

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.41T-104526
Water right change application no.
Petition or Other Action:
2. **Applicant/Contact name and address:** CR KENDALL CORPORATION 14142
DENVER WEST PARKWAY SUITE 250, GOLDEN CO 80401-3142
3. **Water source name:** WELL
4. **Location affected by action:** SW SW SE SEC 31, T18N, R18E
5. **Narrative summary of the proposed project and action to be taken:** THE DNRC SHALL ISSUE A WATER RIGHT PERMIT IF AN APPLICANT PROVES THE CRITERIA IN MCA 85-2-311.THE APPLICANT HAS INSTALLED A PUMP-BACK SYSTEM, IN EFFORTS TO COLLECT WATER THAT MAYBE CONTAMINATED. THIS PROJECT IS IN PLACE AND USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE RECLAMATION OF THE MINE.
6. **Agencies consulted during preparation of the environmental assessment:** DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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: PART OF THE RECLAMATION PROJECT IS TO REVEGETATE THE GROUNDS THAT HAVE BEEN DISTURBED BY THE MINING PROJECT. THE TYPE OF PLANT THAT HAS BEEN SEEDED IN BY THE MINE IS NATIVE GRASSES. PORTIONS OF THE WATER DIVERTED FROM THE PUMP-BACK SYSTEM ARE USED TO IRRIGATE THE REVEGETATED LANDS.

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?

YES: THIS PROJECT IS TO HELP PREVENT ANY MORE WATER CONTAMINATION. THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ARE PRESENTLY MONITORING THE QUALITY OF THE WATER NOT ONLY FROM THE POINT OF DIVERSION BUT ALSO FROM THE DOWN STREAM WATER SOURCES. THE DEQ HAS FOUND SEVERAL TYPES OF CONTAMINATION IN THE GROUNDWATER AND SURFACE WATER SOURCES. AS STATED FROM WAYNE JEPSON, HYDROLOGIST WITH THE HARD ROCK ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (DEQ), " SURFACE WATER AND GROUNDWATER QUALITY DOWNGRADIENT OF THE SEEPAGE COLLECTION SYSTEMS HAVE CLEARLY IMPROVED SINCE THE SYSTEMS WERE INSTALLED".

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: A WILDLIFE SPECIALIST IN THE NEARBY TOWN OF WINIFRED IS IN THE FOURTH YEAR OF REINTORDUCING THE PEREGRINE FALCON. THE FALCONS ARE RELEASED AT THE TOP OF MULESHOE PIT. ALSO THE MINING COMPANY HAS STATED THAT ONCE THE RECLAMATION PROJECT IS COMPLETED THAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO TURN THE PROPERTY OVER TO THE BLM FOR A WILDLIFE REFUGE.

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?

NO

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?

NO

Transportation:

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

NO

Safety:

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

NO

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: THE DEQ IS WORKING WITH THE APPLICANT ON THE RECLAMATION.

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?

NO

Aesthetics:

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

NO

Other:

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2. **Secondary and cumulative impacts:** NONE
 3. **Reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative:** DNRC IS REQUIRED TO ISSUE A PERMIT UNDER MCA 85-2-311

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:

THIS EA IS BEING CONDUCTED ABOUT THE WATER CAPTURE SYSTEMS ONLY, NOT THE EFFECT OF THE TOTAL MINING OPERATION. AN EIS HAS ALREADY BEEN WRITTEN BY THE MONTANA DEQ ON MINING OPERATIONS. AN EA IS THE APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF EVALUATION BY THIS DEPARTMENT. THE DEQ MAY REQUIRE A MORE EXPANDED ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW.

PREPARED BY:

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DATE: 8-26-98.