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

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
For Routine Actions with Limited Environmental Impact

Note: Instructions to DNRC staff for preparing this EA can be found at:
http://www.dnrc.state.mt.us/eis_ea.html

Part I. Proposed Action Description

1. *Applicant/Contact name and address*: Montana Aviation Research Company
PO Box 831
Glasgow, MT 59230

2. *Type of action*: Application to Change a Water Right No. 40S-30104561

3. *Water source name*: Missouri River

4. *Location affected by project*: NWSENW, Section 26, T27N, R41E, Valley County

5. *Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits*: This application is to temporarily change the place on an existing municipal water right (40S-171767-00). The point of diversion is located in the NWSENW, Section 26, T27N, R41E, Valley County. The proposed new place of use is a portion of the Dry Prairie Rural Water Authority's service area (Area B) located north and west of the City of Glasgow and north of the Milk River. The water under this proposed change will be temporarily used until such time as the water treatment plant for the Fort Peck Reservation/Dry Prairie Rural Water system in Wolf Point is completed and delivering water to this portion of the Dry Prairie service area. The applicant benefits by being able to sell a portion of their water on a temporary basis to Dry Prairie Rural Water Authority. Dry Prairie Rural Water Authority benefits by being able to temporarily supply water users in a portion of their service area before the treatment plant is Wolf Point is completed.

   The DNRC shall issue a change authorization if an applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-402 MCA are met.

6. *Agencies consulted during preparation of the Environmental Assessment: (include agencies with overlapping jurisdiction)*

   Environmental Assessment prepared for the Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System, Fort Peck Reservation and Dry Prairie Service Areas. The US Department of Interior, Bureau of Reclamation is the lead federal agency responsible for overseeing compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Montana Department of

Natural Resources and Conservation is a cooperating agency responsible for overseeing compliance with the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). A Finding of No Significant Impact was signed on October 21, 2002. To obtain a copy of this Environmental Assessment, please contact the

Montana Department of Natural Resources
Glasgow Water Resources Office
P.O. Box 1269, Glasgow, 59230
406-228-2561

The EA is also available at: http://www.archive.org/details/2002finalprogrammatimontrich

Montana Department of Environmental Quality – Web site

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: The Missouri River is not identified as a chronically or periodically dewatered stream by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks. The DFWP has a water reservation on this portion of the Missouri River for 4508 cfs to maintain instream flows.

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: The Missouri River is listed on the 1996 Montana 303(d) list as partially supporting aquatic life, recreation and warm water fishery. The probable sources for the impairment are flow regulation, agriculture, municipal point sources, natural sources and streambank modification/destabilization.

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: The use of this surface water should have no impact on groundwater supply or quality.

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 diversion is an existing raw water intake structure in the Missouri River which diverts water using four pumps. Two of the pumps have a capacity of 1000 gpm each, one has a capacity of 600 gpm and one has a pumping capacity of 400 gpm. The maximum diversion rate will be 2000 gpm. This diversion has been in continuous use since 1959. There will be no significant impacts to the channel, flow modification, barriers or riparian areas as a result of authorizing the proposed change in place of use.

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: Endangered and threatened species were addressed in the Environmental Assessment for Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System, Fort Peck Reservation and Dry Prairie Service Areas and the Finding of No Significant Impact signed on October 21, 2002.

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: Wetlands were addressed in the Environmental Assessment for Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System, Fort Peck Reservation and Dry Prairie Service Areas and the Finding of No Significant Impact signed on October 21, 2002. Mitigation measures were also outlined for the impacts to wetlands due to waterline construction.

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

Determination: Not applicable. This is a pump diversion out of the Missouri River.

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: Geology and soils were addressed in the Environmental Assessment for Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System, Fort Peck Reservation and Dry Prairie Service Areas and the Finding of No Significant Impact signed on October 21, 2002.

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: Vegetative cover and noxious weeds were addressed in the Environmental Assessment for Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System, Fort Peck Reservation and Dry Prairie Service Areas and the Finding of No Significant Impact signed on October 21, 2002.

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

Determination: No impacts to air quality are expected due to this project.

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

Determination: Historical and archeological sites were addressed in the Environmental Assessment for Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System, Fort Peck Reservation and Dry Prairie Service Areas and the Finding of No Significant Impact signed on October 21, 2002.

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: No additional impacts on other environmental resources 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: There are no known local environmental plans or goals 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: This project will have no significant impact on recreational or wilderness activities.

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

Determination: The purpose of the project is to provide good quality water for domestic consumption. This project will have no adverse impact on human health.

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: There are no additional government regulatory impacts on private property rights associated with this application.

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?* No Significant Impact

(b) *Local and state tax base and tax revenues?* No Significant Impact

(c) *Existing land uses?* No Significant Impact

(d) *Quantity and distribution of employment?* No Significant Impact

(e) *Distribution and density of population and housing?* No Significant Impact

(f) *Demands for government services?* No Significant Impact

(g) *Industrial and commercial activity?* No Significant Impact

(h) *Utilities?* No Significant Impact

(i) *Transportation?* No Significant Impact

(j) *Safety?* No Significant Impact

(k) *Other appropriate social and economic circumstances?* No Significant Impact

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

Secondary Impacts: Secondary impacts were addressed in the Environmental Assessment for Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System, Fort Peck Reservation and Dry Prairie Service Areas and the Finding of No Significant Impact signed on October 21, 2002.

Cumulative Impacts: Cumulative impacts were addressed in the Environmental Assessment for Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System, Fort Peck Reservation and Dry Prairie Service Areas and the Finding of No Significant Impact signed on October 21, 2002.

3. *Describe any mitigation/stipulation measures:* Mitigation measures, including wetland mitigation measures, were addressed in the Environmental Assessment for Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System, Fort Peck Reservation and Dry Prairie Service Areas and the Finding of No Significant Impact signed on October 21, 2002.

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:* An alternatives analysis was provided in the Environmental Assessment prepared for Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System, Fort Peck Reservation and Dry

Prairie Service Areas and the Finding of No Significant Impact signed on October 21, 2002. Under the no action alternative for this action, the construction of this portion of the Dry Prairie Rural Water System would be delayed by several years. This change application is to temporarily provide water to this portion of the Dry Prairie project, which has federal authorization and funding to proceed with construction.

PART III. Conclusion

1. Preferred Alternative: Issue a change authorization if the applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-402, MCA are met.

2 Comments and Responses

3. *Finding:*
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: No significant impacts have been identified, therefore an EIS is not necessary.

Name of person(s) responsible for preparation of EA:

Name: Denise Biggar
Title: Regional Manager
Date: January 12, 2016