

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

**Name and address of applicant:** Tom Skeleton  
46-46 South Peak Rd.  
Geyser, MT 59447

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

**Does the landowner have legal water rights to the pond?** Yes.

41R 22845 statement of claim December 31, 1948 for stock

41R 5773 00 statement of claim, 1948 (affidavit attached)

**Location of pond:**      **County:**                      Judith Basin  
**Legal description:**      T18N R9E S9 SWNE

**Name of the drainage where the pond is located:** Located on Erwin Creek about four miles upstream of Arrow Creek.

**Fish species proposed for introduction:**

Applicant requested trout and walleye. Walleye will not be approved and will not be further evaluated.

Rainbow trout, brook trout, brown trout now proposed.

**Are these species legally present in the drainage?** Yes.

Several ponds in this vicinity have been permitted for and/or are stocked with trout.

This pond was previously licensed for rainbow trout (Pond #51).

**Species of Special Concern present in the drainage:**

None are known from Erwin Creek or from this part of Arrow Creek.

**RISKS:** Impacts should be similar to those seen during the last 50 plus years of trout stocking.

**Inlets to or outlets from the pond?** Yes X No \_\_\_ **Explain:** This pond has an on-stream outlet. It does not have a functioning outlet pipe and cannot be screened. Overflow goes into a ditch and onto Mr. Skeleton's fields. According to Mr. Skeleton this typically occurs for several months. There is not a well-defined channel below the reservoir.

**Potential for impacts on genetic structure of existing fish populations:**

\_\_\_ None X Minor \_\_\_ Major

No significant impacts are expected. It is unlikely that stocking in this pond will impact the genetics of the wild non-native brook and/or rainbow trout in Arrow Creek and its tributaries. Overflow from pond goes onto a field and it is unlikely fish in the reservoir would reach Arrow Creek or other downstream waters except during extreme high flow events. It is extremely unlikely that trout stocked in this pond could reach any WCT populations. The nearest known pure WCT population is located in headwaters

of Cottonwood Creek about 50 miles away. A barrier protects most of the WCT in the Cottonwood Creek drainage.

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

None  Minor  Major

Population level effects are not likely. No significant impacts are expected. Stocked fish will eat some minnows if present in pond.

**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: It is possible that trout have and will reproduce in the inflowing stream.

**If necessary, would it be feasible to remove this species after it has been stocked?** Removal would likely require pumping the reservoirs dry and/or using fish toxicants. The reservoir does not have an outlet that can be opened for draining.

**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. One of the species requested, walleye will not be approved.

**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:** May 9, 2008

**DECISION RECORD  
FISH POND LICENSE**

**DECISION: Issue**

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

**EA# Title: Tom Skeleton Private Pond**

**APPROVED SPECIES: Rainbow Trout, Brook Trout, Brown Trout Only**

**LICENSE RESTRICTIONS:**

**DECISION REASONING:**

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



---

George Liknes  
Regional Fisheries Manager

5/23/2008  
Date