

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

Name and address of applicant: Robert G. Robertson
PO Box 300
Sand Coulee, MT 59472

Is approval of private pond permit application recommended? Yes

Location of pond:

County: Cascade
Legal description: T19N, R4E, S28 SESWNE

Name of the drainage where the pond would be located:

Walker Coulee is a dry/ intermittent drainage that feeds into Sand Coulee Creek, a tributary of the Missouri River.

Does pond have legal water rights? (describe)

Yes, a water right (41QJ 30031249) was updated on 2-22-08 to include "FISHERY" as a purpose along with the original "STOCK" use. This water right is associated with water right #41QJ 30006677, a domestic use water right. (See attached Certificate of Water Rights).

Fish species proposed for introduction:

Rainbow, Brook, Brown Trout.

Is this species legally present in the drainage?

Rainbow trout are legally present in the Missouri River drainage, but not in Walker Coulee. They are currently present in the pond from past stocking under the 1981 issued Private Pond License (# 4-1266).

Species of Special Concern present in the drainage:

Westslope cutthroat trout exist, but only in the headwaters of the Missouri River drainage. Sauger, blue suckers, and pallid sturgeon are present in the lower Missouri River below Morony Dam; Sauger are present in Morony Reservoir. Walker Coulee is essentially a closed basin and there is no outlet for the pond. If the pond evaporates quickly, the spring is supplemented by piping stock water (a fisheries use is also allowed via Water Right) to maintain the ponds water level. There is no chance of affecting Species of Special Concern in the Missouri River drainage.

RISKS:

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

Comments: No inlet or outlet structures exist on the pond. Robertson's pond is located in a dry coulee and there is no concern for fish escape.

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

None Minor Major

Comments: Large adult Rainbow trout and Brown trout currently reside in the pond. Predation by existing adult salmonids will occur.

Impacts to other forms of aquatic life that may be caused by this introduction? None Minor Major

Comments: Aquatic invertebrates may be consumed.

Potential for the proposed new species to reproduce in this location?: None Minor Major

Comments: Rainbow trout currently exist in the pond under the original Private Pond License and do not naturally reproduce due to limited spawning habitat.

If necessary, would it be feasible to remove this species after it has been stocked? Yes. Robertson's pond is only 0.88 surface acres with a maximum depth of about 12 feet.

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 Restriction.

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:

Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks

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 very minor.

EA prepared by: Adam Strainer

Date: 06/25/08

**DECISION RECORD
FISH POND LICENSE**

DECISION: Issue

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

EA# Robert G. Robertson Private Pond

APPROVED SPECIES: Rainbow Trout, Brook Trout, Brown Trout, and Westslope Cutthroat Trout.

LICENSE RESTRICTIONS:

DECISION REASONING:

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



George Liknes
Regional Fisheries Manager

7/10/2008

Date