

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION
WATER RESOURCES DIVISION
WATER RIGHTS BUREAU
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. **Type of action:** Water use permit application no. 41S-I092925-00
Water right change application no.
Petition or Other Action:
2. **Applicant/Contact name and address:** JUDITH SHADOWS GOLF COURSE, PO BOX 577, LEWISTOWN, MT. 59457.
3. **Water source name:** GROUNDWATER (2-WELLS)
4. **Location affected by action:** NESWNE SEC 11, AND NESENW SEC 12, BOTH IN T15N, R18E, FERGUS COUNTY.
5. **Narrative summary of the proposed project and action to be taken:** THE DNRC SHALL ISSUE A WATER USE PERMIT IF AN APPLICANT PROVES THE CRITERIA IN 85-2-311, MCA ARE MET. THE APPLICANT IS SEEKING A WATER USE PERMIT TO PUMP 600 GPM UP TO 275 AF FROM THE GROUNDWATER SOURCE (WELLS ARE 600' AND 660' DEEP). WATER WILL BE USED FOR IRRIGATION OF A GOLF COURSE FROM MAY 1 TO SEPTEMBER 30 IN SECTIONS 11 AND 12, T15N, R18E, FERGUS COUNTY.
6. **Agencies consulted during preparation of the environmental assessment:**
FERGUS COUNTY COMMISSIONER - KATHY BAILEY
CITY OF LEWISTOWN PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR - BILL SHAW (SEE LETTER)

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

1. Environmental Impact Checklist:

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Soils/Geologic Features:

Degradation of soil quality or alteration of soil stability, moisture content, geologic substructure, unique geologic features, archeological sites?

NO

Erosion:

Alteration of erosion or siltation patterns which modify stream beds or lake shores?

NO

Vegetation/Noxious weeds:

Change in or adverse affect on diversity and production of local plant species including any unique or endangered species (including trees, shrubs, grass, and aquatic plants)? Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?

NO

Air:

Deterioration of air quality, or adverse effects on vegetation due to increased air pollutants.

NO

Water:

Alteration of surface water or groundwater quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity or quantity or distribution?

NO

Floodplain:

Changes in drainage patterns, course or magnitude of flood flows, or exposure of people/property to hazards (flood)?

NO

Wildlife Habitat/Migration:

Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat? Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of fish or wildlife?

NO

Endangered Species:

Adverse effects on any unique or endangered species?

NO

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Existing Land Use:

Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?

YES. THE EXISTING LAND USE IS FOR AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES, AND THE LAND WILL NOW BE USED FOR A PUBLIC GOLF COURSE. THE PROFITABILITY OF THE NEW LAND USE SHOULD BE SUBSTANTIALLY HIGHER THAN THE EXISTING USE.

Historical Significance:

Destruction or alteration of a natural area of scientific or educational value or prehistoric or paleontological importance?

NO

Populace:

Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area? Alteration of social structure of community?

YES. THIS SHOULD BE A MINIMAL IMPACT, HOWEVER, IF PLANS FOR A SUBDIVISION AROUND THE GOLF COURSE FOLLOW THROUGH, THIS MAY INFLUENCE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT IN AN AREA THAT HAS BEEN HISTORICALLY VOID OF HOMES.

Transportation:

Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?

YES. OFFICIALS EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE EXISTING CONDITION OF THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO THE GOLF COURSE. THE CONCERN FOCUSSES ON THE ROAD GRADE AND NARROW PROFILE IN AN AREA THAT OFFERS POOR VISIBILITY. A LEWISTOWN OFFICIAL HAS STATED THAT PLANS ARE BEING NEGOTIATED.

Safety:

Creation of any health hazard or affect on existing emergency response or evacuation plans?

YES. IN A LETTER FROM THE LEWISTOWN PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR (IN FILE), HE DESCRIBES THE POTENTIAL FOR PROBLEMS FOR EMERGENCY TRAFFIC IF THE ROAD IS HEAVILY USED. NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE OWNER OF THE GOLF COURSE WILL INCLUDE MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THIS PROBLEM.

Public Services:

Have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? Have an effect upon local or state tax base?

YES. ROAD MAINTENANCE WILL MOST LIKELY HAVE TO BE INCREASED. IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT THE TAX BASE WILL INCREASE WITH THE GOLF COURSE.

Utilities:

Creates need for new or altered facilities for any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?

YES. THE NEED FOR ELECTRIC POWER AND COMMUNICATIONS WILL RESULT, HOWEVER, NO MAJOR IMPACT IS EXPECTED.

Aesthetics:

Alteration of any scenic vista or recreation opportunity or creation of an aesthetically offensive site to the public?

NO

Other:

NO

2. **Secondary and cumulative impacts:** IF PLANS FOR A SUBDIVISION AROUND THE GOLF COURSE FOLLOW THROUGH, THIS COULD EVENTUALLY CREATE AN INCREASED DEMAND FOR OTHER SERVICES SUCH AS WATER AND SEWER. ALSO, ADDITIONAL JOBS WILL RESULT WITH THE OPENING OF THE GOLF COURSE.
3. **Reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative:** SOME IMPACTS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED, HOWEVER, THEY ARE LIMITED PRIMARILY TO THE LOCAL AGENCIES GOVERNING THE CITY OF LEWISTOWN (CITY AND COUNTY GOVERNMENT). FERGUS COUNTY HAS EXPRESSED MINIMAL CONCERN OVER ROAD SERVICES, AND HAS STATED THAT SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS WERE NOT ANTICIPATED. THE CITY OF LEWISTOWN EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER ROAD SAFETY AND POSSIBLE FUTURE

SERVICES, AND HAS SAID THAT NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE OWNER OF THE GOLF COURSE ARE EXPECTED TO REDUCE THE CONCERN. IF A PERMIT IS NOT ISSUED, THE OWNER WILL NOT BE ABLE TO REALIZE THE OBVIOUS FINANCIAL BENEFITS OF A COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISE, AND AREA RESIDENTS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ENJOY THE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITY OF A GOLF COURSE.

PART III. CONCLUSION

Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? NO

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action:

IT APPEARS THAT ANY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS WILL BE LIMITED TO THE CITY OF LEWISTOWN AND FERGUS COUNTY, HOWEVER, THESE AGENCIES HAVE STATED THAT THEY EITHER HAVE LITTLE CONCERN WITH THE DEVELOPMENT, OR ARE CONFIDENT THAT ANY MAJOR CONCERNS CAN BE SUFFICIENTLY NEGOTIATED AMONG THE LOCAL PARTIES. FERGUS COUNTY COMMISSIONER KATHY BAILEY HAS STATED THAT THE BENEFITS SHOULD SUBSTANTIALLY OUTWEIGH ANY NEGATIVE IMPACTS ON THE COUNTY.

PREPARED BY:

NAME: SCOTT IRVIN

TITLE: WATER RESOURCES SPECIALIST III

DATE: SEPTEMBER 28, 1995