Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation Water Resources Division Water Rights Bureau
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT **For Routine Actions with Limited Environmental Impact**

Note: Instructions to DNRC staff for preparing this EA can be found at:
http://www.dnrc.state.mt.us/eis_ea.html

Part I. Proposed Action Description

1. *Applicant/Contact name and address*:

Barbara Brown

1423 Kimlira Lane

Sarasota, FL 34321

2. *Type of action*: Application For Beneficial Water Use Permit # 43B-30044214

3. *Water source name*: Well

4. *Location affected by project*: SWNENENW, SEC. 36, T7S, R6E, Gallatin, Co.

5. *Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits*: The applicant proposes to pump 15 GPM up to 1.63 acre-feet for domestic purposes. This well is located within the Yellowstone Controlled Groundwater Area. The National Park Service will be notified. If they do not object, a permit will be issued.

6. *Agencies consulted during preparation of the Environmental Assessment: (include agencies with overlapping jurisdiction)*

Montana Natural Heritage Program
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Park County Planning Office
State Historic Preservation Office
National Park Service

Part II. Environmental Review

1. Environmental Impact Checklist:

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

WATER QUANTITY, QUALITY AND DISTRIBUTION

Water quantity *- Assess whether the source of supply is identified as a chronically or periodically dewatered stream by DFWP. Assess whether the proposed use will worsen the already dewatered condition.*

Determination: The source of water is a groundwater well. Not identified by DFWP.

Water quality *- Assess whether the stream is listed as water quality impaired or threatened by DEQ, and whether the proposed project will affect water quality.*

Determination: The source of water is groundwater, not on the DEQ list.

Groundwater *- Assess if the proposed project impacts ground water quality or supply. If this is a groundwater appropriation, assess if it could impact adjacent surface water flows.*

Determination: The well is 103 feet deep, with top soil from 2 feet to 20 feet. The requested 15 GPM flow rate should have negligible affect on surface flows.

DIVERSION WORKS *- Assess whether the means of diversion, construction and operation of the appropriation works of the proposed project will impact any of the following: channel impacts, flow modifications, barriers, riparian areas, dams, well construction.*

Determination: Water will be diverted using a 1/2 HP pump. No impact to existing resources.

UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

Endangered and threatened species *- Assess whether the proposed project will impact any threatened or endangered fish, wildlife, plants or aquatic species or any "species of special concern," or create a barrier to the migration or movement of fish or wildlife. For groundwater, assess whether the proposed project, including impacts on adjacent surface flows, would impact any threatened or endangered species or "species of special concern."*

Determination: The Montana Natural Heritage Program was contacted. Lynx, Wolves & Grizzly Bears may be found in the area. There should be no significant impact from this new house, or well.

Wetlands - *Consult and assess whether the apparent wetland is a functional wetland (according to COE definitions), and whether the wetland resource would be impacted.*

Determination: This well was not drilled in a wetland, and will have no impact on existing wetlands.

Ponds - *For ponds, consult and assess whether existing wildlife, waterfowl, or fisheries resources would be impacted.*

Determination: This project does not involve a pond. No impact to existing resources.

GEOLOGY/SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE - *Assess whether there will be degradation of soil quality, alteration of soil stability, or moisture content. Assess whether the soils are heavy in salts that could cause saline seep.*

Determination: This new well should not impact soil quality; alter soil stability, or moisture content. There is no saline seep in this area.

VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY/NOXIOUS WEEDS - *Assess impacts to existing vegetative cover. Assess whether the proposed project would result in the establishment or spread of noxious weeds.*

Determination: A small area was disturbed by drilling the well, and will be disturbed when the house is built. These disturbed areas may likely be reseeded.

AIR QUALITY - *Assess whether there will be a deterioration of air quality or adverse effects on vegetation due to increased air pollutants.*

Determination: There should be no significant impact to air quality from this well.

HISTORICAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES - *Assess whether there will be degradation of unique archeological or historical sites in the vicinity of the proposed project.*

Determination: SHPO has been contracted. They stated that any cultural properties that may have been in the area have already been impacted.

DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AND ENERGY **-** *Assess any other impacts on environmental resources of land, water and energy not already addressed.*

Determination: No additional impacts on other environmental resources were identified.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS - *Assess whether the proposed project is inconsistent with any locally adopted environmental plans and goals.*

Determination: The Gallatin County Planning Board has no restrictions against drilling new wells near West Yellowstone.

ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES - *Assess whether the proposed project will impact access to or the quality of recreational and wilderness activities.*

Determination: This area is private property, with no access to public recreational or wilderness activities. No impact is expected.

HUMAN HEALTH - *Assess whether the proposed project impacts on human health.*

Determination: No impact on human health is expected.

PRIVATE PROPERTY - *Assess whether there are any government regulatory impacts on private property rights.*

*Yes___ No_**X**__ If yes, analyze any alternatives considered that could reduce, minimize, or eliminate the regulation of private property rights.*

Determination: Private property rights are not impacted by this proposed action

OTHER HUMAN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES - *For routine actions of limited environmental impact, the following may be addressed in a checklist fashion.*

Impacts on:

(a) *Cultural uniqueness and diversity?* No significant impact
(b) *Local and state tax base and tax revenues?* No significant impact

(c) *Existing land uses?* No significant impact
(d) *Quantity and distribution of employment?* No significant impact
(e) *Distribution and density of population and housing?* No significant impact
(f) *Demands for government services?* No significant impact
(g) *Industrial and commercial activity?* No significant impact
(h) *Utilities?* No significant impact
(i) *Transportation?* No significant impact
(j) *Safety?* No significant impact
(k) *Other appropriate social and economic circumstances?* No significant impact

2. *Secondary and cumulative impacts on the physical environment and human population:*

Secondary Impacts No secondary impacts have been identified.

Cumulative Impacts No cumulative impacts have been identified.

3. *Describe any mitigation/stipulation measures:* Mitigation or stipulations are not planned at this time.

4. *Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative, if an alternative is reasonably available and prudent to consider:* If the applicant is not allowed to drill a well they will not have water for the house.

PART III. Conclusion

1. Preferred Alternative: Get a water right permit to use the drilled well.

2 Comments and Responses: None received at this time.

3. *Finding:*

Yes___ No_X__ Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required?

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action: Significant impacts have not been identified. An EIS is not required for this action.

Name of person(s) responsible for preparation of EA:

Name: Porter Dassenko
Title: Water Resources Specialist
Date: December 15, 2008