

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
For Routine Actions with Limited Environmental Impact

Part I. Proposed Action Description

1. APPLICANT/CONTACT NAME AND ADDRESS:

WALSH FAMILY TRUST
19210 N LITTLE SPOKANE DR
COLBERT, WA 99005-9622

2. TYPE OF ACTION:

Surface Water Application for Beneficial Water Use Permit No. 76LJ 30163624

3. WATER SOURCE NAME:

Lake Five

4. LOCATION AFFECTED BY PROJECT:

W2E2SE of Section 9, Township 31N, Range 19W, Flathead County, Montana (Figure 1).

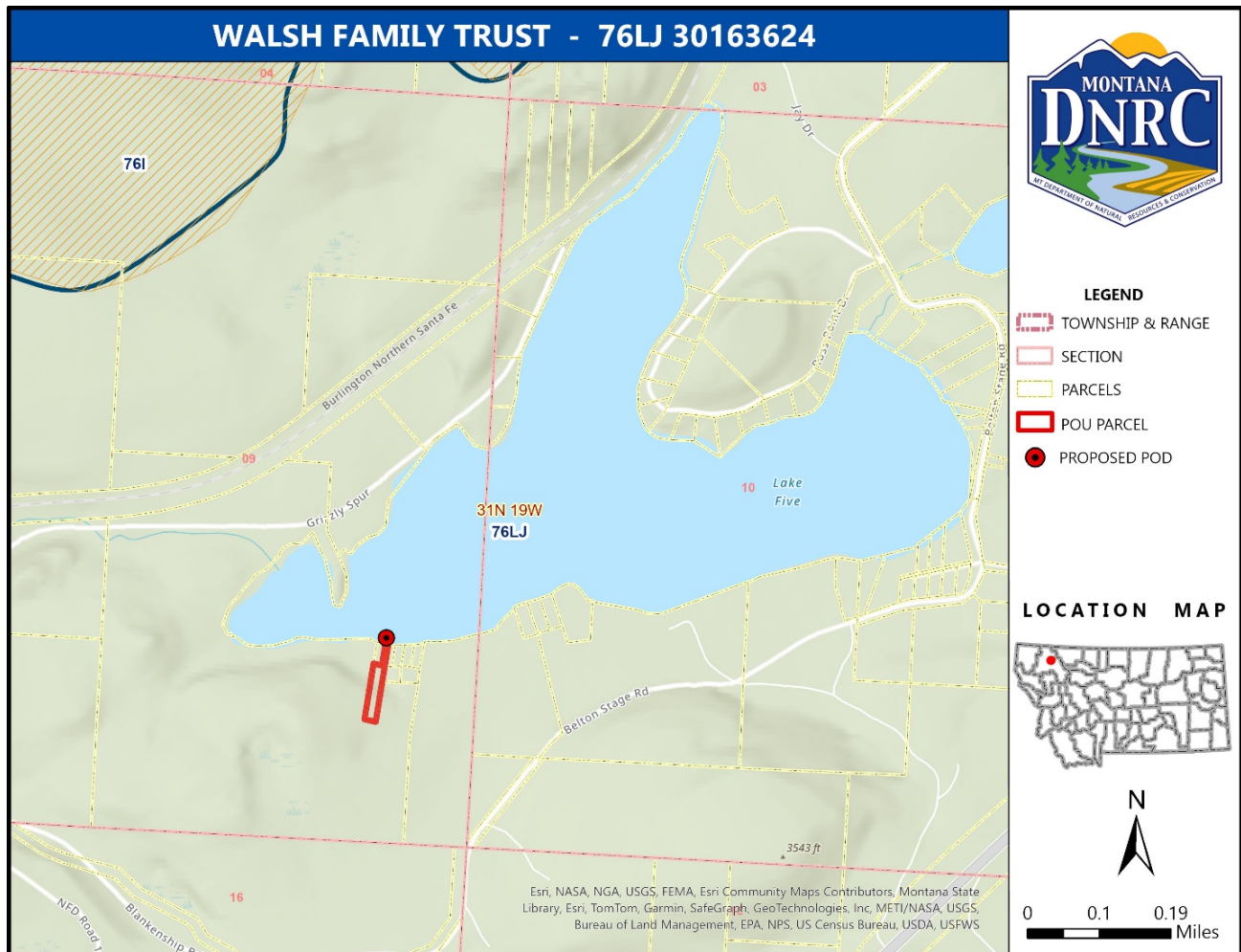


Figure 1. Map of the proposed place of use and point of diversion.

5. NARRATIVE SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT, PURPOSE, ACTION TO BE TAKEN, AND BENEFITS:

The Applicant proposes to divert Lake Five water at 12.0 GPM up to 1.0 AF/year by means of a pump for domestic use from January 1 – December 31. The proposed POD is in the SWNESE of Section 9, Township 31N, Range 19W, Flathead County, Montana (Figure 1). The proposed place of use is in Government Lot 3 in the NWSESE of Section 9, Township 31N, Range 19W, Flathead County, Montana, further described as Parcel A of Certificate of Survey No. 19591 (Figure 1). The POD is in the Flathead River Basin (76LJ) in an area that is not subject to water right basin closures or controlled groundwater area restrictions.

The DNRC shall issue a water use permit if the applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-311 MCA are met.

6. AGENCIES CONSULTED DURING PREPARATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS): National Wetlands Inventory Wetlands Mapper
- Montana Natural Heritage Program: Endangered, Threatened Species, and Species of Special Concern
- Montana Department of Fish Wildlife & Parks (DFWP): Dewatered Stream Information
- Montana Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ): Clean Water Act Information Center
- U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS): Web Soil Survey

Part II. Environmental Review

1. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT CHECKLIST:

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1.1 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 Applicant will divert water from Lake Five. Lake Five is not identified in the MTDFWP list of chronically or periodically dewatered streams/waterbodies.

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 MDEQ Clean Water Act Information Center's 2020 Water Quality Information database was consulted to assess the potential for the proposed project to affect Lake Five water quality. Lake Five water quality has not been assessed by MDEQ through the most recently published assessment cycle (2020). The diversion of water for domestic use is not anticipated to significantly affect water quality in this source.

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.

Determination: N/A, project does not involve groundwater.

1.2 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 Applicant proposes to divert Lake Five water at 12.0 GPM up to 1.0 AF/year for domestic use using a Flint and Walling Model CPJ15 1.5-HP jet pump. The pump and motor will be located in a below-grade concrete vault

approximately 84-feet upland from the shoreline of Lake Five. A buried 1.5-inch black HDPE waterline will extend approximately 20-feet into the lake where water is diverted through a one-inch foot valve affixed to an upturned five-gallon bucket resting on the lakebed. From the pump, water will be conveyed through a one-inch HDPE water line approximately 389-feet to a Well-X-Trol WX-203 32-gallon capacity hydropneumatic pressure tank located in the cabin's basement. Water will then flow to the various domestic fixtures through a 0.5-inch waterline.

Based on the pump specifications and the TDH figures provided by the applicant, the system will divert between 3.5 GPM at a TDH of 190.3-feet and 12.0 GPM at a TDH of 155.6-feet. The pump will turn on when the system pressure at the cabin drops to 40 PSI and will run until system pressure has returned to 55 PSI.

This project will not have any channel or riparian impacts, nor will it create barriers or dams on Lake Five.

Determination: No significant impact.

1.3 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, 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 website was reviewed to determine if there are any threatened or endangered fish, wildlife, plants, aquatic species, or any "species of special concern" in the project area that could be impacted by the proposed project. Nine animal and two plant species of concern (Table 1) were identified in the general vicinity of the project area. Of these species, the Grizzly Bear, is listed as threatened by the USFWS. This general area is lightly developed with cabins and other recreationally focused infrastructure. It is not anticipated that any species of concern will be further impacted by the proposed project. This project will not create any barriers to the migration or movement of fish or wildlife.

| Table 1. Species of Concern | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Species Group | Common Name | Scientific Name |
| Mammals | Fisher | <i>Pekania pennanti</i> |
| Mammals | Grizzly Bear* | <i>Ursus arctos</i> |
| Mammals | Western Pygmy Shrew | <i>Sorex eximius</i> |
| Birds | American Goshawk | <i>Accipiter atricapillus</i> |
| Birds | Evening Grosbeak | <i>Coccothraustes vespertinus</i> |
| Birds | Pileated Woodpecker | <i>Dryocopus pileatus</i> |
| Amphibians | Western Toad | <i>Anaxyrus boreas</i> |
| Fish | Westslope Cutthroat Trout | <i>Oncorhynchus lewisi</i> |
| Invertebrates | Brush-tipped Emerald | <i>Somatochlora walshii</i> |
| Vascular Plants | Velvetleaf Huckleberry | <i>Vaccinium myrtilloides</i> |
| Bryophytes | Meesia Moss | <i>Meesia uliginosa</i> |

* Listed Threatened by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Determination: No significant impact.

Wetlands and Ponds - *Consult and assess whether the apparent wetland is a functional wetland (according to COE definitions), and whether the wetland resource would be impacted. For ponds, consult and assess whether existing wildlife, waterfowl, or fisheries resources would be impacted.*

Determination: N/A, project does not involve wetlands or ponds.

- 1.4 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 proposed domestic use will not negatively impact the soil quality, stability, or moisture content. The soil type in the project area is Dystric Eutrochrepts, till substratum, formed from till parent material. This soil has a high capacity to transmit water. Soils in this general area are not typically saline and thus not susceptible to saline seep.

Determination: No significant impact.

- 1.5 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.*

This project site is already developed. Any existing native vegetation has likely already been disturbed. It is not anticipated that issuance of a water use permit will contribute to the establishment or spread of noxious weeds in the project area. Noxious weed prevention and control will be the responsibility of the landowners, who must follow local noxious weed regulations.

Determination: No significant impact.

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

There will be no impact to air quality associated with issuance of the proposed permit for beneficial use of surface water.

Determination: No significant impact.

- 1.7 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.

- 1.8 DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AND ENERGY** - *Assess any other impacts on environmental resources of land, water, and energy not already addressed.*

All impacts to land, water, and energy have been identified and no further impacts are anticipated.

Determination: No significant impact.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

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

The project is consistent with planned land uses.

Determination: No significant impact.

- 1.10 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 proposed project will not inhibit, alter, or impair access to present recreational opportunities in the area. The project is not expected to create any significant pollution, noise, or traffic congestion in the area that may alter the

quality of recreational opportunities. The proposed place of use and diversion do not exist on land designated as wilderness.

Determination: No significant impact.

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

This proposed use will not adversely impact human health.

Determination: No significant impact.

1.12 PRIVATE PROPERTY - *Assess whether there are any government regulatory impacts on private property rights. If yes, analyze any alternatives considered that could reduce, minimize, or eliminate the regulation of private property rights.*

No government regulatory impacts on private property rights.

Determination: No impact.

1.13 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 identified.
- (b) Local and state tax base and tax revenues? None identified.
- (c) Existing land uses? None identified.
- (d) Quantity and distribution of employment? None identified.
- (e) Distribution and density of population and housing? None identified.
- (f) Demands for government services? None identified.
- (g) Industrial and commercial activity? None identified.
- (h) Utilities? None identified.
- (i) Transportation? None identified.
- (j) Safety? None identified.
- (k) Other appropriate social and economic circumstances? None identified.

2. SECONDARY AND CUMULATIVE IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT AND HUMAN POPULATION:

Secondary Impacts: None identified.

Cumulative Impacts: None 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. The no action alternative would not authorize the diversion of surface water at this location.

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:

Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? ____Yes XNo

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.

4. NAME OF PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE FOR PREPARATION OF EA:

Name: Travis Wilson

Title: Water Resource Specialist

Date: April 10, 2025