EA Form R 1/2007

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:
Timothy P Donovan
2723 Grassland Drive
Missoula, MT 59808-5687

2. Type of action: Surface Water Application for Beneficial Water Use Permit 76M 30163353

3. Water source name: Groundwater

4. Location affected by project: S2SWSE Sec. 11 T13N R20W, Missoula County

5. Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits: The Applicant proposes to divert up to 11.45 AF of water at 70 GPM from a well located in the SWSWSE Sec. 11, T13N, R20W for the irrigation of 4.75 acres. The DNRC shall issue a water use permit if an applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-311 MCA are met.

6. Agencies consulted during preparation of the Environmental Assessment:
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (DFWP)
Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
Montana Natural Heritage Program Species of Concern Report
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Wetlands Inventory
U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS) Web Soil Survey

Part II. Environmental Review

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.*

N/A – Groundwater source

Determination: No significant impact

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.*

N/A – Groundwater source

Determination: No significant impact

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.*

The proposed appropriation is for 11.45 AF, which is a fraction of the groundwater flux in this location (4,788 AF/year). No impacts to groundwater quality are anticipated.

The Department determined in its technical analysis of the application that the proposed diversion is hydraulically connected to the Clark Fork River but not hydraulically connected to Grant Creek. Depletions of 9.2 AF will accrue in the Clark Fork River beginning at the western boundary of the NENE Sec. 23, T13N, R20W.

Determination: No significant impact

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.*

Using the Cooper-Jacob (1946) solution, an aquifer transmissivity (T) value of 162,807 ft^2/day (regional value), specific yield of 0.1 (Lohman, 1972), and normalized pump schedule using the requested diverted volume, the model predicted the 0.01-foot drawdown contour to occur 585 ft from the Applicant's well. No significant impact is anticipated to future well construction.

Determination: No significant impact

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."*

The Montana Natural Heritage Program website was reviewed to determine if there are any "threatened" or "endangered" fish, wildlife, plants, or aquatic species that could potentially be impacted by this project. "Species of special concern" were also included in this search.

According to the Montana Natural Heritage Program, 13 animal species of concern and 1 plant species of concern may be found in the area of potential impact. Two of these species are listed as "threatened" by the USFWS in this area: the Grizzly Bear *(Ursus arctos)* and the Bull Trout *(Salvelinus confluentus)*.

Animal species of concern include:
Grizzly Bear *(Ursus arctos)*
Brewer's Sparrow *(Spipzella breweri)*
Cassin's Finch *(Haemorhous cassinii)*
Evening Grosbeak *(Coccothraustes vespertinus)*
Great Blue Heron *(Ardea herodias)*
Lewis's Woodpecker *(Melanerpes lewis)*
Pacific Wren *(Troglodytes pacificus)*
Pileated Woodpecker *(Dryocopus pileatus)*
Varied Thrush *(Ixoreus naevius)*
Veery *(Catharus fuscescens)*
Bull Trout *(Salvelinus confluentus)*
Westslope Cutthroat Trout *(Oncorhynchus lewisi)*
Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bee *(Bombus suckleyi)*

Plant species of concern include:
Stalk-leaved Monkeyflower *(Mimulus ampliatus)*

The construction of a supply well is not anticipated to cause any adverse impact on these species, and the depletions to the Clark Fork River from the proposed appropriation are too minor to create a noticeable effect on the Clark Fork River.

Determination: No significant impact

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

No wetlands were identified within the project area.

Determination: No significant impact

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

No ponds exist within the project area.

Determination: No significant impact

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.*

No degradation of soil quality or alteration of soil stability or moisture content is anticipated. Soils are nonsaline and have a low risk of surface salinization.

Determination: No significant impact

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.*

No establishment or spread of noxious weeds or impacts to vegetative cover are expected.

Determination: No significant impact

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

No deterioration of air quality or adverse air quality impacts from increased air pollutants are expected due to this project.

Determination: No significant impact

HISTORICAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES **-** *Assess whether there will be degradation of unique archeological or historical sites in the vicinity of the proposed project if it is on State or Federal Lands. If it is not on State or Federal Lands simply state NA-project not located on State or Federal Lands.*

Determination: N/A – Project not located on State or Federal Lands

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

No additional impacts to land, water, or energy are anticipated.

Determination: No significant impact

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

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

This project does not violate any known locally adopted environmental plans or regulations.

Determination: No significant impact

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.*

The proposed project will not inhibit, alter, or impair access to present recreational opportunities in the area. The project is not expected to create any significant pollution, noise, or traffic congestion in the area that may alter the quality of recreational opportunities. The proposed place of use and diversion do not exist on land designated as wilderness.

Determination: No significant impact

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

No impacts on human health are anticipated as a result of this project.

Determination: No significant impact

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: No significant impact

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 identified

(*b)* *Local and state tax base and tax revenues?* None identified

(c) *Existing land uses?* None identified

(*d)* *Quantity and distribution of employment?* None identified

(e) *Distribution and density of population and housing?* None identified

(f) *Demands for government services?* None identified

(g) *Industrial and commercial activity?* None identified

(h) *Utilities?* None identified

(i) *Transportation?* None identified

(j) *Safety?* None identified

(k) *Other appropriate social and economic circumstances?* None identified

2. ***Secondary and cumulative impacts on the physical environment and human population:***

Secondary Impacts: None identified

Cumulative Impacts: None identified

3. ***Describe any mitigation/stipulation measures:*** None

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:*** None identified

PART III. Conclusion

1. ***Preferred Alternative***
Issue a water use permit if the Applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-311 MCA are met.

2 ***Comments and Responses***
None

3. ***Finding:***
Yes___ No_X_ Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required?

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action:

No significant environmental impacts were identified as a result of the proposal.

Name of person(s) responsible for preparation of EA:
Name: Benjamin Thomas
Title: Water Conservation Specialist
Date: 3/12/2025