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 P AND LISA J HAUGO
PO BOX 793
SCOBEY, MT 59263

2. Type of action: Surface Water Application for Beneficial Water Use Permit No. 40S 30165154

3. Water source name: Missouri River

4. Location affected by project: NWSW, Section 34, T27N, R41E, Valley County

5. Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits: The DNRC shall issue a water use permit if an applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-311 MCA are met.

   The Applicants propose to divert water from the Missouri River, by means of a pump, from April 1 to October 31 at 20 GPM up to 2.78 AF, from a point in the SENWSW, Sec. 34, T27N, R41E, for lawn and garden use from April 1 to October 31. The Applicants propose to irrigate lawn and garden on 1.11 acres. The place of use is located in the Idlewild Park Subdivision, Lot 64, S2NWSW, Sec. 34, T27N, R41E, Valley County.

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

   - Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)
   - US Fish & Wildlife Service
   - Montana Natural Heritage Program
   - Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, & Parks
   - Montana Department of Environmental Quality
   - USDA Web Soil Survey
   - National Wetlands Inventory

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.*

The reach of the Missouri River is not identified as a chronically or periodically dewatered stream by the Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP). Also, FWP holds an instream flow right on this section of the Missouri River for 5,178 CFS, effective year-round. Based on the flow requested and the FWP instream right, the proposed diversion is unlikely to alter the current condition of the river, therefore no significant impacts to water quantity related to this application have been identified.

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.*

The reach of the Missouri River where the proposed POD is located is listed on the 2020 Montana 303(d) list as fully supporting agricultural and drinking water uses, and not fully supporting aquatic life. It was not assessed for primary contact recreation. The cause of impairment for aquatic life is Fort Peck Dam which alters the natural hydrologic regime of the river and thus impacts aquatic and riparian habitat. The proposed project will not have any significant effect on water quality.

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 surface water appropriation should have no significant impact on ground water in the area.

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.*

The Applicants plan to divert water from the Missouri River using a 2-HP, Franklin Electric FTB2CI pump from the SENWSW, Sec. 34, T27N, R41E, Valley County. Pump curves were provided by the Applicants, showing the pumps are capable of diverting the requested flow rate of 20 GPM. From the pump, water is filtered via a Lakos Centrifugal Sand Separator and then transferred to a 2-gallon pressure tank with a 30/40 pressure switch. Water is then distributed via 1.5" to 1" PVC pipe to an underground irrigation system consisting of 64 individual sprinklers in 11 zones.

The system is controlled by a Rainbird ESP-ME3 controller/clock. Power lines will be buried from power source to the housing/garage, where the controller is kept, and to the pump. Wiring is in accordance with the National Electric Code. The amount of water delivered can be controlled by interchangeable nozzles on each individual sprinkler head. The irrigation time on each zone is set from the controller/clock.

The system will be shut down on or before October 31. The suction line and foot valve will be removed from the river, electricity to the pump turned off, and the entire system will be blown out with compressed air to force all water out and prevent any water from freezing in the system.

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 identified a list of 16 species of concern within and surrounding section 34, T27N, R41E. Of this list, the Pallid Sturgeon is listed as endangered by the United States Fish, and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Species Group	Common Name	Scientific name
Fish	Blue Sucker	Cycleptus elongatus
Fish	Paddlefish	Polyodon spathula
Fish	Pallid Sturgeon*	Scaphirhynchus albus
Fish	Sauger	Sander canadensis
Fish	Shortnose Gar	Lepisosteus platostomus
Fish	Sturgeon Chub	Macrhybopsis gelida
Birds	Great Blue Heron	Ardea herodias
Mammals	Hoary Bat	Lasiurus cinereus
Birds	Bobolink	Dolichonyx oryzivorus
Birds	Red-headed Woodpecker	Melanerpes erythrocephalus
Birds	Burrowing Owl	Athene cunicularia
Birds	Loggerhead Shrike	Lanius ludovicianus
Birds	Veery	Catharus fuscescens
Birds	Greater Sage-Grouse	Centrocercus urophasianus
Birds	Brewer's Sparrow	Spizella breweri
Fish	Blue Sucker	Cycleptus elongatus

*Listed Endangered by the USFWS and BLM

Pallid Sturgeon are found in the Missouri River and use large, turbid rivers over sand and gravel bottoms, usually in strong current. They use all channel types but primarily use straight reaches with islands. The pumps will use floating screens with small footprints and are not anticipated to have an effect on Pallid Sturgeons.

The diversion point is adjacent to land used for residential purposes and has already experienced impact from human activity. Ground disturbance associated with sprinkler system installation is temporary and will have minimal surface impact once in place. The Applicant will pull the pump in the off-season.

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.*

The only wetland identified within this project is the Missouri River.

Determination: No significant impact.

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

Determination: There are no 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.*

The soil type for the irrigated acres is Havre-Harlem Silty Clays, which is nonsaline to slightly saline (0.0 to 4.0 mmhos/cm), is well drained, is not prime farmland, and has a slope of 0 to 2 percent.

It is not anticipated that there will be degradation to the soil nor development of a saline seep caused by development of this project.

Determination: No significant building.

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 vegetation was listed as endangered or threatened by the USFWS or BLM in the project area. Because the project site is a well-established subdivision with lawn and garden as vegetation cover, the proposed use is not expected to impact the existing vegetation. The control of noxious weeds is the responsibility of the landowner.

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.*

The pumps will be electric and there will be no deterioration of air quality as a result of this appropriation.

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: Not applicable, 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 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.*

The project is located on a subdivision. It will not affect the quality of recreational and wilderness activities.

Determination: No significant impact.

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

The project is in a private subdivision and will not affect human health.

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:

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?* No significant impacts identified.

(c) Existing land uses? No significant impacts identified.

(*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? No significant impacts identified.

(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 other viable alternative would be the no action alternative in which the Department would not authorize a water right permit for lawn and garden use. Under the no action alternative, the Applicant would not be able to divert Missouri River water for lawn and garden irrigation.

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

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 <u>why</u> 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: Ashley Kemmis
Title: Water Resource Specialist
Date: June 16, 2025