

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.  
40E-G(W)064461-00
2. **Applicant/Contact name and address:**  
BLM  
111 GARRYOWEN RD  
MILES CITY, MT 59301
3. **Water source name:** GROUNDWATER
4. **Location affected by action:** NWSWNE, SEC 21, T15N, R46E, PRAIRIE 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 ADD AN ADDITIONAL STOCK TANK TO AN EXISTING WELL AND PIPELINE SYSTEM. THIS WILL IMPROVE GRAZING ROTATION AND PASTURE UTILIZATION. THE FLOW RATE IS 9.96 GPM.
6. **Agencies consulted during preparation of the environmental assessment:** BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, MT NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM, AND THE MT HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE. BLM ALSO CONSULTED NRCS. SEE REPORT IN FILE.

**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?

YES, BUT NOT SIGNIFICANTLY, THERE WILL BE A SLIGHT ALTERATION IN SOIL STRUCTURE WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF SMALL PIPELINE TRENCHES. APPROXIMATELY 2.5 MILES OF PIPELINE WILL BE BURIED 5 ½ TO 6 FT DEEP USING A TRENCHER. EXCAVATION OF THE TRENCH WILL NOT BE GREATER THAN 12 INCHES WIDE.

**Erosion:**

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

NO, THERE WILL BE NO ALTERATION OF EROSION OR SILTATION PATTERNS.

**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?

YES, THE TRENCH WILL DISTURB THE SOIL AND UPROOT NATIVE VEGETATION. THIS WILL NOT BE IN SIGNIFICANT AMOUNTS AND OVERALL THIS CHANGE WILL ACTUALLY IMPROVE VEGETATION OF RIPARIAN AREAS.

**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 , THERE WILL BE NO INCREASE IN THE AMOUNT OF WATER USED.

**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, NO BARRIERS WILL BE CREATED AND WILDLIFE HABITAT WILL BE ENHANCED WITH ADDITIONAL WATER SOURCES PROVIDED.

**Endangered Species:**

Adverse effects on any unique or endangered species?

NO, THERE WERE NO UNIQUE OR ENDANGERED SPECIES REPORTED TO BE IN THE AREA BY THE MT NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM.

**HUMAN ENVIRONMENT**

**Existing Land Use:**

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

NO, THERE WILL BE INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY CAUSED BY MORE EFFICIENT PASTURE ROTATION AND GRAZING PATTERNS

**Historical Significance:**

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

NO, NOTHING OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE REPORTED BY THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY WILL BE AFFECTED BY THIS PROJECT.

**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?

NO

**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:** NO IMPACTS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED. IF THE CHANGE APPLICATION WAS NOT APPROVED AND NO ACTION WERE TAKEN, UPLANDS WILL PROBABLY REMAIN IN GOOD CONDITION WITH RIPARIAN AREAS IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT. OTHER WATER SOURCES SUCH AS PITS AND RESERVOIRS COULD BE CONSTRUCTED BUT ARE NOT PRACTICABLE DUE TO SOIL CONDITIONS.

**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:

AN EA IS ADEQUATE FOR THIS ACTION. THE PROPOSED ACTION WILL NOT HAVE ANY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND AN EIS IS NOT REQUIRED.

PREPARED BY:

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TITLE: WATER RESOURCES SPECIALIST  
DATE: MARCH 30, 2000