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: Robert C and Mary E Holman
PO Box 1221
Whitefish MT 59937

2. Type of action: Surface Water Application for Beneficial Water Use Permit 76LJ 30120683

3. Water source name: Whitefish River (Whitefish Lake)

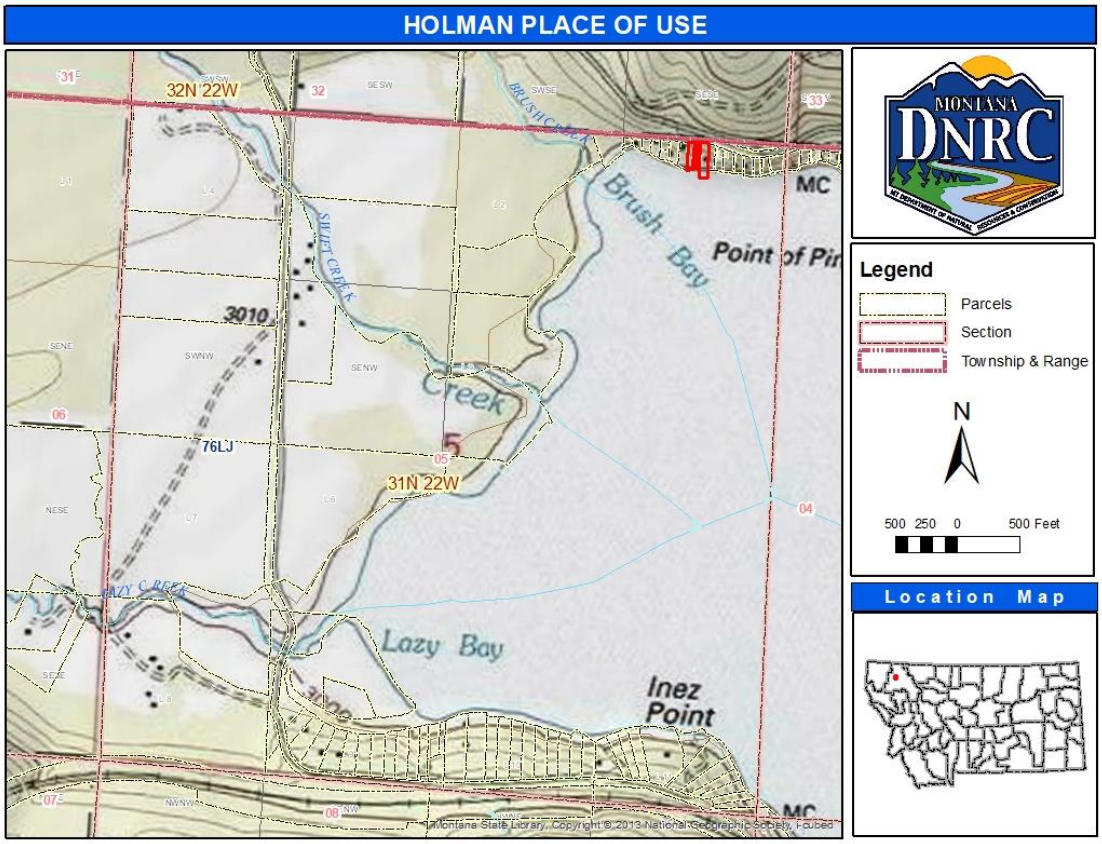
4. Location affected by project: Lots 8, 9 and Tract A Brittels Point of Pines Subdivision NWNENE Section 5, Township 31N, Range 22W, Flathead County

5. Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits:

   The Applicant is proposing to install a pump in Whitefish Lake located in the NWNENE Section 5, Township 31N, Range 22W, Flathead County. The proposed appropriation is 18 gallons per minute (GPM) up to 0.71 acre-feet (AF) per year lawn and garden use. The proposed period of diversion and use is April 15 – October 15.

   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
   National Wetlands Inventory
   USDA NRCS Web Soil Survey



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 significant impact

The source of supply is the Whitefish River at Whitefish Lake which has not been identified as chronically or periodically dewatered by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, & Parks. The proposed appropriation is for 18 GPM up to 0.71 AF per year from Whitefish Lake; this flow and volume has been determined to be both physically and legally available from the source.

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: No significant impact

Whitefish Lake has been assessed for beneficial uses by DEQ; it is identified by DEQ as fully supporting aquatic life, agriculture, and primary contact recreation. It has not been assessed for drinking water. It is not anticipated that the Applicant's proposed pumping will have any impact on water quality in Whitefish Lake.

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: No significant impact

This project does not involve groundwater.

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: No significant impact

The means of diversion is a submersible pump set in Whitefish Lake. It is not anticipated that there will be any channel impacts, flow modifications, barriers, dams, or riparian impacts to Whitefish Lake related to installation of the pump.

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: No significant impact

The Montana Natural Heritage Program identified the Wolverine, Hoary Bat, Canada Lynx, Little Brown Myotis, Fisher, Grizzly Bear, Pileated Woodpecker, Common Loon, Northern Alligator Lizard, Westlope Cutthroat Trout, Pygmy Whitefish, Bull Trout, Sheathed Slug, Crested Shieldfern, Beck Water-marigold, Coville Indian Paintbrush, Kalm's Lobelia, Nagoonberry, Creeping Sedge, Giant Helleborine, Slender Cottongrass, and Gray Lungwort Lichen as species of concern. This project is located on Whitefish Lake in an area that has been subdivided and developed, and it is not anticipated that any of the species of concern will be impacted by the proposed 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: No significant impact

There were no wetlands identified within the project area.

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

Determination: No significant impact

There were no natural ponds identified within the project area.

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 significant impact

This part of the Flathead National Forest Area is typically Dystric Eutrochrepts, till substratum, steep with a high capacity to transmit water. Not identified as soil with saline. It is not anticipated that this use will have an impact on the soil quality, stability, or moisture content.

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: No significant impact

It is not anticipated that issuance of a water use permit will contribute to the spread of noxious weeds in the project area. Noxious weed prevention will be the responsibility of the landowner. Development that has previously occurred on the property has likely changed the composition of the flora within the area.

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

Determination: No significant impact

There will be no impact to air quality associated with issuance of a water use permit.

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.*

Determination: No other potential impacts have been 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: No known environmental plans or goals will be impacted by this project.

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: No access or recreational activities will be significantly impacted by this project.

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

Determination: This proposed project will have no significant 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: No regulatory impacts are known.

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 impacts identified

(b) *Local and state tax base and tax revenues?* Increase in State tax revenue with development

(c) *Existing land uses?* County regulated

(d) *Quantity and distribution of employment?* No significant impacts identified

(e) *Distribution and density of population and housing?* No significant impacts identified

(f) *Demands for government services?* No significant impacts identified

(g) *Industrial and commercial activity?* No significant impacts identified

(h) *Utilities?* Domestic use

(i) *Transportation?* No significant impacts identified

(j) *Safety?* No significant impacts identified

(k) *Other appropriate social and economic circumstances?* No significant impacts identified

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

Secondary Impacts No significant impacts identified

Cumulative Impacts No significant impacts 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:***

The only alternative to the proposed action would be the no action alternative.

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 impacts related to the proposed project have been identified.

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

Name: Kathy Olsen
Title: Kalispell Regional Manager
Date: May 16, 2019