

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

Name and address of applicant: Don Kelly, Pond #1
171 North View Ridge Lane
Bozeman, MT 59715

Has the pond been approved for a private pond permit in the past? No.

Location: Pond is located approximately 1.0 miles east of I-15 adjacent to Curly Gulch north of Divide.

County: Beaverhead **Township:** 1N **Range:** 9W **Section:** 12

Name of the drainage where the pond would be located: Curly Gulch (tributary to Divide Creek).

Name(s) of fish species proposed for introduction: Westslope Cutthroat Trout.

Is this species native to the drainage? If not, was it introduced legally (i.e. by a fish management agency)? Yes. Curly Gulch is within the native range of Westslope Cutthroat Trout but it is unknown if Westslope currently occupy the stream.

List species of special concern present in the drainage: Arctic Grayling are present in the Big Hole River but rare in the vicinity of Divide. They may have historically occupied Divide Creek but are no longer present. Divide Creek does harbor unhybridized Westslope Cutthroat Trout in the upper portions of the basin, but are rare in the vicinity of the above named pond. At the time of the pond inspection an unknown trout species was observed in Curly Gulch.

RISKS:

Inlets to or outlets from the pond? Yes X No ___ **Explain:** There is no inlet to the ponds. Both ponds are excavated below ground water elevation and are filled to the static ground water elevation. A pipe was placed underground under Curly Gulch and connects the two ponds such that once the upper pond fills, it will spill through the pipe into the lower pond. The outlet structure of the lower pond consists of an agri-drain with ¼ vertical bar fish screen. The outlet is piped into a drain field so there is no direct surface connection between the pond outflow and Curly Gulch.

Potential for impacts on genetic structure of wild fish populations?

None ___ Minor X Major ___

Comments required for minor or major impacts: The risk of stocked Westslope Cutthroat Trout escaping from the ponds is very minimal due to the type of outlet structure, fish screen and lack of a surface connection to the stream. However, because of the proximity of the ponds to Curly Gulch, it is possible that during a catastrophic flood event that the ponds could be captured by the stream and fish could escape from the pond to the stream.

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

Comments required for minor or major impacts: See comment above.

Impacts to other forms of aquatic life that may be caused by this introduction?
None X Minor__ Major__

Comments required for minor or major impacts: This is a new pond which did not exist prior to excavation so there will be no anticipated impacts on aquatic life as a result of fish introduction.

Potential for the proposed new species to reproduce in this location?
None X Minor__ Major__

Comments required for minor or major impacts: There is no spawning habitat present in the ponds.

If necessary, would it be feasible to remove this species after it has been stocked? How?
Yes. Through the use of an approved piscicide or cease stocking and wait for fish to age-out.

Would this introduction result in impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? Not likely, unless further pond development is proposed in the drainage. Irrigation water is diverted from Curly Gulch, which has limited flow. Increasing development of irrigation and/or ponds would increase water loss through evaporation and other means and could lead to dewatering of the stream.

Describe reasonable and prudent alternatives to this action, if any (including no action).
No action and leave pond barren of fish.

Describe and evaluate mitigation, stipulations, or other control measures enforceable by the agency, if any. None, other than maintenance of screen on outflow of pond.

List any other agencies or individuals that may be affected by the proposed introduction:
None.

List all agencies and individuals outside of FWP who have been notified of this proposed introduction: None.

Based on this evaluation, is an EIS required? Yes__ No X If no, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for the proposed action. Pond meets all criteria for a private pond license with no or minimal potential effects on the fishery of Curly Gulch or the Big Hole River.

Literature Cited: N/A

EA prepared by: Jim Olsen

Comments will be accepted until: N/A
Comments should be sent to: N/A