

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
For Routine Actions with Limited Environmental Impact

Part I. Proposed Action Description

1. *Applicant/Contact name and address:* Ray L. & Juanita F. Hart, 45 Brookside Way, Missoula MT 59802
2. *Type of action:* Application for Beneficial Water User Permit-30028023-76LJ
3. *Water source name:* Groundwater from a Developed Spring
4. *Location affected by action:* SW NW and NE SW, Section 13, T 36N, R 22W, Flathead County.
5. *Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits:*
The applicants propose to develop a spring on USFS property and pipe the water to their project in the N2 of the SW quarter of section 13. Water will be used for domestic purposes in up to 4 cabins/homes, for lawn & garden irrigation on 3.52 acres and for evaporation mitigation for their pond.
6. *Agencies consulted during preparation of the Environmental Assessment:*
(include agencies with overlapping jurisdiction) MT DEQ, MT Natrual Heritage Program, MT DFW & P webpage and the MT Historical Society.

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: No anticipated impacts.

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: NA

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: This source is being developed to mitigate impacts to a UT to the North Fork of the Flathead River locally known as Esther Creek.

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: The applicant will need to obtain a special use permit from the USFS to develop the spring and pipe the water to their property.

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: Many species of special concern utilize this area as habitat. This project will create no migration barriers.

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: The applicant will help maintain a full pool in the applicants pond.

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 anticipated impacts.

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: The applicants will be responsibility to control all weeds.

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 historical sites were located on this project site.

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 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: This project is consistent with other like developments in this area

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: NA

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? None

(b) Local and state tax base and tax revenues? Positive increase in revenues due to development.

- (c) Existing land uses? Slight changes.
- (d) Quantity and distribution of employment? None
- (e) Distribution and density of population and housing? Slight seasonal changes.
- (f) Demands for government services? Slight
- (g) Industrial and commercial activity? None
- (h) Utilities? None
- (i) Transportation? Slight increases in traffic.
- (j) Safety? None
- (k) Other appropriate social and economic circumstances? None

2. ***Secondary and cumulative impacts on the physical environment and human population:*** No secondary or cumulative impacts are anticipated as a direct result of this action.
3. ***Describe any mitigation/stipulation measures:*** None are justified at this 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:*** The applicants could drill a well to provide water for their needs, but the pump would probably be powered by a generator fueled by fossil fuels since no power line runs to this area. Consumption of fossil fuels would create more environmental impacts than this alternative.

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 secondary or cumulative impacts were identified in the EA as a result of this action, the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this action.

Name of person responsible for preparation of EA:

Name: Wes McAlpin
Title: Water Resources Specialist
Date: June 25, 2007