

**MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

Permitting and Compliance Division  
Waste and Underground Tank Management Bureau  
Solid Waste Management Section  
Metcalf Building  
PO Box 200901  
Helena, MT 59620-0901

***CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
SEPTIC TANK PUMPERS***

**1. PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED FOR AGENCY ACTION:**

Ms. Tina Johnson of WE J'S SEPTIC SERVICES, LLC has submitted an application for a Montana Septic Tank Pumpers License. WE J'S SEPTIC SERVICES, LLC is located in Ravalli County and will conduct business in Ravalli, Missoula, and Granite Counties.

The purpose of this checklist Environmental Assessment (EA) is to document environmental issues related to the disposal of septage and portable toilet/vault toilet type waste on the Gary Schulz property in Ravalli County located in the W/2 of the SE/4 of Section 18, T2N, R20W. This site is also approved for use by another septic pumper business.

**2. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION:**

Septic Tank Pumper Disposal site application for a:

*(check one only and complete a separate assessment for each site)*

- Wastewater Treatment Facility
- Land Application Site
- Septage Processor or Composter
- Class II Landfill
- other (specify)

**3. OPERATION & MAINTENANCE (O&M) PLAN:**

*Source, Types and Amount of Wastes:*

- Septage – estimated total gal/year **100,000**
- Portable Toilet/Vault Toilet Type Waste – estimated total gal/year **2,500**
- Grease Trap Waste - estimated total gal/year
- Sump Pumpings *(specify type below)*
  - Automatic Car Wash Bay Sump - estimated total gal/yr
  - Attended Car Wash Bay Sump - estimated total gal/yr
  - Unattended Car Wash Bay Sump - estimated total gal/yr
  - Other Sump, specify: \_\_\_\_\_ estimated total gal/yr



**5. DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES WHENEVER ALTERNATIVES ARE REASONABLY AVAILABLE AND PRUDENT TO CONSIDER:**

The Department considered three alternatives:

1.  Approve the disposal site. The site meets all of the requirements of the Cesspool, Septic Tank, and Privy Cleaners Act (Act). The site soils, slope, depth to ground water, approvals, and setback requirements have been met.
2.  Not approved. The land application site fails to meet the requirements of the Act.
3.  Have the applicant seek an alternative site. If this alternative is chosen, the applicant will have to seek another site for land application and could spend a large amount of time and potentially money to locate, study, and license another site suitable for septage land application.

**6. EVALUATION OF MITIGATION, STIPULATIONS AND OTHER CONTROLS ENFORCEABLE BY THE AGENCY OR ANOTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCY:**

The proposed land application site and operation and maintenance plan must meet the requirements of the Montana Septic Tank, Cesspool, and Privy Cleaners Act, Air and Water Quality Acts and other Montana environmental laws and regulations as well as County ordinances. Compliance with these laws and regulations should keep any environmental effects to a minimum. The licensee will operate the site under the guidelines of the approved Operations Plan.

**7. FINDINGS:**

The Department finds that there would be little or no impacts to the physical and human environment if the septage is treated in a manner consistent with the rules and regulations. Therefore, a checklist EA is the appropriate level of analysis and an Environmental Impact Statement is not needed. This treatment option is a beneficial reuse of a waste product.

EA prepared by: Renai Hill

Date: April 23, 2009

**TABLE 1. Predicted Impacts of the Proposed Project on the Physical & Biological Environments.**

RESOURCE	LEVEL OF IMPACT <sup>1</sup>					
	Major	Moderate	Minor	None	Unknown	Appendix
1. Terrestrial and Aquatic Life and Habitat			✓			✓
2. Water Quality, Quantity, and Distribution				✓		
3. Geology and Soil Quality, Stability and Moisture				✓		
4. Vegetation Cover, Quantity and Quality				✓		
5. Aesthetics				✓		
6. Air Quality				✓		
7. Unique, Endangered, Fragile or Limited Environmental Resources			✓			✓
8. Demands on Environmental Resources of Water, Air, and Energy				✓		
9. Historical and Archaeological Sites				✓		

<sup>1</sup> CUMULATIVE IMPACTS: None for the Proposed Project, because compliance with the Montana Cesspool, Septic Tank, and Privy Cleaners Act mitigates impacts on human health and the environment and no other projects affect the area.

**TABLE 2. Predicted Impacts of the Proposed Project on the Social & Economic Environments.**

RESOURCE	LEVEL OF IMPACT <sup>1</sup>					
	Major	Moderate	Minor	None	Unknown	Appendix
1. Social Structure and Mores				✓		
2. Cultural Uniqueness and Diversity				✓		
3. Local and State Tax Base and Tax Revenue				✓		
4. Agricultural or Industrial Production				✓		
5. Human Health				✓		
6. Access to and Quality of Recreational and Wilderness Activities				✓		
7. Quantity and Distribution of Employment				✓		
8. Distribution of Population				✓		
9. Demands for Government Services				✓		
10. Industrial and Commercial Activity				✓		
11. Locally Adopted Environmental Plans and Goals				✓		

<sup>1</sup> CUMULATIVE IMPACTS: None for Proposed Project, because compliance with the Montana Cesspool, Septic Tank, and Privy Cleaners Act mitigates impacts on human health and the environment and no other projects affect the area.

## APPENDIX

### **EVALUATION OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS RELATED TO THE PROPOSED FACILITY**

This section evaluates potential environmental effects that may occur if the land application site is approved. **Bolded headings I and II** correspond to Tables 1 and 2. The number on each of the underlined resource headings corresponds to one of the resources listed in the tables. Generally, only those resources potentially affected by the proposal are discussed. If there is no effect on a resource, it may not be mentioned in the appendix.

Direct and indirect impacts are those effects that occur in or near the proposed project area and might extend over time. Often, the distinction between direct and indirect effects is difficult to define, thus in the following discussion, impact or effect means both types of effects.

Cumulative impacts are restricted to the net effects of the proposed project because no other known projects are proposed in this area. Secondary impacts are induced by a direct impact and occur at a later time or distance from the triggering action. No secondary impacts are expected.

## **I. POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT ON THE PHYSICAL & BIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENTS (see Table 1)**

### **1.0 Terrestrial and Aquatic Life and Habitat**

The Montana Natural Heritage Program indicates the following species of concern within a 5-mile radius of the site: the Western Toad, the Flammulated Owl, the Gray Wolf, the Wolverine, the Canada Lynx, the Western Skink, the Fisher, the Westslope Cutthroat Trout, and the Bull Trout.

There are no wetlands or permanent surface water bodies located on the proposed land application site. Because no continuously active aquatic systems exist within the land application site, it is unlikely that there is any significant aquatic life or habitat anywhere on the site. Thus, any impacts to aquatic life and habitat due to the proposed facility will likely be very minor.

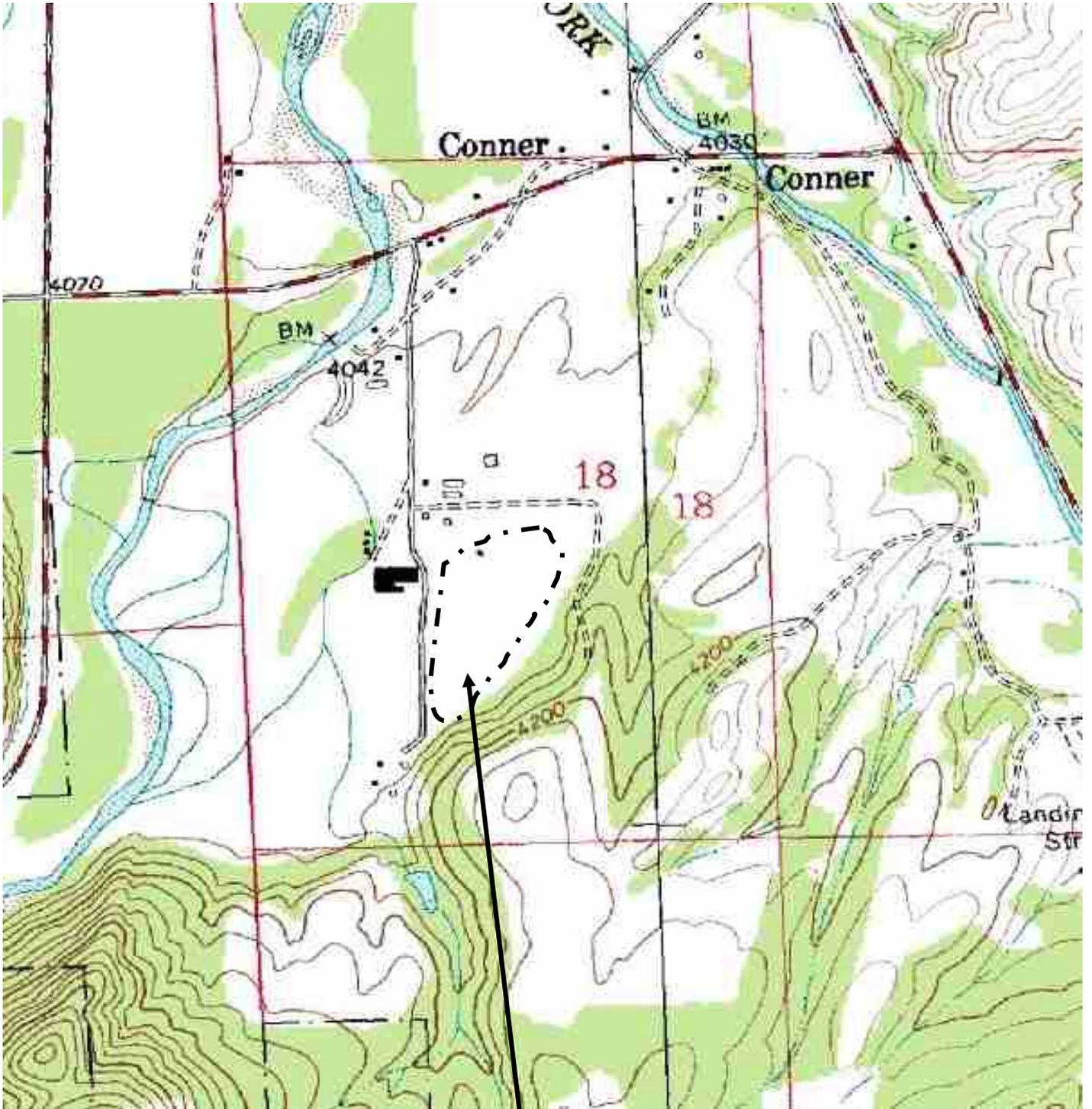
No terrestrial species currently inhabit the proposed land application site and will not be displaced by the land application operations at the site. The impacts due to the proposed land application of septage and portable toilet waste will be minor.

### **7.0 Unique, Endangered, Fragile or Limited Environmental Resources**

The Montana Natural Heritage Program indicated the Gray Wolf is listed as endangered; the Bull Trout and Canada Lynx are listed as threatened; the Western Toad, the Flammulated Owl, the Wolverine, the Fisher, and the Westslope Cutthroat Trout are listed as species of concern within a 5-mile radius of the site

The property is used for agricultural and pasture land and is currently being used as a land application site by another septic tank pumper business. Septic tank pumper businesses land applying septage and portable toilet type waste must do so using annual application rates (AAR) for those wastes. At this site septage will be applied at a rate of 28,846 gallons per acre per year and portable toilet type waste will be applied at a rate of 14,423 gallons per acre per year. This will ensure over application does not occur and that vegetation (grass) grown on the land can use the nitrogen being land applied. The impacts due to the proposed land application of septage and portable toilet waste at this site will be minor.

**Figure 1: WE J'S SEPTIC SERVICES, LLC  
Land Application Site Location  
Ravalli County – Gary Schulz Property  
W/2 of the SE/4 of Section 18, T2N, R20W**



**Approximate land application site boundary**