

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.
43D-G(W)211521-00
2. **Applicant/Contact name and address:**
STEVE AND LINDA HIGDON
PO BOX 254
BOYD, MT 59013
3. **Water source name:** COW CREEK
4. **Location affected by action:** NWSESW, SEC 6, T5S, R22E, CARBON 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 A POINT OF DIVERSION TO THE EXISTING RIGHT. WATER DIVERTED FROM ROCK CREEK IN HIGHLINE DITCH WILL BE DUMPED IN TO COW CREEK WHERE IT WILL THEN BE DIVERTED AND USED TO IRRIGATE THE EXISTING PLACE OF USE. THE FLOW RATE IS 3.75 CFS.
6. **Agencies consulted during preparation of the environmental assessment:**
MT FWP, MT STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE, MT NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM.

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, THERE WILL BE LITTLE TO NO AFFECT ON ANY OF THE ABOVE.

Erosion:

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

YES, THERE MAY BE A SLIGHT INCREASE IN EROSION OR SILTATION IN COW CREEK ALTHOUGH IT WILL NOT BE SIGNIFICANT.

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 , 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, ACCORDING TO FWP BIOLOGISTS THERE WILL BE NO DETERIORATION OF FISH OR WILDLIFE HABITAT.

Endangered Species:

Adverse effects on any unique or endangered species?

NO, ACCORDING TO THE MONTANA NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM THERE ARE NO UNIQUE OR ENDANGERED SPECIES OF SPECIAL CONCERN IN THE AREA OF THE NEW POINT OF DIVERSION.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Existing Land Use:

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

YES, THIS WILL INCREASE THE PRODUCTIVITY AND PROFITABILITY OF THE EXISTING LAND USE FOR THE APPLICANT.

Historical Significance:

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

NO, THE STATE HISTORICAL PRESERVATION OFFICE REPORTED NO HISTORIC OR ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN THE AREA.

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, THE NEW DIVERSION IS ON PRIVATE LAND.

Other:

NO

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 THE WATER USE WOULD CONTINUE AS HISTORICALLY RECORDED.

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. THERE WILL BE NO SIGNIFICANT ALTERATIONS OR IMPACTS TO THE ENVIRONMENT CAUSED BY ISSUANCE OF THIS CHANGE APPLICATION.

PREPARED BY:

NAME: JAN LANGEL
TITLE: WATER RESOURCES SPECIALIST
DATE: [Automatic date code removed]