

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. 411-G(W)089642-00
2. **Applicant/Contact name and address:** Saddle Mountain Service Corp
919 Big Dipper Dr.
Clancy MT 59634
3. **Water source name:** Groundwater Well
4. **Location affected by action:** SESESE Sec. 14, Twp 09N, Rge 03W, JE Co.
5. **Narrative summary of the proposed project and action to be taken:** The DNRC shall issue an Authorization To Change to the applicant if the criteria in 85-2-402, MCA are met. The application proposes to change the point of diversion of the existing water right listed above because the production of the old well had diminished over time. A new well was drilled and tested with information concerning draw down and flow rate included with the application.

The application would transfer all of the flow rate (200 gpm) and volume (195 af) to the new well. The old well has had the pump removed and will be used as a monitoring well. The proposed new well would be incorporated into the existing system which supplies domestic water to approximately 132 lots in the Saddle Mountain Subdivision.
6. **Agencies consulted during preparation of the environmental assessment:**
Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP)

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?

This is an existing system for a subdivision developed in the 1970's. Any unique geologic features and/or archeological sites would have been discovered at that time. For this application there would be alteration of soil stability and geologic substructure during the construction of the pipeline from the new well to the existing pumphouse. An access road will be established. Electrical lines will be brought to the site. The impact would be temporary during construction.

Erosion:

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

No, there will be no alteration of stream beds or lake shores.

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?

MNHP indentified one plant species (Astragalus convallarius var convallarius or Lesser Rushy Milkvetch) of special concern in the entire Jefferson County area. The construction of the pipeline will disturb native grass. The area will be reclaimed with a special mixture of grass seed. The adverse affect on the vegetation will be temporary.

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?

Through aquifer tests the applicant has shown there is sufficient water at the proposed point of diversion in the amount requested on the application.

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?

This is a groundwater well near an existing subdivision the proposed use will not adversely impact wildlife habitat/migration.

Endangered Species:

Adverse effects on any unique or endangered species?

No, this is a groundwater well near a large subdivision in existence since the 1970's.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Existing Land Use:

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

No

Historical Significance:

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

The subdivision was started in the 1970's. Any destruction or alteration of significant impact would have occured at that time

Populace:

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

No, the subdivision is almost fully developed, with only 12 lots remaining to be sold. There will be little or no impact with the sale of the remaining lots.

Transportation:

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

The only impact will occur during the construction of the pipeline. This will be temporary.

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?

Only temporary during the construction of the pipeline. The area will be reclaimed.

Other:

None

2. Secondary and cumulative impacts: None identified

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

The authorization should be issued. There is little or no impact to the physical environment. There will be a postive impact to the human environment.

The no action alternative would deny the application and would not allow the Saddle Mountain Subdivision to provide a full service water system for the lot owners.

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 sufficient for this action. The impacts are not of significant levels to require an EIS

PREPARED BY:

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DATE: [Automatic date code removed]