

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW OF FISH INTRODUCTION
PRIVATE FISH POND**

Name and address of applicant: Robert L. Schoonover
Box 544
Fort Benton, MT 59442

Is approval of private pond permit application recommended? Yes. This pond was stocked previously by FWP with rainbow trout, brook trout, largemouth bass, and white crappie. Landowner now wants permit to stock privately.

Location of pond:

County: Choteau

Legal description: T26N R10E Sec 7, NW ¼ **POND #1**

Name of the drainage where the pond would be located:

Pond is located on Dry Fork Coulee, which drains intermittently (normally dry) to the Marias River approximately 2 miles upstream from Loma, MT.

Does pond have legal water rights? (describe) Yes, 1900 priority date for stockwater.

Fish species proposed for introduction:

Rainbow trout, brook trout, brown trout, cutthroat trout, largemouth bass, white crappie, black crappie, bluegill.

Is this species legally present in the drainage? All species currently exist or have been stocked in the past in the Marias drainage. Bluegill were stocked in 15-20 ponds in the drainage in the 1940's and 1950's. Largemouth bass and white crappie were stocked by FWP in this pond during 1989-1994.

Species of Special Concern present in the drainage:

Sauger are present in the Marias River. Pallid sturgeon may occasionally be present in the lower Marias. Sicklefin and sturgeon chub may also occasionally be found in the lower Marias River.

RISKS:

Potential for impacts on genetic structure of existing fish populations: None Minor Major

Comments: FWP stocked largemouth bass and crappie during 1989-1994 in this pond and no adverse effects were noted in downstream areas.

Impacts to any life stage of existing fish populations due to competition and/or predation?

None Minor Major

Comments: These species are already present in drainage and no adverse effects have been observed.

Impacts to other forms of aquatic life that may be caused by this introduction? None Minor Major

Comments: Fish will consume some invertebrates in pond.

Potential for the proposed new species to reproduce in this location: None Minor Major

Comments: Bass, crappie and bluegill could reproduce. Pond dries up occasionally, resulting in total fish eradication.

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? No.

Describe reasonable and prudent alternatives to this action, if any (including no action). Do not stock.

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

Species restrictions.

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. Impacts expected to be very minor.

EA prepared by: Steve Leathe

Date: March 29, 2004