

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 PERMIT APPLICATION NO.
41J-Q111469-00
2. **Applicant/Contact name and address:**
D. H. BLATTNER & SONS, INC.
400 COUNTY RD 50
AVON, MN 56310-9676
3. **Water source name:** GROUNDWATER
4. **Location affected by action:** SE SE NE SEC 7, T17N, R03E, CASCADE CO.
approximately 15 miles east of Cascade
5. **Narrative summary of the proposed project and action to be taken:** THE DNRC SHALL ISSUE A WATER USE PERMIT IF AN APPLICANT PROVES THE CRITERIA IN 85-2-311, MCA ARE MET. THIS APPLICATION IS TO USE 1800 GPM UP TO 36.0 AC-FT ACRE-FEET FOR ROAD CONSTRUCTION ON SECONDARY ROUTE 330 SOUTH OF ULM. THE WATER WILL BE WITHDRAWN FROM A GROUNDWATER PIT LOCATED IN SE SE NE SEC 7, T17N, R03E, CASCADE COUNTY.
6. **Agencies consulted during preparation of the environmental assessment:**
Montana Department of Transportation

Reference Document: Categorical Exclusion issued by the Federal Highway Administration and the Montana Department of Transportation.

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 SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The soils at the point of diversion consist of alluvial sand & gravel. The pit was already used under a previous water right. The groundwater pit will be reclaimed once the construction project is complete. Given the nature of the soil, groundwater flows will not be interrupted when the pit is reclaimed.

Erosion:

Alteration of erosion or siltation patterns which modify stream beds or lake shores? **NO IMPACT**

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 SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The categorical exclusion identifies no endangered local plant species. The categorical exclusion also indicates that all areas affected by the construction will be seeded with desirable species that will quickly establish vegetative cover.

Air:

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

NO IMPACT

Air quality will likely be maintained by the use of water for dust control.

Water:

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

NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Short term affects on groundwater quality in a very limited area may occur when the groundwater pit is reclaimed.

Floodplain:

Changes in drainage patterns, course or magnitude of flood flows, or exposure of people/property to hazards (flood)? **NO IMPACT**

Wildlife Habitat/Migration:

Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat? Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of fish or wildlife? **NO IMPACT**

Endangered Species:

Adverse effects on any unique or endangered species?

NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The Categorical Exclusion identified the bald eagle and the peregrine falcon as threatened species in the area. The Categorical Exclusion referenced Les Reichett's Biological Resources Report which state that the project is "not likely to adversely affect" either species. The diversion of water from the groundwater pit will not increase the potential for impact.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Existing Land Use:

Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area? **NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

The access to and the point of diversion itself may temporarily interfere with grass production for grazing. This impact will be temporary and will end once the project is complete and the area is re-vegetated.

Historical Significance:

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

NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The Categorical Exclusion indicates that no adverse affect will occur to any of the sites identified.

Populace:

Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area? Alteration of social structure of community? **NO IMPACT**

Transportation:

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

NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

An increased traffic hazard my result from transportation of the water from the point of diversion to the place of use.

Safety:

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

NO IMPACT

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 IMPACT**

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 IMPACT**

Aesthetics:

Alteration of any scenic vista or recreation opportunity or creation of an aesthetically offensive site to the public? **NO IMPACT**

Other: **NO**

2. Secondary and cumulative impacts: MANY SECONDARY IMPACTS DUE TO THE ROAD CONSTRUCTION ARE POSSIBLE. THESE IMPACTS HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED IN THE CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION.
3. Reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative: NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED. THE PROJECT IS ALREADY IN PLACE AND HAS BEEN USED UNDER A PREVIOUS TEMPORARY PERMIT. IF THE USE OF THIS WATER WERE NOT APPROVED, THE ROAD CONSTRUCTION COULD NOT OCCUR . ALTERNATE SOURCES OF WATER ARE DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN BECAUSE OF THE SURFACE WATER CLOSURE IN THE UPPER MISSOURI BASIN.

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 IMPACTS, THEREFORE, NO EIS IS REQUIRED.**

PREPARED BY:

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DATE: [Automatic date code removed]