

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:* Anne I. Collins, 3080 E. Lakeshore Dr., Whitefish MT 59937
2. *Type of action:* Application for Beneficial Water Use Permit 76LJ 30048274
3. *Water source name:* Whitefish Lake
4. *Location affected by project:* NE¹/₄SE¹/₄ of Section 4, Township 31N, Range 22W, Flathead County
5. *Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits:*
The DNRC shall issue a water use permit if an applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-311 MCA are met.

The applicant proposes to divert surface water from Whitefish Lake, by means of a ½ HP pump, from January 1 through December 31 annually at a rate of 20 GPM up to 1 AF, from a point in the SW¹/₄NE¹/₄SE¹/₄ of Section 4, Township 31N, Range 22W, for domestic use from January 1 through December 31. The place of use is Lot 5 Eagle Point and generally located NW¹/₄NE¹/₄SE¹/₄ of Section 4, Township 31N, Range 22 W. The property is located five miles northwest of Whitefish, Flathead County, MT, and approximately 40 miles north of the Flathead Indian Reservation’s most northern boundary.

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

Montana Natural Heritage Program
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Natural Resources and Conservation Service soil maps
United States Fish and Wildlife Wetland Mapper

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 is not identified as chronically or periodically dewatered 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.

Whitefish Lake is listed as a threatened water body for the uses of aquatic life and a cold water fishery. The use of 20 gpm up to 1 AF per year is not likely to increase the impairment of this source because the probable causes of impairment are mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls, and sedimentation/siltation.

Determination: No impact

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: This appropriation is for surface water and therefore does not apply.

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: The diversion works will consist of a ½ HP Myers S series 4-inch submersible pump that sits inside a 4-inch PVC casing within a series of 2-foot diameter concrete rings that are buried above the high water level of the shoreline. The lake end of the 4-inch PVC casing will be placed below low water level, perforated and buried in 2-foot diameter rings. A 1.5-inch polyethylene tubing will convey water to the home. The pump will operate year round to keep a pressure tank full. Discharge will enter a drain field. Pump specifications show that the system is capable of delivering and controlling the requested 20 GPM with 100 feet of head.

Installation of pump and distribution line should not impact the above.

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 to determine if there are any threatened or endangered fish, wildlife, plants or aquatic species or any “species of special

concern”, that could be impacted by the proposed project. They identified the following animal and plant species that are threatened, or have special status, that are located regionally: Gray Wolf, Canada Lynx, Wolverine, Fisher, Grizzly Bear, Golden Eagle, Great Blue Heron, Pileated Woodpecker, Common Loon, Bald Eagle, Northern Alligator Lizard, Westsloope Cutthroat Trout, Pygmy Whitefish, Bull Trout, Lake Trout, Sheathed Slug, Crested Shiedfern, Creeping Sedge, Giant Helleborine, Slender Cottongrass, and Gray Lungwort Lichen. These species are found throughout this region and not necessarily at this particular spot. No immediate impact.

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 place of use is 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.*

Determination: Proposed area is composed mainly of rock outcrop, structural breaklands. No impact to soil quality or alteration of soil stability is expected.

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: Grounds will be maintained with lawn and garden/natural landscaping. No impact.

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

Determination: No impacts are anticipated.

HISTORICAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES - *Assess whether there will be degradation of unique archeological or historical sites in the vicinity of the proposed project if it is on State or Federal Lands. If it is not on State or Federal Lands simply state NA-project not located on State or Federal Lands.*

Determination: N/A – project not located on State or Federal Lands.

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 other impacts were identified during this EA.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

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

Determination: This domestic use appears to be in compliance.

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: No impact expected.

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

Determination: No impact expected.

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

Yes___ No**XX**___ 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? None identified.
- (b) Local and state tax base and tax revenues? None
- (c) Existing land uses? None
- (d) Quantity and distribution of employment? None
- (e) Distribution and density of population and housing? None
- (f) Demands for government services? None

(g) Industrial and commercial activity? None identified.

(h) Utilities? None

(i) Transportation? None

(j) Safety? None

(k) Other appropriate social and economic circumstances? None identified.

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

Secondary Impacts None identified.

Cumulative Impacts None identified.

3. Describe any mitigation/stipulation measures:

None identified.

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: No reasonable alternatives identified.

PART III. Conclusion

1. Preferred Alternative

2. Comments and Responses

3. Finding:

Yes ___ NoXX 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: Because no significant impacts were identified, this EA is the appropriate level of analysis.

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

Name: Kathy Olsen

Title: Water Resource Specialist

Date: September 1, 2010