

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:* Martin City County Water & Sewer District, PO Box 260186, Martin City, MT 59926-0186
2. *Type of action:* Application to Change a Water Right 76LJ 30048682
3. *Water source name:* Ground Water
4. *Location affected by project:* NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 4, Township 30N, Range 19W, Flathead County.
5. *Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits:*
The DNRC shall issue a change authorization if an applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-402 MCA are met.

Martin City County Water District currently has two unperfected Provisional Permits for municipal use: 76LJ 61904 and 76LJ 102588. These rights consist of two shared wells for a combined appropriation of 440 GPM and 160 AF being diverted year-round. This application requests changing the place of use of these two rights to reflect the place of use within the current boundaries of the district; specifically, Glacier Hills and Mountain Meadow RV Park. The expanded place of use being incorporated in this application will not exceed the already established limits of 440 GPM and up to 160 AF. The place of use is approximately 35 miles north of the northern border of the Flathead Reservation.

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

Montana Natural Heritage Program
United State Fish and Wildlife Wetland Mapper
Natural Resources and Conservation Service Soil Maps

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 – ground water

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 – ground water

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: Depletions to surface water sources was addressed in the previous DNRC permit process for the underlying rights on this change.

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 two wells were drilled to a depth of 143 and 204 feet by a licensed Montana driller with static levels at 32 and 38 feet respectively. The two wells are manifold together on a lead/lag demand system with a storage tank. The diversion system is under MDEQ requirements as a public water supply system.

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, Brown Creeper, Pileated Woodpecker, Common Loon, Bald Eagle, Boreal Chickadee, Pacific Wren, Westsloope Cutthroat Trout, Pygmy Whitefish, Lake Trout, Smoky Taildropper, Madenhair Spleenwort, Upward-lobed Moonwort, Common Moonwort, Deer Indian Paintbrush, Short-styled Thistle, English Sundew, Latah Tule Pea, Pod Grass and Aloina moss.. 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: No ponds; no impacts.

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: The majority of soils in this area is Dystric Eutrochrepts, outwash substratum, with moderately high to high capacity to transmit water with no frequency of flooding. Saline seep is not a concern 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: N/A

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

Determination: N/A

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.

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 change.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

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

Determination: Project is under DEQ requirements.

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: N/A

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

Determination: N/A

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

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

Determination: No impacts.

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
- (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
- (h) Utilities? None
- (i) Transportation? None
- (j) Safety? None
- (k) Other appropriate social and economic circumstances? None

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

Secondary Impacts

None expected

Cumulative Impacts

None expected

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 ___ No **XX** *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:

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

Name: Kathy Olsen

Title: Water Resource Specialist

Date: February 17, 2011