

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

Name and address of applicant: Kenneth R. Evans
PO Box 194
Fort Benton MT 59442

Is approval for a private pond permit application recommended? Yes

Does the landowner have legal water rights to the pond?

Yes. There is a 9/3/1954 fish and wildlife water right with a reservoir record for 115.20 AC- FT, Water Right 41O 157769-00. The water right lists the capacity of the reservoir at 115.5 Acre-Feet.

Location of pond:

County: Chouteau

Legal description: T26N R6E S12 E½W½SW

Name of the drainage where the pond is located:

The Reservoir is listed on the water right as 13.13 surface acres and is named Big Reservoir. It is located 1.5 miles upstream on an unnamed tributary coulee of Chimney Rock Coulee that 7.5 miles from where Chimney Rock Coulee enters Dry Fork Coulee, approximately 11.3 river miles upstream from where it enters the Teton River at River Mile 25.1. The reservoir is approximately 20.3 river miles upstream of the Teton River along coulees that are intermittent in nature. The Teton River is also subjected to chronic dewatering.

Fish species proposed for introduction:

Rainbow trout, brook trout

Are these species legally present in the drainage?

Yes.

Species of Special Concern present in the drainage:

Blue sucker, sturgeon chub, and sauger are Species of Special Concern found in the lower Teton River. Risks to these species from potential escapement of rainbow and/or brook trout from Big Reservoir are negligible because water quality, water volume, and habitat in the lower Teton River are not suitable for the establishment of trout species.

RISKS:

Potential for impacts on genetic structure of existing fish populations:

None Minor Major

Comments: No significant impacts are expected. Fish have to travel 20.3 miles downstream to reach the Teton River, which has often been dry in its lower reaches. Rainbow trout may have been eliminated or are very rare. In the unlikely event stocked trout reached a population of rainbow trout, they should have very little influence on genetics of any remaining non-native rainbow trout, brook trout and brown trout.

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

None Minor Major

Comments: Currently, there are no fish in Big Reservoir. Escapement of stocked fish into the unnamed coulee could potentially occur in a major run-off event that results in overland surface flow. There is potential for stocked rainbow and brook trout to reach the Teton River. However, it is unlikely they

would persist in this reach of the river because of high summer water temperatures. Escaped rainbow and brook trout may migrate to upstream reaches of the Teton towards Choteau, but no significant impacts are expected.

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: There is little potential for rainbow trout to spawn in this location because of the absence of flowing water and suitable habitat. Brook trout may successfully spawn in the reservoir if there are areas of groundwater upwelling.

If necessary, would it be feasible to remove this species after it has been stocked? Yes. It should be possible to use chemicals during low/no flow periods to eradicate fish.

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: George Liknes

Date: July 3, 2008

**DECISION RECORD
FISH POND LICENSE**

DECISION: Issue

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

EA# Ken Evans Private Pond

APPROVED SPECIES: Rainbow Trout, Brook trout.

LICENSE RESTRICTIONS:

DECISION REASONING:

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



George Liknes
Regional Fisheries Manager

7/3/2008

Date