

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION
WATER RESOURCES DIVISION
WATER RIGHTS BUREAU

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

- Type of action:** Water use permit application no. 41I-110337-00
- Applicant/Contact name and address:**
Montana City School District #27
11 McClellan Creek Rd
Clancy, MT 59634-9620
- Water source name:** Groundwater well
- Location affected by action:** SWNW, Sec 13, Twp 09N, Rge 03W, Jefferson County
- Narrative summary of the proposed project and action to be taken:**
The applicant is requesting 230 gpm up to 41.35 acre-feet per year to service 555 pupils and staff and irrigate 11.10 acres of lawn. The place of use is the Montana City School located in the SWNW of Sec 13 and the SESENE of Sec 14, both in Twp 09N, Rge 03W, Jefferson County. The source of water is a 425' groundwater well drilled in 1999.
The DNRC shall issue a water use permit to the applicant if the criteria in 85-2-311, MCA are met.
- Agencies consulted during preparation of the environmental assessment:**
Montana Natural Heritage Program

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

- 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 project should increase the soil stability and the moisture content of the irrigated grounds.

Erosion:

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

No. This application is for groundwater.

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?

A query with the Montana Natural Heritage Program identified one plant species of special concern (*Astragalus convallarius* var *convallarius*) within the East Helena quad map area. 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) or the establishment or spread of noxious weeds is not likely to occur.

Air:

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

No deterioration of air quality, or adverse effects on vegetation due to increased air pollutants is likely to occur.

Water:

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

There will be an alteration of the quantity and distribution of the groundwater due to the well pumping 230 gpm up to 41.35 acre-feet per year. The impact should be slight. A well monitoring test done on another well 750' from this well showed a minimal drawdown in the 24-hour test period.

Floodplain:

Changes in drainage patterns, course or magnitude of flood flows, or exposure of people/property to hazards (flood)?

There should be no changes in drainage patterns, course or magnitude of flood flows, or exposure of people/property to hazards (flood).

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 project is for a groundwater well to be used at an established school and should not affect wildlife habitat or create a barrier to the migration of wildlife.

Endangered Species:

Adverse effects on any unique or endangered species?

No. There should be no adverse effects on any unique or endangered species.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Existing Land Use:

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

No. The land use remains the same. The well will service the Montana City school and grounds.

Historical Significance:

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

No. Any destruction or alteration of a natural area of scientific or educational value or prehistoric or paleontological importance would have occurred when the school area was first developed.

Populace:

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

No. This project should not alter the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area or the community social structure. However, the expansion and remodeling of the school, could attract more people to the area.

Transportation:

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

No. This project should not increase traffic hazards or effect existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods.

Safety:

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

No. This project should not create any health hazard or affect existing emergency response or evacuation plans.

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. This project should not have a significant impact on public services.

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. This project should not affect existing utilities.

Aesthetics:

Alteration of any scenic vista or recreation opportunity or creation of an aesthetically offensive site to the public?

The aesthetics should be improved due to the school being able to water more of the school grounds.

Other:

No other significant impacts identified.

2. Secondary and cumulative impacts: none

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

There are no reasonable alternatives to the proposed action. The water is needed to service the school. The no action alternative would result in the school not having sufficient water to supply the demand and may result in the school being closed.

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 level of action. The possible impacts from this project are not significant enough to warrant an EIS.

PREPARED BY:

NAME: Terry Scow

TITLE: Water Resources Specialist

DATE: [Automatic date code removed]