

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW OF FISH INTRODUCTIONS
PRIVATE POND APPLICATION**

Name and address of applicant: Dan Stilson
388 Scott Crossing N
Lewistown, MT 59457

Is approval for a private pond permit application recommended? Yes.

Does the landowner have legal water rights to the pond? Yes. There is a 1992 provisional permit for irrigation and fish and wildlife. 41S 80078 00

Location of pond: County: Fergus
Legal description: T15N R17E Sec 1

Name of the drainage where the pond is located: Located on unnamed tributary to Wolverine Creek. Also fed by irrigation ditch from Big Spring Creek.

Fish species proposed for introduction:
Rainbow trout, brook trout, brown trout

Are these species legally present in the drainage?
Pond was previously licensed for rainbow trout, brown trout and brook trout. These species are also present in Big Spring Creek and Wolverine Creek.

Species of Special Concern present in the drainage:
Headwaters of Big Spring Creek have pure westslope cutthroat trout.

RISKS:

Inlets to or outlets from the pond? Yes X No ___ **Explain:** Outlet flows into tributary of Wolverine Creek and then into Big Spring Creek. Pond is spring fed and also has an inlet from the irrigation ditch. It is not practical to screen outlets or inlet to this pond, because they clog.

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

Comments: No significant impacts are expected. It is unlikely that stocking in this pond will impact the genetics of the wild non-native brook, rainbow and brown trout found in the Big Spring Creek and Wolverine drainages. Dense populations of these species exist in the area and the small numbers stocked would likely have no impact. It is highly unlikely that trout stocked in this pond could reach any WCT populations, since they are protected by dry stream reaches and are located at least 40 miles away. Existing wild fish populations are much more likely to impact the WCT populations.

Impacts to any life stage of existing fish populations due to competition and/or predation?

None Minor Major

Comments: No significant impacts are expected. Stocked fish will eat some minnows if present in pond. It is likely some stocked fish will end up in Big Spring Creek and Wolverine Creek, but the stocked fish should be much less numerous and less adapted to stream life than the existing wild fish.

Impacts to other forms of aquatic life that may be caused by this introduction?

None Minor Major

Comments: Fish will consume some invertebrates in pond.

Potential for the proposed new species to reproduce in this location:

None Minor Major

Comments: Highly unlikely trout would reproduce.

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

Pond is very small and could likely be drained and pumped dry.

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.

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 expected to be minor.

EA prepared by: Anne Tews, Fisheries Biologist **DATE:** January 14, 2008

**DECISION RECORD
FISH POND LICENSE**

DECISION: Issue

- Private Pond License**
- Commercial Pond License**
- One Time Permission to Plant Letter**
- Denial**

EA# Title Dan Stilson Private Pond

APPROVED SPECIES: Rainbow Trout

LICENSE RESTRICTIONS:

DECISION REASONING:

- Pond meets all other requirements for Private Pond License.**
- Other (specify)**

George Liknes

George Liknes
Regional Fisheries Manager

1/24/2008
Date