

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
AND CONSERVATION



BRIAN SCHWEITZER
GOVERNOR

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STATE OF MONTANA

WATER RESOURCES DIVISION (406) 444-6601
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PO BOX 201601
HELENA, MONTANA 59620-1601

Cover Letter

August 13, 2012

TO: Governor's Office, Vivian Hammill, Rm 204, State Capitol, PO Box 200801, Helena, MT 59620
Environmental Quality Council, Capitol Building, Room 106, P.O. Box 201704, Helena, MT 59620
Dept. of Environmental Quality, Metcalf Building, P.O. Box 200901, Helena, MT 59620-0901
Director's Office
Dept. of Natural Resources and Conservation, 1625 11th Ave. Helena, MT 59620
Director's Office
Information Services Section
Water Resources Division, 1424 9th Ave., P.O. Box 201601, Helena, MT 59620-1601
Denise Biggar, Water Res. Glasgow Office, 222 6th St. S. PO Box 1269, Glasgow, MT 59230
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 1420 E. 6th Ave. Helena, MT 59620
Director's Office
Regional Supervisor, Region 6 Office, 54078 US Hwy. 2, Glasgow, MT 59230
Montana Environmental Information Center, P.O. Box 1184, Helena, MT 59624
Montana Audubon Council, P.O. Box 595, Helena, MT 59624
Shirley A. Nelson, 705 5th Ave. SW, Ronan, MT 59864
McCone County Commissioners, Box 199, Circle, MT 59215
Wildlife Federation, P.O. Box 1175, Helena, MT 59624
Trout Unlimited, P.O. Box 7186, Missoula, MT 59807
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 10 W. 15th St. Suite 2200, Helena, MT 59626
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, MT Field Office, 585 Shepard Way, Helena, MT 59601

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The enclosed Finding of No Significant Impact/Decision Notice has been prepared for the Selhm Reservoir Property Easement Release Project. Please contact James P. Domino at (406) 444-6622 (e-mail jdomino@mt.gov) should you have any questions about the Finding of No Significant Impact/Decision Notice or the Final EA. Copies of the Final EA are available upon request. The Final EA can also be viewed on the DNRC website at www.dnrc.mt.gov. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "TD", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Tim Davis
Water Resources Division Administrator

STATE WATER PROJECTS
BUREAU
(406) 444-6646

WATER MANAGEMENT
BUREAU
(406) 444-6637

WATER OPERATIONS
BUREAU
(406) 444-0860

WATER RIGHTS
BUREAU
(406) 444-6610

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT/
NOTICE OF DECISION

August 13, 2012

Dear Reader:

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) released a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) on July 25, 2012 on the Sehm Reservoir Property Easement Release. The action calls for the release of an easement on 16.2 acres of MT DNRC State Water Projects Bureau property to the current landowner. The property is located in McCone County in Section 31, Township 23 North, Range 48 East. The property consists entirely of rangeland. The easement for the construction of a reservoir on this property was acquired by the State Water Conservation Board in 1941. The goals of this project were never realized, and the State has had no involvement with this property for many years. The property is adjacent to a single landowner, Mrs. Shirley Nelson, and does not generate any revenue for the State. The easement release would take place in August of 2012 via quit claim deed.

State involvement in this project is no longer needed, as no public benefits are provided by retaining this easement. The transfer of such properties into private ownership absolves the State of any liability and reduces the State's administrative duties. The Army Corps of Engineers, Montana Department of Environmental Quality, DFWP, Montana State Historic Preservation Office and the Montana Natural Heritage Program were consulted as part of this assessment. The public comment period closed on August 6th, 2012, with no comments received.

Based on the EA's disclosure and analysis of potential impacts, the DNRC concludes that the proposed action will not result in any significant impacts. The DNRC will adopt the draft EA as the final EA and proceed with the project as planned. Copies of the Final EA are available upon request. The Final EA can also be viewed on the DNRC website at www.dnrc.mt.us. Please direct any questions to:

James P. Domino

State Water Projects Bureau
DNRC, P.O. Box 201601
Helena, MT 59620-1601
(406) 444-6622 e-mail: jdomino@state.mt.us

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely



Tim Davis
Water Resources Division Administrator