

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-P113040-00
2. **Applicant/Contact name and address:**  
WILLIAM D. & TARA L. OPP  
2347 MIDDLE ROAD  
COLUMBIA FALLS, MT 59912
3. **Water source name:** GROUNDWATER WELL
4. **Location affected by action:** SWSWSW, SECTION 4, T29N, 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 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. THIS EA CHECKLIST WILL ADDRESS THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS TO THE ENVIRONMENT DUE TO THE LOCATION OF THE WELL. THE APPLICANT PROPOSES TO DIVERT WATER AT A RATE OF 70 GPM UP TO 50.63 ACRE-FEET PER YEAR FOR DOMESTIC, SHOP, IRRIGATION, AND STOCK USES.
6. **Agencies consulted during preparation of the environmental assessment:**  
NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM (NHP)  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE (SHPO)

**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 RESULTED IN NO KNOWN CULTURAL RESOURCES IN THE PROJECT AREA. SOIL MOISTURE WILL INCREASE ON THE IRRIGATED LAND. THE PROPOSED PROJECT WILL NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON SOILS OF GEOLOGIC FEATURES.

**Erosion:**

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

NO, THIS PROJECT IS NOT LOCATED NEAR A STREAM OR LAKE.

**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 PROPERTY WILL BE IRRIGATED PASTURE AND LAWN. THE PROPOSED USE WILL NOT ESTABLISH OR SPREAD NOXIOUS WEEDS.

**Air:**

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

NO AFFECT

**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 AFFECTED. THE SOURCE OF WATER IS IN THE DEEP ARTESIAN AQUIFER. ANY SPRAY USED ON THE CROP COULD PENETRATE THE GROUND SURFACE SEVERAL INCHES, BUT WOULD NOT REACH THE SOURCE AQUIFER.

**Floodplain:**

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

NO AFFECT

**Wildlife Habitat/Migration:**

Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat? Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of fish or wildlife?

A QUERY WITH NHP RESULTED IN SEVERAL WILDLIFE SPECIES THAT FREQUENT THE GENERAL LOCATION OF THE PROJECT. THERE ARE THREE SPECIES OF SPECIAL CONCERN: LYNX, GRIZZLY BEAR, AND BLUE HERON. THE SPECIES LISTED ARE NOT NECESSARILY LOCATED ON THE APPLICANT'S PROPERTY. THE PROPOSED PROJECT WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT WILDLIFE HABITAT OR MIGRATION.

**Endangered Species:**

Adverse effects on any unique or endangered species?

SEE ABOVE RESPONSE. THE PROPOSED USE WILL NOT ADVERSELY IMPACT UNIQUE/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 PRODUCTIVITY AND PROFITABILITY OF THE PROPERTY WILL BE INCREASED.

### **Historical Significance:**

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

A QUERY WITH SHPO RESULTED IN NO KNOWN CULTURAL RESOURCES IN THE PROJECT LOCATION. THE PROPOSED PROJECT WILL NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE 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 POPULATION IN THE AREA WILL INCREASE BY ONE HOUSEHOLD.

### **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?

NO

**Other:**

NO

---

**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 ENVIRONMENT AND LITTLE TO NO IMPACT TO THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT.  
2) REJECT THE APPLICATION DUE TO UNKNOWN LONG TERM CUMULATIVE IMPACTS TO THE HUMAN OR PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT.

**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:

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