ADOPTION OF EXISTING EINVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (EA/EIS)

Part I. Proposed Action Description

Applicant/Contact Name & Address: City of Great Falls
P.O. Box 5021
Great Falls, MT 59403

Contact: David Schmidt
Water Right Solutions, Inc.
303 Clarke St.
Helena, MT 59601

Type of Action: Application to Change a Water Right 41K - 30047486

Location Affected by Action: 1) NW Section 14, T21N R5E, Cascade County
(up to 4 new additional points of diversion)

Narrative Summary of Proposed Action:

The Applicant proposes to add up to 4 new points of diversion for the City of Great Falls Water Reservation 41K – 71890. The Applicant requests 896.3 GPM up to 1,072 AF per year. The water will be diverted by hydraulically connected shallow ground water wells located adjacent to the Missouri River. Water will be used for the Highwood Generating Station, a 120 MW natural gas-fired plant proposed by the Southern Montana Electric Generation and Transmission Cooperative. The original Highwood Generating Station was proposed as a coal-fired facility and requested 3200 GPM up to 5161 AF per year. These plans have since been modified in favor of a natural gas-fired plant. The place of use for the proposed plant site will not change. The diversion means will change to hydraulically connected ground water wells, which are proposed to be less obtrusive to aquatic life in the Missouri River.

Part II. Existing Environmental Review Information

Title: Final Environmental Impact Statement – Highwood Generating Station

Publication Date: January 2007
Lead Agency: MT Dept. of Environmental Quality /
US Dept. of Agriculture - Rural Utility Service
Location Where Interested Parties Can View or Obtain the Document: MT Dept. of Environmental Quality, Helena MT

Part III. Criteria for Adopting Existing Environmental Review

☒Yes ☐No Does the existing environmental review cover an action paralleling or closely related to the proposed action?
☒Yes ☐No Is the information in the existing environmental review accurate and clearly presented?
☒Yes ☐No Is the information in the existing environmental review applicable to the action being considered?
☒Yes ☐No Were all appropriate Agencies consulted during preparation of the existing environmental review?
☒Yes ☐No Were alternatives to the proposed action evaluated as part of the existing environmental review effort?
☒Yes ☐No Have all of the impacts of the proposed action been accurately identified as part of the existing environmental review?
☒Yes ☐No If the existing environmental review identifies any significant impacts as a result of the proposed action, will they be mitigated below the level of significance?

Part IV. Conclusion

If the answers to ALL of the questions listed above are “Yes”, the existing environmental review can be considered sufficient to satisfy DNRC’s MEPA review responsibilities.

Name: Douglas D. Mann
Title: DNRC Water Resources – Lewistown Regional Office
Date: 10/22/2010