

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW OF FISH INTRODUCTIONS
PRIVATE POND APPLICATION**

Name and address of applicant Hoyt Jones
P.O. Box 760
Victor, MT 59875

Has the pond been approved for a private pond permit? Yes--in 1994
to previous owner

Location:

County Ravalli Township 7N Range 20W Section 7 SE1/4

Name of the drainage where the pond would be located Bitterroot
River

Name(s) of fish species proposed for introduction
Rainbow Trout

Is this species legally present in the drainage? Yes--
widespread

Species of special concern present in the drainage yes

RISKS:

Potential for impacts on genetic structure of existing fish
populations? None___ Minor X Major___
Comments:

NOTE: The pond has no inlet or outlet, so fish could not enter or
exit the pond. The possibility that fish could escape and have any
impact on any other species is very small.

Impacts to any life stage of existing fish populations due to
competition and/or predation? None___ Minor x Major___
Comments:

See above

Impacts to other forms of aquatic life that may be caused by this
introduction? None___ Minor x Major___
Comments:
See above

Potential for the proposed new species to reproduce in this location? None___ Minor_x Major
Comments:

See above

If necessary, would it be feasible to remove this species after it has been stocked?
yes

Would this introduction result in impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?

Not likely. This pond is very close to river, which has well-established population of rainbow trout. There are, however, numerous such ponds in the Bitterroot Valley, and the cumulative effects are unknown.

Describe reasonable and prudent alternatives to this action, if any (including no action).

The proposal to renew this private fish pond license includes the stocking of fish. The application is for rainbow trout. Any fish that escapes could potentially interbreed with resident rainbows in the River, which were themselves stocked in previous years.

Alternatives:

1. Stock different species. Three potential species are:
Brook trout - not presently allowed by MFWP policy.
Brown trout - also exist in Bitterroot River.
Westslope cutthroat trout - The westslope cutthroat that are commercially available do not originate from the Bitterroot and have a different genetic makeup than bitterroot fish, so **would not be an advisable choice**.
2. No action. The Bitterroot River already has a good population of Rainbow trout. There is no reason to believe that the stocking of rainbows in this pond would have any adverse impact on the river population, so a no action alternative would serve no purpose.

Describe and evaluate mitigation, stipulations, or other control measures enforceable by the agency, if any.

Current laws regarding the transfer of live fish from one water body to another govern the legality of movement of fish planted in this pond to other waters. This movement of fish to other waters would be enforceable under this regulation.

List any other agencies or individuals that may be affected by the proposed introduction:

none

List all agencies and individuals who have been notified of this proposed introduction:

none

Based on this evaluation, is an EIS required? Yes/No If no, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for the proposed action.

No. The proposed action occurs on private lands. This issue can be handled at the EA level

EA prepared by Larry Javorsky—acting Fisheries Biologist 03/30/00

Comments will be accepted until April 30, 2000

Comments should be sent to: Larry Javorsky
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