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:
   TREASURED MOUNTAINS HOLDINGS LLC
   5653 MONTEREY DRIVE
   FRISCO, TX 75034-4076

2. Type of action: Application to Change an Existing Irrigation Water Right No. 41G 30165036 by Treasured Mountains Holdings LLC.

3. Water source name: Parsons Slough

4. Location affected by project: The proposed point of diversions (PODs) and place of use (POU) change will occur in Sections 13 and 14 all in T1S, R5W, Madison County.

5. Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits: Applicant submitted Change Application 41G 30165036 on April 25, 2025, to the Bozeman DNRC Water Resources Office. The Application proposes to add two primary PODs and modify the POU to Statement of Claim 41G 197111-00. The proposed PODs are located downstream of the historical POD in the NENESE Section 14, and SENWNE Section 13, T1S, R5W, Madison County. The proposed PODs are pump sites composed of one stationary pump and one transitory pump that will divert water from the Jefferson River. Water will be conveyed from the proposed PODs to the POU via pipelines, so conveyance losses will decrease. The applicant proposes to retire 91 acres and add 52.9 new acres to the POU for a total of 199.5 irrigated acres in SESE Section 14 and S2, SWNE, SENW, SWNENE, & SENWNE Section 13, all in T1S, R5W, Madison County. The proposed flow rate, diverted volume and conveyance losses will all be lower than the historical amounts. 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:
   - Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP)- Dewatered Streams Page 3 of 4 FISHMT :: Waterbody Search
   - Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)- Clean Water Act Information Center (CWAIC) Clean Water Act Information Center
   - Montana National Heritage Program (MTNHP)- National Heritage Map Viewer NHP Generalized Observations

- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)- National Wetlands Inventory Wetlands Mapper Web Soil Survey
- Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)- Web Soil Survey (WSS) National Wetlands Inventory

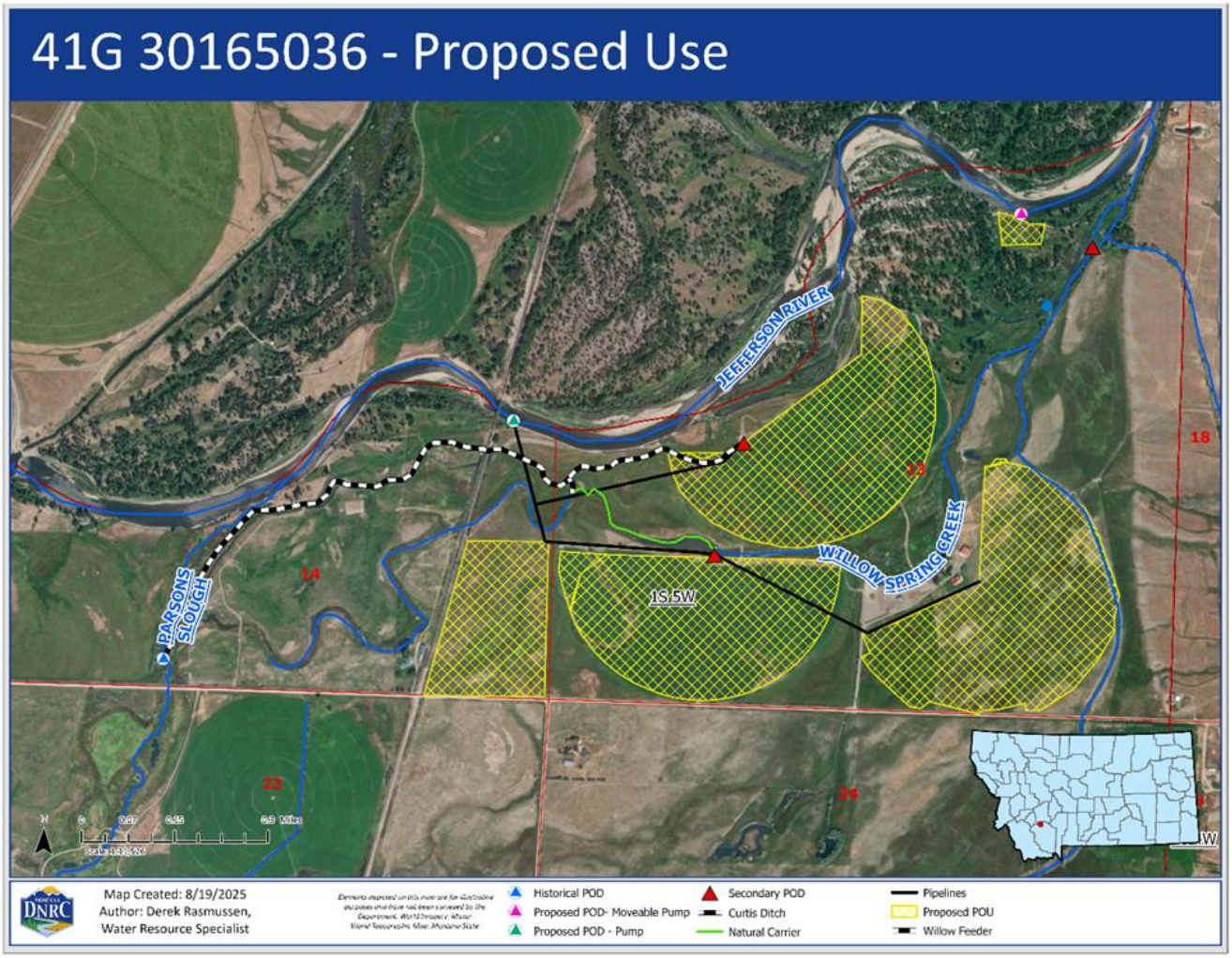

Figure 1. Proposed use for Change Application 41G 30165036

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.

A September 4, 2025, search of DFWP data does not list Parsons Slough or the Jefferson River as periodically or chronically dewatered. The proposed diverted volume is less than or equal to the historically diverted volume so water quantity in the source will not decrease as a result of the proposed change. Water will continue to be used for irrigation and the consumptive use associated with the fields will be 18.42 AF less than the historical consumed volume. No impact to water quantity is expected as a result of this change.

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.

A September 4, 2025, search of DEQ Impaired Waters 2020 data on the CWAIC did not identify anything for Parsons Slough but identified the Jefferson River, headwaters to the mouth (Missouri River), was assessed for impairments. Primary Contact Recreation use was not assessed, but the search showed the source to be fully supporting Agriculture and Drinking Water use. The search showed that Aquatic Life is not supported. The impairment is suspected to be caused by the following:

- Temperature
    - Crop Production (Irrigated)
    - Hydrostructure Flow Regulation/modification
    - Loss of Riparian Habitat
    - Dam or Impoundment-Aquatic Life
    - Abandoned Mine Lands (Inactive)
    - Streambank Modifications/destabilization
- Flow Regime Modification
    - Crop Production (Irrigated)
    - Dam or Impoundment
    - Hydrostructure Flow Regulation/modification
- Iron Impacts
    - Abandoned Mine Lands (Inactive)
- Lead Impacts
    - Abandoned Mine Lands (Inactive)
- Physical Substrate
    - Crop Production (Irrigated)
    - Hydrostructure Flow Regulation/modification
    - Streambank Modifications/destabilization
- Sedimentation/Siltation
    - Crop Production (Irrigated)

- Abandoned Mine Lands (Inactive)
- Streambank Modifications/destabilization
- Loss of Riparian Habitat
- Natural Sources

The proposed project involves adding the PODs, diverting water by pipelines and changing the POU. The proposed change is not likely to affect water quality because the historical consumptive volume, diverted volume, and return flows are greater than proposed volumes.

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.

The proposed use does not involve a groundwater component.

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 proposed project involves a change in PODs and POU. The proposed PODs are approximately 4,000 feet and 1.86 miles downstream of the historical POD on the Jefferson River and will convey water from the pump site by a means of a buried 10" PVC mainline for the stationary pump and a 2" flexible plastic hose for the transitory pump. There will be a small disturbance of native soils during construction, but no significant impact to the channel, flow regime, or riparian areas are expected by using the diversion works after the proposed change.

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 identified.

A September 4, 2025, search of the Montana Heritage Programs website for T1S, R5W, Madison County returned the following results:

- 35 Animal Species of Concern: Grizzly Bear, Little Brown Myotis, Long-eared Myotis, Long-legged Myotis, Silver-haired Bat, Wolverine, American Goshawk, American White Pelican, Baird's Sparrow, Black-necked Stilt, Bobolink, Brewer's Sparrow, Brown Creeper, Cassin's Finch, Clark's Nutcracker, Evening Grosbeak, Ferruginous Hawk, Flammulated

Owl, Golden Eagle, Great Blue Heron, Greater Sage-Grouse, Green-tailed Towhee, Harlequin Duck, Long-billed Curlew, Mountain Plover, Pinyon Jay, Solitary Sandpiper, Sprague's Pipit, Thick-billed Longspur, Trumpeter Swan, Veery, Western Toad, Arctic Grayling, Rocky Mountain Cutthroat Trout, Westslope Cutthroat Trout

- 4 Animal Potential Species of Concern: Common Poorwill, Hooded Merganser, Rufous Hummingbird, Great Gray Owl
- 1 Animal Special Status Species: Bald Eagle
- 3 Invertebrate Potential Species of Concern: Mountain Saddlecase Caddisfly, Familiar Bluet, California Darner
- 11 Plant Species of Concern: Nevada Clubrush, Annual Indian Paintbrush, Dense-leaf Draba, Beardless Wildrye, Parry's Fleabane, Slender Cottongrass, Whitebark Pine, Five-leaf Cinquefoil, Mealy Primrose, Northern Spikemoss, Ute Ladies'-tresses
- 2 Plant Potential Species of Concern: Flat-Topped Broomrape, Austin's Knotweed
- 0 Plant Special Status Species

The proposed change will decrease the flow rate and volume of diverted water from historical values. The proposed project will continue historical irrigation practices. The proposed pump diversion is not expected to create a barrier to the migration or movement of aquatic species. The proposed project is not anticipated to have a significant impact on endangered or threatened species.

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.

A September 4, 2025, search on the National Wetlands Inventory Mappers shows freshwater emergent wetlands, freshwater ponds and riverine in the project area (Figure 2). Water will be diverted in volumes less than the historical use of the water rights proposed to change. No significant impact on wetlands in the area are expected as a result of the proposed change.

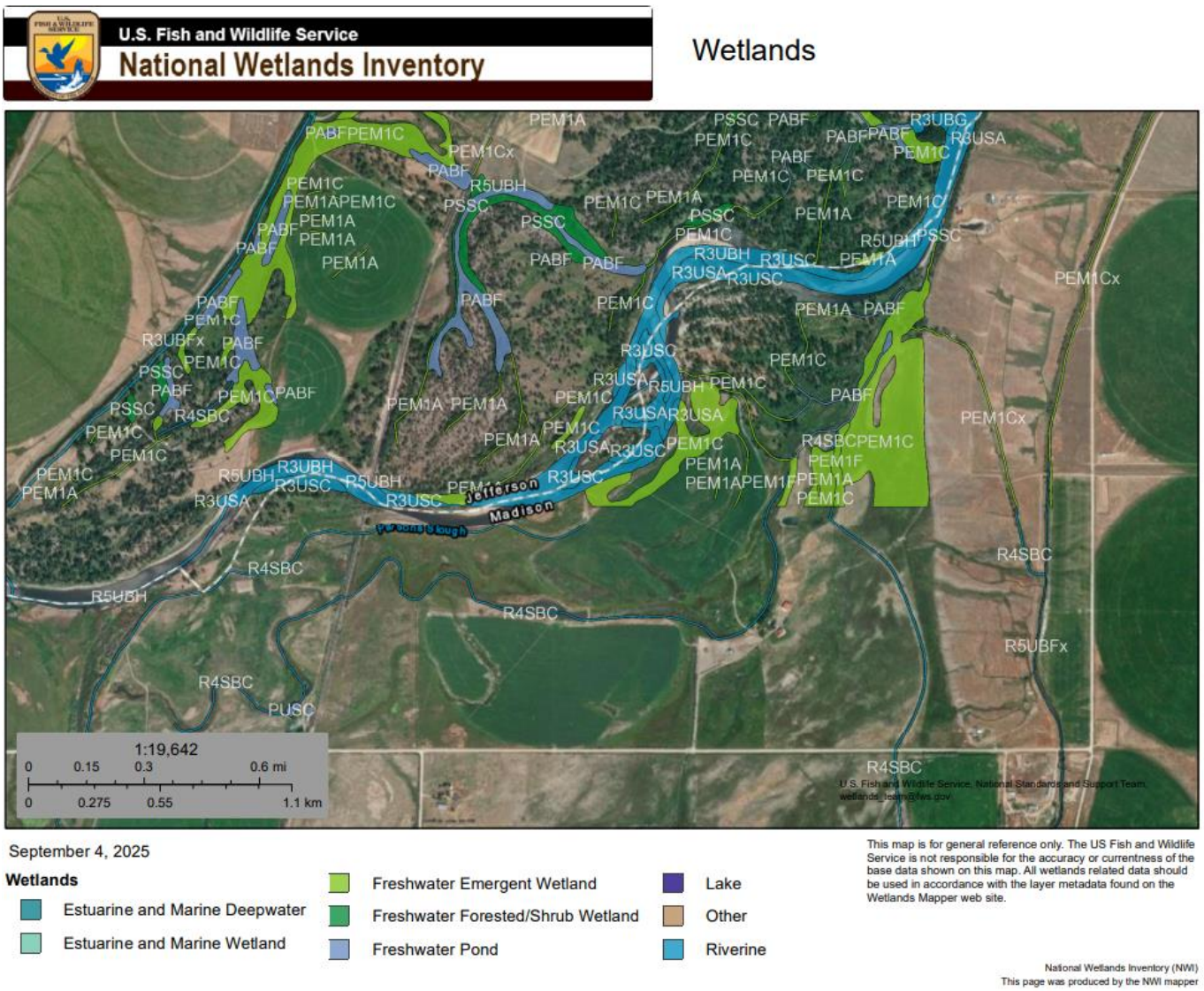

Figure 2. Wetlands surrounding the proposed project area

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

Determination: No significant impact.

No Ponds are involved with this project.

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.

A September 4, 2025, search of the NRCS Web soil Survey identified surface salinization risk in the project area. The proposed project is not predicted to increase soil salinization risk. The historical POU will be modified by retiring 91 acres and adding 52.9 acres to the proposed POU. Of the 91 acres retired, 59.6 will be from flood irrigation and 31.4 will be wheel line. The 52.9 added acres will be center pivot irrigation. The installation of the pump diversion may cause temporary and minor disturbance to the soil but is not anticipated to have significant impact.

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.

The disturbance associated with construction of the pumps and pipeline structure in the Jefferson River should be minimal and should not promote the establishment of noxious weeds. Under Montana law, private landowners are responsible for noxious weed control on their property.

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.

The proposed project will not impact air quality.

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: No significant impacts.

The proposed project is not located on State or Federal Lands. The Applicant did not mention significant historical or archeological sites on the property.

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 significant impact identified.

No impacts on environmental resources of land, water, or energy not already addressed.

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 significant impact identified.

This change application is to add two new PODs and change the POU for continued irrigation use which is recognized beneficial use of water within the State of Montana a (§85-2-102(5), MCA).

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 significant impact identified.

The proposed change is located entirely on private property and will not affect access to recreational activities or the quality of recreational and wilderness activities.

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

Determination: No significant impact identified.

The project will not impact 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 significant impact identified.

This project does not impact government regulations on private property rights.

Other human environmental issues *- For routine actions of limited environmental impact, the following may be addressed in a checklist fashion.*

1. Impacts on:

(a) *Cultural uniqueness and diversity?* No significant impact identified.

(b) *Local and state tax base and tax revenues?* No significant impact identified.

(c) *Existing land uses?* No significant impact identified.

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

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

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

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

(h) *Utilities?* No significant impact identified.

(i) *Transportation?* No significant impact identified.

(j) *Safety?* No significant impact identified.

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

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

Secondary Impacts No significant secondary impacts identified.

Cumulative Impacts No significant cumulative impacts identified.

3. Describe any mitigation/stipulation measures: The proposed diversions will be located downstream of the historical POD. Water will be diverted via pump sites and conveyed into the irrigation system via a pipeline. The applicant will not exceed historical diverted volume. For the change authorization to be granted by the DNRC, the Applicant must prove the criteria in §85-2-402 MCA are met.

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 "no action" alternative would be to not construct additional points of diversion or change the current POU. The Applicant would continue using the historical POD to divert water from Parsons Slough for irrigation use and the POU would remain unchanged.

PART III. Conclusion

1. ***Preferred Alternative:*** The preferred alternative is to grant the change application if the Applicant has proven the criteria of §85-2-402, MCA.

2. ***Comments and Responses:*** None at this time

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: The EA is the appropriate level of analysis because the proposed project is to add the PODs and change the POU of Claim 41G 197111-00. The Applicant proposes to use the water right for irrigation use and will use a maximum diverted volume of 564.92 AF and up to a

maximum 4.26 CFS flow rate. A total of 91 acres will be retired from the historical POU, and 52.9 acres will be added to the proposed POU for a total of 199.5 acres of irrigation. Irrigation is consistent with state and local plans. None of the identified impacts for any of the alternatives are significant as defined in ARM 36.2.524.

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

Name: Derek Rasmussen
Title: Water Resource Specialist
Date: September 5, 2025