

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: Winter Sports Inc.
PO Box 1400
Whitefish, Montana 59937

2. Type of action: Applicant is requesting to add a point of diversion and appropriate an additional 80 GPM for domestic and lawn and garden irrigation purposes to supplement their existing water right (76LJ 104047 00) of 100 GPM for a total of 180 GPM. No additional volume is requested. The Applicant proposes to divert water from a well 425 feet deep, from January 1 through December 31 at an additional 80 GPM from a point in the SE¹/₄SW¹/₄NW¹/₄ of Section 2, Township 31N, Range 22W, Flathead County for multiple domestic use in 115 homes from January 1 through December 31 and lawn and garden irrigation on 26.91 acres from April 15 through October 15 (Application for Beneficial Water Use Permit No. 40F 30063777).

3. Water source name: Groundwater

4. Location affected by project: As proposed, the location of the point of diversion is located at a point in the SE¹/₄SW¹/₄NW¹/₄ of Section 2, Township 31N, Range 22W, Flathead County. The place of use is to be located generally located in the E¹/₂NE¹/₄ and S¹/₂SE¹/₄NE¹/₄ of Section 3 and all of Section 2 Township 31N, Range 22W and is commonly known as the Sunrise Water System.

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.

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

Montana Natural Heritage Program
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Soils Data Website
Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality Website (TMDL 303d listing)
Montana Dept. of Fish, Wildlife & Parks Website (Montana Rivers Information System)
USDI National Wetlands Inventory Website
Montana Natural Resource Information System

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: N/A – groundwater

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: N/A – groundwater

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: The additional flow rate associated with this system will likely not reduce water to nearby surface water sources. Depletions from these sources have been taken into consideration with the Permit Application process.

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 well was constructed by Billmayer Drilling who is a licensed water well contractor (License No.WWC-335). The Goulds Model 150 8-stage pump will pump water through a three-inch pipe where it will be connected in manifold to the existing system where water will be conveyed to a 320,000 gallon storage tank where water will then be distributed to the subdivision.

Determination: NA – Diversion is by means of a well.

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.”

According to the information provided by the Montana Natural Heritage program the following charts contain specific information about the identified species of concern:

AnimalSubGroup	SNAME	SCOMNAME
Mammals (Mammalia)	Gulo gulo	Wolverine
Mammals (Mammalia)	Lasiurus cinereus	Hoary Bat
Mammals (Mammalia)	Lynx canadensis	Canada Lynx
Mammals (Mammalia)	Martes pennanti	Fisher
Mammals (Mammalia)	Ursus arctos	Grizzly Bear
Birds (Aves)	Dryocopus pileatus	Pileated Woodpecker
Birds (Aves)	Gavia immer	Common Loon
Reptiles (Reptilia)	Elgaria coerulea	Northern Alligator Lizard
Fish (Actinopterygii)	Oncorhynchus clarkii lewisi	Westslope Cutthroat Trout
Fish (Actinopterygii)	Prosopium coulteri	Pygmy Whitefish
Fish (Actinopterygii)	Salvelinus confluentus	Bull Trout
Fish (Actinopterygii)	Salvelinus namaycush	Lake Trout
Invertebrates - Mollusks	Zacoleus idahoensis	Sheathed Slug

Determination: Surface water depletion caused by the development of the project well should have no impact. There should be negligible impact to threatened or sensitive species of concern. No impacts are anticipated.

Wetlands - *Consult and assess whether the apparent wetland is a functional wetland (according to COE definitions), and whether the wetland resource would be impacted.*

There are no wetlands identified from GIS mapping of the proposed project utilizing NWI data. Because there are no wetlands identified within the proposed project area, there are no impacts anticipated.

Determination: N/A

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

No ponds or reservoirs are associated with the proposed project therefore the assessment is not applicable.

Determination: N/A

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.*

Soil information from the USDA Natural Resource and Conservation Service indicates that the following soil types are present:

- Andic Cryochrepts-Entic Cryandepts-Rock outcrop complex, cirque basins
- Andeptic Cryoboralfs-Andic Cryochrepts complex, hilly
- Cirqueand-Entic Cryandepts complex, very steep
- Rock outcrop, structural breaklands

Determination: Soils are not salt saturated. There will be no degradation of soil quality, alteration of soil stability.

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 impacts are anticipated because the system has been constructed. However, it is the applicant's responsibility to control noxious weeds 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 deterioration of air quality or adverse effects on vegetation due to an increase in air pollutants is expected from the project.

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: 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: There are no known environmental plans or goals in this area.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

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

Determination: There are no known 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.*

Determination: The project should have no significant or harmful impact on recreational or wilderness activities.

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

Determination: The development should have no 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 adverse effect on private property rights is anticipated from this development.

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 impact
- (b) Local and state tax base and tax revenues? No significant impact
- (c) Existing land uses? No significant impact
- (d) Quantity and distribution of employment? No significant impact
- (e) Distribution and density of population and housing? No significant impact
- (f) Demands for government services? No significant impact
- (g) Industrial and commercial activity? No significant impact
- (h) Utilities? No significant impact
- (i) Transportation? No significant impact
- (j) Safety? No significant impact
- (k) Other appropriate social and economic circumstances? No significant impact

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

Secondary Impacts No secondary impacts have been identified.

Cumulative Impacts No cumulative impacts have been 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:*

No action alternative:

The applicant would not be able to operate their project as proposed.

Alternative 1:

Approve the application if the applicant proves the statutory criterion has been met.

PART III. Conclusion

1. *Preferred Alternative*

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 why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action:

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

Name: Matt Miles

Title: Water Resource Specialist

Date: December 13, 2013