EA Form R 1/2007

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Water Resources Division
Water Rights Bureau

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
For Routine Actions with Limited Environmental Impact

Part I. Proposed Action Description

1. *Applicant/Contact name and address:* Holt LLC
% Dale and Janet Sparks
806 East Ave Pico #I-279
San Clemente, CA 92673

2. *Type of action:* Permit to Appropriate Water 76LJ 30045268

3. *Water source name:* Groundwater

4. *Location affected by project:* $SE^1/_4$ $SW^1/_4$, Section 1, Township 28N, Range 21W, Flathead County

5. *Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits:*

This application is to obtain a water use permit for two public water supply wells for servicing the Holt Fields Subdivision located approximately 4 miles east of Kalispell. This application requests a volume of 4.03 AF for domestic use among 12 single family homes, and 26.28 AF for 12 acres of lawn and garden. The period of diversion for domestic uses is from January 1 to December 31, and April 15 to October 15 for the lawn and garden use, inclusive of each year. The Applicant proposes to divert water at a rate of 80 gpm up to 30.31 AF per year.

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

Montana Natural Resource Program ..... Species of Concern
Montana Historical Society ..... Cultural Records Search
US Fish and Wildlife Service ..... Wetlands Mapper
Natural Resource Conservation Service ..... Web Soil Survey

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: N/A.

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: N/A

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.*

The proposed appropriation includes the use of two wells pumping at a maximum of 80 gpm completed in a confined alluvial aquifer. These wells have a total depth of 222 and 200 feet, are screened from 212-222 and 190-200 feet, and have the pumps installed at 185 and 165 feet for wells 1 and 2 respectively. The applicant determined a zone of influence of approximately 10,380 ft. from the point of diversion by modeling a average pumping rate of 18.8 gpm for the full period of appropriation. The annual volume of water passing through the potential zone of influence was calculated as 4,336.7 AF. The proposed diverted amount of 30.31 AF combined with existing appropriations totals 4,081.4 AF per year, representing 94% of annual available volume.

Over time, the use of this public water supply will likely reduce water inflows to the Flathead River and ultimately Flathead Lake.

Determination: Given the extensive nature of the alluvial aquifer in this area it is unlikely this proposed appropriation will have significant, long-term impact on groundwater or surface water availability.

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.*

The Applicant is requesting a groundwater appropriation using two wells. Each well was drilled by a licensed well driller (license # WWC-635) in accordance with MCA Title 37, Chapter 43 and ARM Title 36, Chapter 21. Well #1 was completed to a depth of 222 ft. below ground surface, has a minimum casing diameter of eight-inches, and contains 0.1 inch slot perforations from 212 to 222 ft. Well #2 was completed to a depth of 200 ft. below ground surface, has a minimum casing diameter of eight-inches, and contains 0.1 inch slot perforations

from 190 to 200 ft. Each well contains a Goulds model 80GS75, 4-inch submersible pump (7.5-hp). The delivery pumping rate from the well to the system is 80 gpm. The pumps are set at depths of 185 and 165 feet on 2-inch 1 and Well No. 2, respectively.

Determination: No impact

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."*

The Montana Natural Heritage Program website was referenced to determine if there are any threatened or endangered fish, wildlife, plants or aquatic species or any "species of special concern" in vicinity of Township 28N and Range 21W that could be impacted by the proposed project. The US Fish and Wildlife Service identified the threatened Canada Lynx (*Lynx canadensis*), and Bull Trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*). In addition the State of Montana, US Forest Service, and Bureau of Land Management identified the following species of special concern: Gray Wolf (*Canis lupus*);Wolverine (*Gulo gulo*); Fisher (*Martes pennant*); Great Blue Heron (*Ardea* herodius); Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*); and Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*).

Determination: This proposed project is associated with the use of groundwater and therefore should not impact the above listed species.

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: The proposed point of diversion and place of use are not within the boundaries of wetlands mapped by the national wetlands inventory program.

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

Determination: N/A

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.*

The location of the proposed place of use encompass the soil types of Kalispell loam (Kr ~ 43%), Somers silt loam (Se ~ 29%), Demers-Kalispell silt loam (Db ~ 26%), Kalispell Loam (Ks ~ 1.6%), and Blanchard loamy fine sand (Bp ~ 0.5%).

Determination: There are some susceptibilities to degradation for these soil types, particularly for wind erosion. Approximately 99.5% of area is slightly susceptible for degradation due to

disturbances, and 0.5% is highly susceptible for wind erosion. The proposed use associated with this application will not likely cause soil degradation.

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: The development of the Holt subdivision will occur in a primarily farmland area, and as a result land use will change from farmland to low density residential. There will be little likelihood for spread or establishment of noxious weeds as a result of this proposed project.

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

Determination: No impact.

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

Determination: There will be no change in land-use characteristics associated with this change so there will be no significant impact.

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: None

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 project is consistent with planned land use.

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: There should be no significant impacts on recreational or wilderness activities from this proposed use.

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

Determination: No impact.

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: No impact.

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

(b) *Local and state tax base and tax revenues?* Slight impact

(c) *Existing land uses?* Slight impact

(d) *Quantity and distribution of employment?* No

(e) *Distribution and density of population and housing?* Slight impact

(f) *Demands for government services?* Slight impact

(g) *Industrial and commercial activity?* No

(h) *Utilities?* Slight impact

(i) *Transportation?* Slight impact

(j) *Safety?* No

(k) *Other appropriate social and economic circumstances?* No

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

Secondary Impacts: None

Cumulative Impacts: None

3. ***Describe any mitigation/stipulation measures:*** None

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:***

The "no action" alternative to this proposed project will result in the landowner not having access to water for domestic purposes.

PART III. Conclusion

1. ***Preferred Alternative***: As proposed

2 ***Comments and Responses:*** None

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 <u>why</u> the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action: No significant impacts have been identified; therefore, no EIS is necessary.

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

Name: Tim Eichner
Title: Water Resources Specialist
Date: December 28, 2009