

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation Water Resources Division Water Rights Bureau
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT For Routine Actions with Limited Environmental Impact

Part I. Proposed Action Description

1. Applicant/Contact name and address: **Jefferson Hills Water Users Assn
Box JHA
Clancy MT 59634**
2. Type of action: **Application to Change a Water Right No. 30042566 411**
3. Water source name: **Groundwater Replacement Well**
4. Location affected by action: **SWSWNW, SEC. 14, TWP 9N, RGE 3W,
Jefferson County**
5. Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and objectives:
This is an application for a replacement well for water right 38483 411. The current system consists of two manifold wells that supply water to the Jefferson Hills subdivision. The existing 295 feet deep well will be replaced with a new well located 20 feet east of the old well and drilled into the same aquifer. The old well had several problems due to poor well construction. The purpose and place of use remains the same and the flow and volume permitted under 38483 411 will not change.

The DNRC shall issue an Application to Change if the applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-402, MCA are met.

Agencies consulted during preparation of the Environmental Assessment:
(include agencies with overlapping jurisdiction)

None

Part II. Environmental Review

1. Environmental Impact Checklist:

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

WATER QUANTITY, QUALITY AND DISTRIBUTION

Water quantity - Assess whether the source of supply is identified as a chronically or periodically dewatered stream by DFWP. Assess whether the proposed use will worsen the already dewatered condition.

Determination: **See groundwater section below.**

Water quality - Assess whether the stream is listed as water quality impaired or threatened by DEQ, and whether the proposed project will affect water quality.

Determination: **See groundwater section below.**

Groundwater - Assess if the proposed project impacts ground water quality or supply. If this is a groundwater appropriation, assess if it could impact adjacent surface water flows.

Determination: **No significant impact. This project replaces a poorly constructed well with a properly engineered well. The new well will be drilled into the same aquifer as the previous and there will be no increase in flow or volume as permitted under water right 38483-411.**

DIVERSION WORKS - Assess whether the means of diversion, construction and operation of the appropriation works of the proposed project will impact any of the following: channel impacts, flow modifications, barriers, riparian areas, dams, well construction.

Determination: **No significant impact. The replacement well will be constructed in the same aquifer by a licensed well driller in accordance with the Montana Board of Water Well Contractors construction standards.**

UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

Endangered and threatened species - Assess whether the proposed project will impact any threatened or endangered fish, wildlife, plants or aquatic species or any "species of special concern," or create a barrier to the migration or movement of fish or wildlife. For groundwater, assess whether the proposed project, including impacts on adjacent surface flows, would impact any threatened or endangered species or "species of special concern."

Determination: **No significant impact. This replacement well is in an established subdivision. A search of threatened species was not conducted.**

Wetlands - Consult and assess whether the apparent wetland is a functional wetland (according to COE definitions), and whether the wetland resource would be impacted.

Determination: **No wetlands in this project area.**

Ponds - For ponds, consult and assess whether existing wildlife, waterfowl, or fisheries resources would be impacted.

Determination: **No ponds in this project area.**

GEOLOGY/SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE - Assess whether there will be degradation of soil quality, alteration of soil stability, or moisture content. Assess whether the soils are heavy in salts that could cause saline seep.

Determination: **No significant impact.**

VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY/NOXIOUS WEEDS - Assess impacts to existing vegetative cover. Assess whether the proposed project would result in the establishment or spread of noxious weeds.

Determination: **No significant impact.**

AIR QUALITY - Assess whether there will be a deterioration of air quality or adverse effects on vegetation due to increased air pollutants.

Determination: **No significant impact.**

HISTORICAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES - Assess whether there will be degradation of unique archeological or historical sites in the vicinity of the proposed project.

Determination: **No significant impact.**

DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AND ENERGY - Assess any other impacts on environmental resources of land, water and energy not already addressed.

Determination: **No significant impact.**

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS - Assess whether the proposed project is inconsistent with any locally adopted environmental plans and goals.

Determination: **No significant impact.**

ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES - Assess whether the proposed project will impact access to or the quality of recreational and wilderness activities.

Determination: **No significant impact.**

HUMAN HEALTH - Assess whether the proposed project impacts on human health.

Determination: **No significant impact.**

PRIVATE PROPERTY - Assess whether there are any government regulatory impacts on private property rights.

Yes ___ No X. If yes, analyze any alternatives considered that could reduce, minimize, or eliminate the regulation of private property rights.

Determination: **No significant impact.**

OTHER HUMAN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES - For routine actions of limited environmental impact, the following may be addressed in a checklist fashion.

Impacts on:

- (a) Cultural uniqueness and diversity? **No significant impact.**
- (b) Local and state tax base and tax revenues? **No significant impact.**
- (c) Existing land uses? **No significant impact.**
- (d) Quantity and distribution of employment? **No significant impact.**
- (e) Distribution and density of population and housing? **No significant impact.**
- (f) Demands for government services? **No significant impact.**
- (g) Industrial and commercial activity? **No significant impact.**
- (h) Utilities? **No significant impact.**
- (i) Transportation? **No significant impact.**
- (j) Safety? **No significant impact.**
- (k) Other appropriate social and economic circumstances? **No significant impact.**

2. Secondary and cumulative impacts on the physical environment and human population:

Secondary Impacts: **No significant impact.**

Cumulative Impacts: **No significant impact.**

3. Describe any mitigation/stipulation measures: **None**

4. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative, if an alternative is reasonably available and prudent to consider:

This is a replacement well for an existing system for a subdivision. There are no reasonably available or prudent alternatives to consider.

PART III. Conclusion

1. Preferred Alternative: **Not applicable.**

2. Comments and Responses: **None**

3. Finding:
Yes ___ No X Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required?

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action: **An EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this action because no significant impacts have been identified.**

Name of person(s) responsible for preparation of EA:

Name: **Terry Scow**

Title: **Water Resource Specialist**

Date: **updated by L. Volpe: 9/01/08**