

Determination: No Impact

The Natural Heritage Program identified the following species of concern and special status species, within the project area: Black-tailed Prairie Dog, Spotted Bat, Little Brown Myotis, Great Blue Heron, Burrowing Owl, Greater Sage-Grouse, Spiny Softshell, Snapping Turtle, Sauger, Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle. The State of Montana, Office of the Governor has issued Executive Order No. 12-2015 creating the Montana Sage Grouse Oversight Team and the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program. The proposed place of use falls within currently mapped general sage grouse habitat. The Applicant has consulted with the Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program and is subject to the stipulations outlined in the letter they received from the Program. This area is already actively farmed. There should be no change in affects to Sage Grouse due to this project.

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: possible impact

This project proposes to remove spreader dikes from an existing irrigation system and replace it with center pivot sprinklers. There are some wetlands within the proposed place of use shown on the National Wetlands Inventory online at <https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Data/Mapper.html>. The code for these wetlands indicates they were created by a man-made barriers or dams that obstruct the inflow or outflow of water. The Applicants are not required to continue flood irrigating in order to maintain the wetlands.

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

Determination: no impact

This project does not involve any ponds.

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 impact

The project area is comprised of several varieties of soil including loams and clay loams. A description of the soils is in the project file. This project is to change the place of use for an existing irrigation system. Both the historic and proposed systems are center pivot sprinkler systems. There is very low likelihood of soil degradation, alteration of stability or moisture content, or saline seep due to this proposed use of water.