

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:* Score Management LLC, 686 Echo Lake Road, Bigfork MT 59911
2. *Type of action:* Application to Change an Existing Irrigation Water Right 76LJ 30067964
3. *Water source name:* Whitefish River
4. *Location affected by project:* SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 21, Township 29N, Range 21W and N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$  and W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$  all in Section 20, Township 29N, Range 21W, Flathead County
5. Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits: The DNRC shall issue a change authorization if an applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-402 MCA are met.

Applicant proposes to change Statement of Claim 76LJ 30069111. Claim is for 1,710 GPM (3.81 CFS) up to 430.83 AF of water from Whitefish River for sprinkler irrigation on 152.42 acres with a priority date of May 1, 1956. Point of diversion is in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 21, Township 29N, Range 21W, Flathead County, with a period of diversion April 15 through September 1. Period of use is from April 15 through September 1 on 80 acres in the N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ , 59.09 acres in the E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ , and 13.33 acres in the W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$  all in Section 20, Township 29N, Range 21W, Flathead County approximately 2.5 miles north of Kalispell. Historic irrigation water will be used to fill and maintain pond levels (volume is 147.9 AF with surface area of 27 acres) and irrigate approximately 61.8 acres of common area at a proposed flow rate of 1,175 GPM (2.62 CFS) up to 200.31 AF annually on a new 58-lot subdivision, Rosewater.

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

Montana Natural Heritage Program  
Natural Resources and Conservation Service soil maps  
Montana Department of Environmental Quality  
United States Fish and Wildlife Wetland Mapper  
Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks

## **Part II. Environmental Review**

### **1. Environmental Impact Checklist:**

<b>PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT</b>
-----------------------------

#### **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:* Whitefish River is not identified by DFWP as being a chronically or periodically dewatered stream.

**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:* Whitefish River is not listed as impaired or threatened by the DEQ.

**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 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.

*Determination:* The existing 10-inch steel pipeline will be utilized to divert water from the river to the pond(s). A total of 1,595 feet of this pipeline will be left in place for conveyance. A new Berkeley centrifugal pump, Model B4G BH, will be fit with 12.563-inch impellers and will utilize a 50 HP motor for this diversion. Pump specifications showing capacity of delivering 1,175 GPM (2.62 CFS) at 117.2 total dynamic head (103 feet of lift + 14.2 feet of friction loss) were submitted with the application. A new 10-inch line, approximately 525 feet in length will connect to the existing pipeline approximately 500 feet north of the pond. Water will be split between the two sections of the pond when filling. A flow meter (M#1) will measure water coming from the river before this split occurs. The pond(s) will be lined with a 30 mil PVC liner to prevent seepage. Capacity for the pond is 147.9 AF with a surface area of 27 acres. Irrigation diversion from the pond will done by two systems; each with a flow meter to measure diverted water from the pond (M#2 and M#3).

#### **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:* The Montana Natural Heritage Program was contacted to determine if there are any threatened or endangered fish, wildlife, plants or aquatic species or any “species of special concern”, that could be impacted by the proposed project. They identified the following animal and plant species that are threatened, or have special status, that are located regionally: Hoary Bat, Little Brown Myotis, Great Blue Heron, Westslope Cutthroat Trout, Pygmy Whitefish, Bull Trout, Deer Indian Paintbrush, Latah Tule Pea and Aloina moss.. These species are found throughout this region and not necessarily at this particular spot. No immediate 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.*

*Determination:* No wetland identified. No impact.

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

*Determination:* No pond. No 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.*

*Determination:* The majority of soils in this area are well drained Kalispell loam with a moderately high to high capacity to transmit water. This soil is nonsaline to very slightly saline.

**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:* Majority of current pasture grass will now be landscaped grasses. No impact.

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

*Determination:* No 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. .*

*Determination:* NA-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 impacts.

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

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

Determination: Subdivision approval in place by county.

**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 impact.

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

Determination: No impact.

**PRIVATE PROPERTY** - Assess whether there are any government regulatory impacts on private property rights.

Yes \_\_\_ No **XXX** If yes, analyze any alternatives considered that could reduce, minimize, or eliminate the regulation of private property rights.

Determination: No 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
- (b) Local and state tax base and tax revenues? Increased revenues from agricultural to residential
- (c) Existing land uses? None
- (d) Quantity and distribution of employment? None
- (e) Distribution and density of population and housing? Irrigated land replaced with residences
- (f) Demands for government services? None

- (g) Industrial and commercial activity? None
- (h) Utilities? Required
- (i) Transportation? More traffic than historic numbers
- (j) Safety? None
- (k) Other appropriate social and economic circumstances? None

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

Secondary Impacts None

Cumulative Impacts None

**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:** Project should be completed as proposed.

**PART III. Conclusion**

**1. Preferred Alternative**

**2. Comments and Responses**

**3. Finding:**

Yes \_\_\_ No ~~XXX~~ 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: Private property

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

Name: Kathy Olsen

Title: Water Resource Specialist

Date: February 3, 2015