

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. 41I-105647-00
2. **Applicant/Contact name and address:** HELENA REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY
2850 SKYWAY DRIVE
HELENA, MT 59602-1228
3. **Water source name:** GROUND WATER
4. **Location affected by action:** NWSEW OF SEC. 21, TWP10N, RGE 03W
5. **Narrative summary of the proposed project and action to be taken:** The applicant has drilled a well and proposes to use the well to irrigate approximately 40 acres. The land is located near the Helena Regional Airport and will be used for youth soccer fields in the City of Helena.
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?

The project will probably decrease the degradation of soils as the area will be seeded for grass which will reduce erosion. There are no known unique geologic features or archeological sites on the property.

Erosion:

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

None

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?

It is likely that there will be a decrease in the establishment or spread of noxious weeds. Currently, the area is unoccupied. There are no known endangered species present on the property. The area will benefit from the soccer field.

Air:

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

Traffic will probably increase in the area which could cause an increase in air pollutants. However, the overall benefit to the community and the change from the existing land use will out weigh the increase in air pollutants.

Water:

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

None

Floodplain:

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

None known.

Wildlife Habitat/Migration:

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

None

Endangered Species:

Adverse effects on any unique or endangered species?

None

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Existing Land Use:

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

Currently, the land is not being used for anything. The soccer fields will increase the productivity and profitability of the existing land.

Historical Significance:

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

None

Populace:

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

The youth soccer field will cause an increase in distribution and density of people in the area. However, the increase will only occur during the soccer season.

Transportation:

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

The soccer fields will probably increase transportation and movement of people in the area. All of the surrounding roads will see an increase in traffic due to the fields. However, the increase in transportation and the movement of people will only be during the soccer season which will probably last 5 months.

Safety:

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

None

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?

The City of Helena is going to maintain the fields which will could cause an increase in work for the parks and recreation department. Because transportation is likely to increase there may be a need for additional roads and more maintenance to existing roads. The fields will probably provide restrooms to the public which may require increased maintenance costs. All of these additions will require more money to operate and maintain the fields which could have an effect upon the local tax base.

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?

There may be a need for new utilities in the area, but once the utilities are installed there will be little or no maintenance associated with them.

Aesthetics:

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

The soccer fields will create a new recreational opportunity and will get rid of an aesthetically offensive site.

Other: None

2. Secondary and cumulative impacts: None

3. Reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative:

There are two alternatives to the proposed project including: connecting to the City of Helena’s water and sewer system; or leave the area as is. However, neither of these options would better than the existing plan.

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:

The project will not adversely affect the surroundings or the environments. No significant problems were identified that would warrant an EIS.

PREPARED BY:

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TITLE: WATER RESOURCES SPECIALIST
DATE: