

See above. Also, the ditch likely goes dry during winter months, which would make it difficult for all life stages to occur in the ditch.

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—highly unlikely)

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. 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 "trout".

Alternatives would include which species to stock:

Four (4) potential trout species are:

1. Rainbow trout - already widespread in the drainage thanks to earlier stocking efforts.
2. Brook trout - not presently allowed by MFWP policy.
3. Brown trout - also exist in Bitterroot River drainage, especially in river and waters on the valley floor.
4. 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 and Brown trout. There is no reason to believe that the stocking of rainbows and browns in this pond would have any adverse impact on the river population, as well as waters on the valley floor, 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 06/14/00

Comments will be accepted until July 14, 2000

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