

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Water Resources Division
Water Rights Bureau

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
For Routine Actions with Limited Environmental Impact

Part I. Proposed Action Description

1. *Applicant/Contact name and address:* Juniper Bay, LLC, PO Box 13795, Reno NV 89507
2. *Type of action:* Application for Beneficial Water Use Permit 30025680-76LJ
3. *Water source name:* Flathead Lake
4. *Location affected by action:* NW of section 35, T 27N, R 21W aka the E2 of Government Lot 1.
5. *Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits:*
The applicants propose to pump water from Flathead Lake at a rate of 25 gpm up to an annual volume of 7.23 acre-feet for lawn & garden irrigation on 3 acres. The place of use for this action is on Tracts 7C, 7E and 7J of Government Lot 1.
6. *Agencies consulted during preparation of the Environmental Assessment:*
(include agencies with overlapping jurisdiction) MT DEQ, Flathead County Planning & Zoning office, MT Natural Heritage Program, the MT Historical Society and the MT DFW& P.

Part II. Environmental Review

1. Environmental Impact Checklist:

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

WATER QUANTITY, QUALITY AND DISTRIBUTION

Water quantity - Assess whether the source of supply is identified as a chronically or periodically dewatered stream by DFWP. Assess whether the proposed use will worsen the already dewatered condition.

Determination: Flathead Lake is no identified as being dewatered.

Water quality - Assess whether the stream is listed as water quality impaired or threatened by DEQ, and whether the proposed project will affect water quality.

Determination: Due to the volume of the source, no additional water quality impairment is anticipated as a result of this action. These condos will connect to the Lakeside Sewer District lines for their septic needs.

Groundwater - *Assess if the proposed project impacts ground water quality or supply. If this is a groundwater appropriation, assess if it could impact adjacent surface water flows.*

Determination: NA

DIVERSION WORKS - *Assess whether the means of diversion, construction and operation of the appropriation works of the proposed project will impact any of the following: channel impacts, flow modifications, barriers, riparian areas, dams, well construction.*

Determination: A 1 hp electric pump will be used to push water through a 1 ¼” line from the lake to the proposed irrigation system.

UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

Endangered and threatened species - *Assess whether the proposed project will impact any threatened or endangered fish, wildlife, plants or aquatic species or any “species of special concern,” or create a barrier to the migration or movement of fish or wildlife. For groundwater, assess whether the proposed project, including impacts on adjacent surface flows, would impact any threatened or endangered species or “species of special concern.”*

Determination: An old Bald Eagle nesting site is located within a mile of this action, but the site has not been active since 1999. No other species of special concern should be harmed or affected by this action.

Wetlands - *Consult and assess whether the apparent wetland is a functional wetland (according to COE definitions), and whether the wetland resource would be impacted.*

Determination: NA

Ponds - *For ponds, consult and assess whether existing wildlife, waterfowl, or fisheries resources would be impacted.*

Determination: NA

GEOLOGY/SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE - *Assess whether there will be degradation of soil quality, alteration of soil stability, or moisture content. Assess whether the soils are heavy in salts that could cause saline seep.*

Determination: No changes are anticipated nor is there evidence of saline seep in this area.

VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY/NOXIOUS WEEDS - *Assess impacts to existing vegetative cover. Assess whether the proposed project would result in the establishment or spread of noxious weeds.*

Determination: Conditions to vegetative cover will improve with the installation of a controlled irrigation system. The developer is responsible to control noxious weeds on the property.

AIR QUALITY - *Assess whether there will be a deterioration of air quality or adverse effects on vegetation due to increased air pollutants.*

Determination: NA

HISTORICAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES - *Assess whether there will be degradation of unique archeological or historical sites in the vicinity of the proposed project.*

Determination: No undisturbed historic sites were identified on this location.

DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AND ENERGY - *Assess any other impacts on environmental resources of land, water, and energy not already addressed.*

Determination: None were identified.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS - *Assess whether the proposed project is inconsistent with any locally adopted environmental plans and goals.*

Determination: The developer is working with the Flathead County Planning and Zoning office on this action. The developer must satisfy all county requirements before this project is approved and allowed to be completed.

ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES - *Assess whether the proposed project will impact access to or the quality of recreational and wilderness activities.*

Determination: NA

HUMAN HEALTH - *Assess whether the proposed project impacts on human health.*

Determination: No impacts anticipated.

PRIVATE PROPERTY - *Assess whether there are any government regulatory impacts on private property rights.*

*Yes*___ *No*X*.* *If yes, analyze any alternatives considered that could reduce, minimize, or eliminate the regulation of private property rights.*

Determination:

OTHER HUMAN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES - For routine actions of limited environmental impact, the following may be addressed in a checklist fashion.

Impacts on:

- (a) Cultural uniqueness and diversity? Possible changes
 - (b) Local and state tax base and tax revenues? Positive changes due to tax revenues.
 - (c) Existing land uses? The lawn and garden areas will remain vegetated. .
 - (d) Quantity and distribution of employment? NA
 - (e) Distribution and density of population and housing? The 27 condo units associated to this project will cause changes in population numbers once build out is complete.
 - (f) Demands for government services? Slight increases.
 - (g) Industrial and commercial activity? NA
 - (h) Utilities? Slight increases in demand.
 - (i) Transportation? Traffic in the area will increase.
 - (j) Safety? Traffic safety will change with occupancy of the condos.
 - (k) Other appropriate social and economic circumstances? None identified.
2. ***Secondary and cumulative impacts on the physical environment and human population:*** No secondary or cumulative impacts were identified as a result of this action.
3. ***Describe any mitigation/stipulation measures:*** None were justified at the time.
4. ***Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative, if an alternative is reasonably available and prudent to consider:*** Other than the no action alternative, the only other alternative considered would be for the applicants to drill wells to provide water to this project. Due to existing septic drain fields on the lots, the applicants would have to obtain an easement to neighboring property to drill the well far enough away from any pre-existing septic systems. This alternative would be more costly than the preferred.

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: Because no significant or cumulative impacts were identified as a result of this water system portion of this action, the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for the action.

Name of person responsible for preparation of EA:

Name: Wes McAlpin

Title: Water Resources Specialist

Date: [Automatic date code removed]