

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 right change application no. 42M-G(R)104422-00
2. **Applicant/Contact name and address:** RICHLAND COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT, HCR 89, BOX 5165A, SIDNEY, MT, 59270
3. **Water source name:** YELLOWSTONE RIVER
4. **Location affected by action:** SWSWNW SEC. 1, TWP. 22N, RGE 59E RICHLAND COUNTY
5. **Narrative summary of the proposed project and action to be taken:** THE DNRC SHALL ISSUE A WATER USE AUTHORIZATION IF AN APPLICANT PROVES THE CRITERIA IN 85-2-402, MCA ARE MET. THIS APPLICATION IS TO USE 7.1 CFS UP TO 961 ACRE-FEET OF THE RESERVED WATER GRANTED TO THE RICHLAND COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT.
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 - ADDRESSED IN THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER BASIN RESERVATIONS.

**Erosion:**

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

NO - ADDRESSED IN THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER BASIN RESERVATIONS.

**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 - ADDRESSED IN THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER BASIN RESERVATIONS.

**Air:**

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

NO - ADDRESSED IN THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER BASIN RESERVATIONS.

**Water:**

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

NO - ADDRESSED IN THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER BASIN RESERVATIONS.

**Floodplain:**

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

NO - ADDRESSED IN THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER BASIN RESERVATIONS.

**Wildlife Habitat/Migration:**

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

NO - ADDRESSED IN THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER BASIN RESERVATIONS.

**Endangered Species:**

Adverse effects on any unique or endangered species?

NO - ADDRESSED IN THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER BASIN RESERVATIONS.

<b>HUMAN ENVIRONMENT</b>
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**Existing Land Use:**

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

NO - ADDRESSED IN THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER BASIN RESERVATIONS.

**Historical Significance:**

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

NO - ADDRESSED IN THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER BASIN RESERVATIONS.

**Populace:**

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

NO - ADDRESSED IN THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER BASIN RESERVATIONS.

**Transportation:**

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

NO - ADDRESSED IN THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER BASIN RESERVATIONS.

**Safety:**

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

NO - ADDRESSED IN THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER BASIN RESERVATIONS.

**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 - ADDRESSED IN THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER BASIN RESERVATIONS.

**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 - ADDRESSED IN THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER BASIN RESERVATIONS.

**Aesthetics:**

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

NO - ADDRESSED IN THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER BASIN RESERVATIONS.

**Other:**

NO - ADDRESSED IN THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER BASIN RESERVATIONS.

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2. **Secondary and cumulative impacts:** NONE - SEE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER BASIN RESERVATIONS.
  3. **Reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative:** NO IMPACTS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED. IF THE USE OF THE RESERVED WATER WERE NOT APPROVED, THE CONSERVATION DISTRICT COULD NOT BENEFIT FROM HAVING A RESERVED WATER RIGHT.

**PART III. CONCLUSION**

Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? NO - EIS WAS ALREADY COMPLETED FOR THE RESERVATIONS.

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

EA IS ADEQUATE FOR THIS ACTION. A FULL EIS WAS ALREADY COMPLETED FOR THE RESERVATIONS.

PREPARED BY:

NAME: KIM OVERCAST  
TITLE: WATER RESOURCES SPECIALIST  
DATE: