

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.
43B-P107112-00
2. **Applicant/Contact name and address:**
STETSON TODD
HC 88 BOX 3615
BIG TIMBER MT 59011
3. **Water source name:** PETERSON GULCH
4. **Location affected by action:** GOVT LOT 1, NENE SECTION 3, T1S, R15E, SWEET
GRASS COUNTY
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 225 GPM UP TO 362.93 ACRE-FEET FOR
TWO FLOW THROUGH FISH AND WILDLIFE PONDS, 9 ACRES OF IRRIGATION, AND
STOCKWATER FOR 10 HORSES.
6. **Agencies consulted during preparation of the environmental assessment:**
Montana Natural Heritage Program
State Historical Preservation Office

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? **Although the ponds may increase the amount of moisture in the soils in the surrounding area, the impact should not be significant.**

Erosion:

Alteration of erosion or siltation patterns which modify stream beds or lake shores? **The presence of the ponds should prevent erosion that has normally occurred in the area by slowing down the flow in the drainage.**

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? **There may be a slight increase in the water temperature from the proposed fish and wildlife use, but the affect is not expected to be significant.**

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, this stream was not a fishery, as it is fed mainly by irrigation runoff.**

Endangered Species:

Adverse effects on any unique or endangered species? **The Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout and the Bald Eagle were identified by the Montana Natural Heritage Program as species of special concern in the area. The development and use of this proposed water right is not expected to have any adverse affect on these species.**

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Existing Land Use:

Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area? **The land use will change from being dryland pasture and rangeland to fish and wildlife habitat and a small amount of irrigation. The change in the use of this land should cause no significant adverse impact on the area.**

Historical Significance:

Destruction or alteration of a natural area of scientific or educational value or prehistoric or paleontological importance? **The State Historic Preservation Office identified two items of historic significance in the general area, but this proposed use should have no impact on the historic sites.**

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? **This proposed project is expected to enhance the aesthetics in the area.**

Other: NO

2. Secondary and cumulative impacts: **NONE**

3. Reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative: **The area could be left as is.**

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. THE APPLICATION WAS ALSO PUBLIC NOTICED AND NO OBJECTIONS WERE RECEIVED.

PREPARED BY:

NAME: MARTY VAN CLEAVE
TITLE: WATER RESOURCES SPECIALIST
DATE: [Automatic date code removed]