

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-P109512-00
2. **Applicant/Contact name and address:**  
Reno Baldwin  
P.O. Box 270  
West Glacier, MT 59936
3. **Water source name:** GROUNDWATER WELL
4. **Location affected by action:** NWSWNW, SECTION 2, T31N, R19W, 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 OBTAIN THE LEGAL RIGHT TO USE THE WATER IN A WELL. THIS WELL WAS DRILLED ON THE OWNERS PROPERTY USING STANDARD WELL DRILLING PRACTICES WITH MINIMAL DISTURBANCE TO THE AREA. WELLS DRILLED IN THIS MANNER HAVE LITTLE TO NO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT. THIS EA CHECKLIST WILL ADDRESS THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS TO THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT DUE TO THE LOCATION OF THE WELL AND WILL ADDRESS THE CULTURAL IMPACTS TO THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. THE APPLICANT INTENDS TO USE 10 GPM UP TO 10 ACRE-FEET FOR COMMERCIAL IRRIGATION AND A SMALL AESTHETICS POND AT A COMMERCIAL TOURIST SITE.
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?

A QUERY WITH SHPO SHOWED A HISTORIC TRASH DUMP LOCATED IN SECTION 2, T31N, R19W. SHPO'S CULTURAL RECORDS MANAGER SAID THAT IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THIS UNDERTAKING WILL IMPACT CULTURAL PROPERTIES IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT AREA. THE WELLS HAVE BEEN IN USE FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS. THE PROPOSED USE WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT SOIL QUALITY, GEOLOGIC FEATURES, OR ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES.

**Erosion:**

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

NO, THE PROJECT AREA DOES NOT BORDER SURFACE WATER. THEREFORE, THERE WILL BE NO ADVERSE IMPACTS ON STREAMBEDS 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?

A QUERY WITH NHP LISTED SEVERAL PLANT SPECIES OF SPECIAL CONCERN LOCATED WITHIN NORTHWESTERN MONTANA. AN ONSITE VISIT TO THE PROJECT AREA SHOWED THE PROPERTY TO BE FULLY DEVELOPED. NO THREATENED VEGETATION OR NOXIOUS WEEDS WERE IDENTIFIED. THE PROPOSED WATER RIGHT WILL NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE AFFECT ON VEGETATION.

**Air:**

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

NO, THERE WILL NOT BE AN INCREASE IN AIR POLLUTANTS.

**Water:**

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

GROUNDWATER WILL BE PUMPED AT A RATE OF 10 GPM. THE TOTAL VOLUME OF WATER USED WILL NOT EXCEED 10 ACRE-FEET PER YEAR. THIS IS A SMALL AMOUNT OF WATER RELATIVE TO THE AMOUNT OF WATER IN THE AQUIFER. THE PROPOSED WATER USE WILL NOT AFFECT THE AQUIFER OR SURFACE WATER.

**Floodplain:**

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

NO, THE PROJECT LOCATION IS NOT ON A FLOODPLAIN.

**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 SITE IS NOT LOCATED NEAR FISH HABITAT. THE PROPERTY BORDERS HIGHWAY 2 AND DOES NOT INTERFERE WITH WILDLIFE MIGRATION OR HABITAT. THE APPLICANT MENTIONED THAT A HERD OF SIX ELK HAD BEEN WALKING THROUGH THE PROPERTY IN THE EARLY MORNINGS THIS SPRING. THE PROPOSED USE WILL NOT AFFECT WILDLIFE HABITAT OR MIGRATION.

**Endangered Species:**

Adverse effects on any unique or endangered species?

NO, THE SYSTEM HAS BEEN IN PLACE FOR APPROXIMATELY 10 YEARS AND IS LOCATED ALONG US HIGHWAY 2. THE LOCATION IS IN GRIZZLY HABITAT, BUT IT IS RARE TO SEE

THEM THERE ALONG THE HIGHWAY. THE PROPOSED USE WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT ENDANGERED SPECIES.

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

### **Existing Land Use:**

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

THE PROPOSED USE WILL INCREASE THE PRODUCTIVITY AND PROFITABILITY OF THE PROPERTY. THE EXISTING LAND USE WILL NOT BE ALTERED.

### **Historical Significance:**

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

NO, SHPO INDICATED THAT THE ISSUING OF THIS WATER RIGHT WOULD NOT HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE CULTURAL PROPERTIES IN THE PROJECT AREA.

### **Populace:**

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

THE PROJECT AREA IS A WELL-ESTABLISHED EXISTING TOURIST STOP NEAR THE ENTRANCE TO GLACIER NATIONAL PARK. THE ISSUING OF THE WATER RIGHT WILL NOT ALTER THE POPULATION DENSITY OR THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE COMMUNITY.

### **Transportation:**

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

THE SITE IS LOCATED ALONG US HIGHWAY 2. THERE IS NOT A TURNOUT LANE FOR TRAFFIC. THE PROPOSED USE HAS BEEN IN EXISTENCE FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS, THUS WILL NOT AFFECT TRANSPORTATION.

### **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, THE SITE IS FULLY EQUIPPED WITH 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, THE SITE IS FULLY EQUIPPED WITH ALL UTILITIES NEEDED.

**Aesthetics:**

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

NO, THE SITE IS NICELY LANDSCAPED AND IS AESTHETICALLY PLEASING.

**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 LONG TERM POSITIVE IMPACT TO THE HUMAN AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS.  
2) REJECT THE APPLICATION DUE TO UNKNOWN LONG-TERM CUMULATIVE IMPACTS TO THE HUMAN OR PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. THE APPLICANT WILL NOT HAVE A RIGHT TO USE HIS WATER OR WILL NEED TO DECREASE THE AMOUNT USED OR ACRES IRRIGATED.

**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. NO IMPACTS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED, THEREFORE AN EIS IS NOT REQUIRED.

PREPARED BY:

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DATE: [Automatic date code removed]