

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.
Water right change application no. 40R-G(C)035530-00
Petition or Other Action:
2. **Applicant/Contact name and address:** Town of Medicine Lake, PO Box 5,
Medicine Lake, MT 59247
3. **Water source name:** Groundwater wells (2)
4. **Location affected by action:** 1)SESENE Sec. 25, T32N R55E, Sheridan Co.
2)SWSENE Sec. 25, T32N R55E, Sheridan Co.
5. **Narrative summary of the proposed project and action to be taken:** The DNRC shall issue an authorization for change of appropriation if an applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-402, MCA, are met. Two new wells were drilled to replace two existing wells filed on Water Right Nos. 40R-C035530 and 40R-W046676. The casings of the two existing wells were deteriorating resulting in inadequate water supply. The only change to these water rights is the point of diversion; there will be no increase in the flow rate and volume. The old and new wells are in the same aquifer per groundwater studies in the area. The old wells will be abandoned once the new wells are in production.
6. **Agencies consulted during preparation of the environmental assessment:**
None

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?

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?

NO

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: Due to the change in diversion points, electricity had to be run to the new wells. As of the date of this environmental assessment, it has been completed and there were no concerns.

Aesthetics:

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

NO

Other:

NO

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2. **Secondary and cumulative impacts:** None
 3. **Reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative:** One alternative would be to replace the casings of the old wells. One reason this was not considered is because the two existing wells are on BNSF Railroad right-of-way and a costly annual liability fee is required. The two new wells were moved on the town's property. Another alternative is not to do anything at this time. This is not a reasonable consideration because of the need for drinking water for the Town of Medicine Lake.

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:

No significant impacts were identified, therefore, no EIS is required.

PREPARED BY:

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DATE: September 2, 1998