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. 76LJ-P111219-00

2. **Applicant/Contact name and address:**
Four Seasons Nursery, LLC
3240 Montana Hwy. 35
Kalispell, MT 59901

3. **Water source name:** GROUNDWATER WELL

4. **Location affected by action:** NWNWNW, SECTION 5, T28N, R20W, FLATHEAD 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 THE WATER IN A WELL. THIS WELL WAS DRILLED ON THE OWNERS PROPERTY USING STANDARD WELL DRILLING PRACTICES WITH MINIMAL DISTURBANCE TOT HE AREA. WELLS DRILLED IN THIS MANNER HAVE LITTLE TO NO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT. THIS EA CHECKLIST WILL ADDRESS THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS DUE TO THE LOCATION OF THE WELL. THE APPLICANT PROPOSES TO DIVERT WATER AT A RATE OF 500 GPM NOT TO EXCEED 196.16 ACRE-FEET PER YEAR FOR A COMMERCIAL TREE NURSERY (OFFICE, IRRIGATION, AND LAWN AND GARDEN).

6. **Agencies consulted during preparation of the environmental assessment:**
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE (SHPO)
NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM (NHP)

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?

THE EXISTING FARMLAND WILL BE USED AS A COMMERCIAL TREE NURSERY. THE TREES WILL PROVIDE SOME WIND PROTECTION FOR THE SURROUNDING FIELDS. THE PROPOSED PROJECT WILL INCREASE SOIL STABILITY AND MOISTURE CONTENT. A QUERY WITH SHPO RESULTED IN NO KNOWN HISTORICAL SITES

WITHIN THE DESIGNATED SEARCH LOCALE. BASED ON THE PREVIOUS LAND USE, IT IS NOT LIKELY THAT THE PROPOSED USE WILL IMPACT GEOLOGIC OR ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES.

Erosion:
Alteration of erosion or siltation patterns that modify streambeds or lake shores?

NO, THE PROJECT AREA DOES NOT COME INTO CONTACT WITH SURFACE WATER.

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?

THE PROPOSED USE WILL INTRODUCE A VARIETY OF SHRUBS AND TREES TO THE PROPERTY FOR COMMERCIAL USE. THE TREE NURSERY WILL BE WELL MAINTAINED. THERE WILL NOT BE AN ADVERSE AFFECT ON LOCAL VEGETATION DUE TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT.

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

NO, THE ADDITION OF PLANTS ULTIMATELY HELPS TO PURIFY THE AIR.

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

SURFACE WATER WILL NOT BE ALTERED. GROUNDWATER WILL BE ALTERED BY 500 GPM FOR SEVEN MONTHS EVERY YEAR. THE AMOUNT IS NEGLIGIBLE WITH RESPECT TO THE AQUIFER VOLUME.

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, THE FARMLAND WILL NOW BE A COMMERCIAL TREE FARM. THIS WILL NOT CREATE A BARRIER FOR WILDLIFE MIGRATION. FISH HABITAT WILL NOT BE IMPACTED.

Endangered Species:
Adverse effects on any unique or endangered species?

NO, A QUERY WITH NHP RESULTED IN SEVERAL PLANT AND ANIMAL SPECIES OF SPECIAL CONCERN. HOWEVER, ALL WERE LOCATED ON McWENNEGAR SLOUGH, EGAN SLOUGH, LYBECK'S DIKE, OR FLATHEAD RIVER. THESE LOCATIONS ARE AT LEAST ONE MILE FROM THE PROPOSED WELL LOCATION. THE PROPOSED PROJECT WILL NOT ADVERSELY EFFECT 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, IF THERE IS ANY IMPACT, THE PRODUCTIVITY AND PROFITABILITY OF THE LAND WILL BE ENHANCED.

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

NO IMPACT

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 IMPACT

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?

YES, THE PROPOSED PROJECT WILL NEED A WATER SUPPLY AND A SEPTIC SYSTEM. THIS EA IS TO PERMIT THE APPLICANT'S WATER SUPPLY.

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

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2. Secondary and cumulative impacts: NONE

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

1) ISSUE THE PERMIT. THERE IS A NET POSITIVE IMPACT TO THE PHYSICAL AND CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT.
2) DENY THE PERMIT DUE TO UNKNOWN SECONDARY IMPACTS TO THE ENVIRONMENT. THE APPLICANT'S WILL NEED TO FIND A SECONDARY SOURCE OF WATER OR DECREASE THEIR NEEDS.

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. THE IMPACTS ARE NOT SIGNIFICANT ENOUGH TO REQURE AN EIS.

PREPARED BY:

NAME: CRISTY CARTER
TITLE: WATER RESOURCES SPECIALIST
DATE: [Automatic date code removed]