibility   | 2                         | 1                             |
| Environmental Impacts   | 1                         | 1                             |
| Financial Feasibility   | 2                         | 1                             |
| Public Health and Safety  | 1                         | 1                             |
| Operation and Maintenance   | 2                         | 1                             |
| Future Connection to North Central<br>Montana Regional Water System | 2                         | 1                             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>10</b>                 | <b>6</b>                      |

Based on the pump alternative comparison ranking, Alternative 3 is the best choice.

**D. TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS**

The total estimated present worth cost of the proposed project, including administrative, financial, land acquisition, engineering and construction costs, is \$1,684,531, based on selection of Alternative 5 for the water treatment facilities and Alternative 3 for pump selection. Without the storage tank, which the district has chosen to eliminate from the initial construction contract, the total estimated project cost is \$1,479,202. The district anticipates receiving an \$813,561 State and Tribal Assistance Grant from the federal government and will take out a loan for \$621,141 from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund. The loan will be at an interest rate of 3.75 percent with a 20-year term. The remaining \$44,500 will come from the district's funds. The project's expenses would result in an average monthly water rate of approximately \$44.51, based on 743 equivalent dwelling units. However, the district currently charges an average rate of \$61 per month and will continue with the same rate structure since the actual operational costs of the new treatment facility are unknown.

#### IV. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

##### A. PLANNING AREA

Most of the Hill County Water District is in the southern half of Hill County. The eastern edge of the district is approximately 18 miles west of Havre and the district extends west along Montana Highway 2 to Joplin in Liberty County. The population served by the water system is predominately rural and residential.

Based on U. S. Census data, the district had a 2000 population of 2100. The district population is expected to grow 5.72 percent over the next twenty years to 2220 in 2026.

Construction of the proposed project will take an estimated four months following the award of a contract. Construction is anticipated to begin during the summer of 2006.

##### B. FLOW PROJECTIONS

Projected water use is based on the demands developed in the final engineering report for the North Central Montana Regional Water System. Table 5-3 of that report lists a design life average daily demand of 336,800 gallons per day and a design life peak day demand of 613,500 gallons per day. Adding ten percent for distribution system losses, the adjusted design life average daily demand is 370,480 gallons per day. Applying an adjusted peaking factor of 1.75, the adjusted design life peak day demand is 647,180 gallons per day.

##### C. NATURAL FEATURES

The district lies in the glaciated Missouri Plateau section of the Great Plains physiographic province. The geology of the area is characterized by gently dipping sedimentary rocks. The rocks that form the surface are generally soft and have been eroded into open, rolling plains. The plains are punctuated by granitic stocks and ancient volcanic activity that has formed isolated mountain ranges such as the Sweet Grass Hills and the Bear Paw Mountains.

The area consists of sandstone and shale formations largely overlain by a mantle of glacial till. The major rivers are the Milk and the Marias, which have greatly influenced the soil morphology of the region. Three general soil regimes, based on soil parent material, are present:

1. Sandstone/shale upland soils, typically well-drained silty clay loams to silty clays that form in material weathered from siltstone, interbedded shale and sandstone on uplands. These soils are generally rangeland but some are dryland farmed.
2. Glacial soils derived from glacial till, glacial lake deposits and glacial outwash. The soil textures are typically gravelly loams and clay loams with some clays. These soils are used for irrigated and dryfarmed crops and rangeland.
3. Alluvial soils, well drained soils found mainly on floodplains, fans and terraces. Some of these soils are affected by salt or sodium due to parent material or poor drainage. These soils are used for irrigated and dryfarmed crops and rangeland.

None of the project area lies within the 100-year or 500-year floodplains, as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency maps.

Average temperature is 70 degrees Fahrenheit in summer and 14 degrees Fahrenheit in winter. The annual average precipitation is 12 inches, with most of the precipitation occurring during late spring and early summer.

Vegetation native to the region include needle and thread, western and thick spike wheatgrass, green needle grass, blue bunch wheatgrass, basin wild rye, prairie June grass, native legumes, silver sagebrush, blue gram, plains reed grass, milk vetches, scarlet globe mallow, winter fat, prairie sundered, Indian rice grass, thread leaf sedge, yucca, suckfish sumac, basin wild rye, Nutgall saltbush, greasewood, Douglas-fir, common snowberry, white spire, Oregon grape, heartleaf arnica, Columbia needle grass, Idaho fescue, bearded wheatgrass, kinnikinnick, lupine and arrowleaf balsamroot. The Montana State Office of the Bureau of Land Management identifies 22 plant species in the study area as sensitive species, those determined to be imperiled in at least part of their range. The study area included the Hill County Water District, which extends from the Canadian border to Montana Highway 2 between Kremlin and Joplin.

Wildlife in the area include white-tailed and mule deer, elk, pronghorn antelope, coyotes, fox, raccoon, muskrat, bobcat, badger and skunk. A partial list of bird species in the area include partridge, grouse, ring-neck pheasant and several varieties of ducks, geese, turkeys, eagles, hawks and falcons. The area also has a variety of game and non-game fish including rainbow, cutthroat, brook and brown trout, grayling, whitefish, sturgeon, sauger, walleye, northern pike, sunfish, crappie, yellow perch and catfish. The reptile and amphibian population includes western rattlesnakes, bullsnakes, garter snakes, snapping and painted turtles, and leopard and spotted frogs. In total, the Montana Natural Heritage Program database identifies 453 animal species found in the area.

The Montana Natural Heritage Program identifies five species in the study area as endangered and two species as threatened. The endangered species include the pallid sturgeon, the bald eagle, the peregrine falcon, the whooping crane and the gray wolf. Threatened species in the area include the piping plover and the grizzly bear. Additionally, the bull trout, the arctic grayling, the sturgeon chub and the swift fox are listed as candidate species for a threatened or endangered designation.

## V. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF PROPOSED PROJECT

### A. DIRECT AND INDIRECT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1. Housing and Commercial Development – Land use within the district boundaries is predominately residential. The proposed improvements are not expected to have any impact on housing and commercial development.
2. Future Land Use – Land use within and surrounding the district boundaries is predominately residential. No adverse impacts to land use are expected from the proposed project.

3. Floodplains and Wetlands – None of the project area lies within the 100-year or 500-year floodplains. No wetlands have been identified in the vicinity of the proposed project.
4. Cultural Resources – After reviewing the project description, Damon Murdo of the state Historic Preservation Office concluded that there is a low probability cultural properties will be impacted; therefore a cultural resource inventory is not warranted. However, he recommended that the Historic Preservation Office be contacted in the event cultural resources are identified during construction.
5. Fish and Wildlife – No impacts on biological resources in the area are anticipated by the Kremlin Pump Station Improvements or the proposed filtration equipment.
6. Water Quality – Impacts on water quality are expected to be minor and short-term. Short-term impacts on water quality can be controlled through proper construction practices.
7. Air Quality - Short-term negative impacts on the air quality will occur from heavy equipment, dust and exhaust fumes during project construction. Proper construction practices and dust abatement measures will be implemented during construction to control dust, thus minimizing this problem.
8. Public Health – The proposed project is not expected to have adverse impacts on public health, and should instead enhance public health by providing a safe water supply to the district's consumers.
9. Energy - During construction of the proposed project additional energy will be consumed, causing a direct short-term impact on this resource.
10. Noise - Short-term impacts from increased noise levels may occur during construction of the proposed project improvements. Construction activities are anticipated to last four months and will occur only during daylight hours.

#### B. UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS

Short-term construction-related impacts, such as noise, dust and traffic disruption, will occur but can be minimized through proper construction management. Energy consumption during construction cannot be avoided.

#### VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The proposed project was discussed at public meetings held by the district board in January and March 2006. No public comments were received at either meeting.

## VII. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

The following documents were used in the environmental review of this project and are considered to be part of the project file:

- A. Preliminary Engineering Report, Fresno Surface Water Treatment Plant and Kremlin Pump Station Improvements, February 2006, prepared for the Hill County Water District by HKM Engineering, Billings, Montana.
- B. Hill County Water District Water Treatment Plant Design Report, May 2006, prepared by HKM Engineering, Billings, Montana.

## VIII. AGENCIES CONSULTED

The following agencies were contacted regarding the proposed construction of this project:

- A. The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks regional supervisor responded by email on January 3, 2006. Pat Gunderson wrote that he did not see any issues of concern.
- B. The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks stream protection coordinator responded by email on January 3, 2006. Doug McDonald wrote that it did not appear that a Stream Protection Act 124 permit would be required for the project.
- C. The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks Region 6 wildlife manager responded by email on March 1, 2006. Harold Wentland wrote that his staff biologist, Al Rosgaard, did not see any biological resource problems with the proposed project.
- D. The Montana Department of Environmental Quality responded by email on December 13, 2005. Bob Habeck wrote that there are no air quality issues in Hill County that would be of concern.
- E. The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Water Resources Division reviewed the proposed project and responded in a January 3, 2006, email. Dixie Brough wrote that as long as withdrawal rates are not increased there would be no environmental impacts on the Fresno Reservoir.
- F. The Montana Historical Society's Historic Preservation Office reviewed the project and responded with a letter dated December 13, 2005. Damon Murdo, author of the response, wrote that only structures over fifty years of age are considered eligible for historic status. He concluded that if no structures are altered there would be a low likelihood cultural properties would be impacted. However, he asked that the Historic Preservation Office be contacted in the event cultural resources are identified during construction.
- G. The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Floodplain Section was asked in a March 13, 2006, email from the district's consultant for comments on the proposed project. No response was received.
- H. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was asked in a March 8, 2006, email from the district's consultant for comments on the proposed project. Mark Wilson responded that "the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reviewed the proposed project & determined that no federally-listed species or designated critical habitat occurs within the project area.

IX. APPLICABLE REGULATIONS AND PERMITTING AUTHORITIES

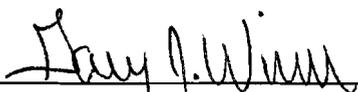
No additional permits will be required from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Program of the Department of Environmental Quality for this project after review and approval of the submitted plans and specifications. However, a stormwater general discharge permit for construction activities must be obtained from the department's Water Protection Bureau prior to the beginning of construction. A construction dewatering permit from the department's Water Protection Bureau may also be required if groundwater is encountered during construction of the new facilities and dewatering activities are necessary.

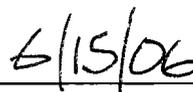
X. RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

EIS       More Detailed EA       No Further Analysis

Rationale for Recommendation: Through this environmental assessment, the department has made a preliminary determination that none of the adverse impacts of the proposed Hill County Water District Fresno surface water treatment plant project are significant. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required. The environmental review was conducted in accordance with the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) 17.4.607, 17.4.608, 17.4.609 and 17.4.610. The environmental assessment is the appropriate level of analysis because none of the adverse effects of the impacts are expected to be significant.

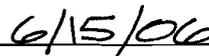
EA prepared by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gary J. Wiens, P.E.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

EA reviewed by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Smith, P.E.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date