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: Michael and Sarah Dector, PO Box 2782, Columbia Falls, MT 59912

2. Type of action: Permit to Appropriate Water 76LJ-30050679

3. Water source name: Groundwater well

4. Location affected by project: SW¼SW¼NE¼ of Section 35, Township 37, 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.

   This application is to obtain a water use permit for a well located in the Glacier National Park Compact Area in the above-described location. The applicant proposes to divert water using a ½ horsepower pump at a rate of 16 GPM up to 2.25 acre-feet per year. The proposed use is for domestic use from January 1 through December 31 and lawn and garden use from April 15 through October 15 inclusive of each year.

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

   The National Park Service is being notified per compact requirement.
   Montana Natural Heritage Program

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: Not applicable, the source is groundwater.

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: Not applicable, the source is groundwater.

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 applicant will derive ground water from the aquifer at a rate up to 16 GPM. The well was completed to a depth of 160 feet below ground surface (bgs) and has a static water level of 112.7 feet. Perforations are ¼" x 1" and appear from 134 to 143 feet. No immediate impacts to groundwater.

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 well was constructed with a 6.63-inch casing to a depth of 160 feet bgs with perforations of ¼" x 1" from 134 to 145 feet. The well was completed by a licensed Montana state driller, license WWC-655, in July of 2010. No significant impacts have been noted.

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 Gray Wolf, Wolverine, Canada Lynx, Fisher and Grizzly Bear frequent this area of Flathead County. The well is drilled and should not impact area wildlife. Other species of concern include the Northern Goshawk, Cassin's Finch, Pileated Woodpecker, Common Loon, Harlequin Duck, Black-backed Woodpecker, Westslope Cutthroat Trout, Lake Trout, Arctic Grayling, and Blunt-leaved Pondweed.

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: There are no wetlands in the area of this project.

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

Determination: Not applicable, the project does not involve a pond.

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: No impact.

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 land use will not change so no impact is anticipated.

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 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: Glacier National Park Service has been notified of this application.

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: The well is drilled on private property. It will not impact recreation or effect wilderness activities.

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**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?* No

(b) *Local and state tax base and tax revenues?* No

(c) *Existing land uses?* No

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

(e) *Distribution and density of population and housing?* No

(f) *Demands for government services?* No

(g) *Industrial and commercial activity?* No

(h) *Utilities?* No

(i) *Transportation?* No

(j) *Safety?* No

(k) *Other appropriate social and economic circumstances?* None

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:*

PART III. Conclusion

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

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

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: No significant impacts have been identified; therefore, no EIS is necessary.

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

Name: Kathy Olsen
Title: Water Resource Specialist
Date: April 13, 2011