

Montana Water Court
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43B-0700-R-2022

October 21, 2022

Montana Water Court

MONTANA WATER COURT, YELLOWSTONE DIVISION
YELLOWSTONE RIVER ABOVE AND INCLUDING BRIDGER CREEK BASIN
BASIN 43B
PRELIMINARY DECREE

CLAIMANTS: VF Farm LLC

OBJECTORS: VF Farm LLC

CASE 43B-0700-R-2022
43B 158562-00

NOTICE OF FILING OF MASTER'S REPORT

This Master’s Report was filed with the Montana Water Court on the above stamped date. Please review this report carefully.

You may file a written objection to this Master’s Report within **10 days** of the stamped date if you disagree or find errors with the Master’s findings of fact, conclusion of law, or recommendations. Rule 23, W.R.Adj.R. If the Master’s Report was mailed to you, the Montana Rules of Civil Procedure allow an additional 3 days to be added to the 10-day objection period. Rule 6(d), M.R.Civ.P. If you file an objection, you must mail a copy of the objection to all parties on the service list found at the end of the Master’s Report. The original objection and a certificate of mailing to all parties on the service list must be filed with the Water Court.

If you do not file a timely objection, the Water Court will conclude that you agree with the content of this Master’s Report.

MASTER'S REPORT

VF Farm LLC objected to its claim 43B 158562-00. On September 8, 2022 VF Farm LLC filed a Motion To Resolve Objection. This settlement documentation is viewable in the Court's FullCourt Enterprise case management system.

APPLICABLE LAW

A properly filed Statement of Claim for Existing Water Right is prima facie proof of its content pursuant to section 85-2-227, MCA. This prima facie proof may be contradicted and overcome by other evidence that proves, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the elements of the claim do not accurately reflect the beneficial use of the water right as it existed prior to July 1, 1973. This is the burden of proof for every assertion that a claim is incorrect including for claimants objecting to their own claims. Rule 19, W.R.Adj.R.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The Preliminary Decree states that the point of diversion and place of use each include the NWNENE section 22, T2S, R12E, PARK. This legal description should be changed to the N2NE section 22, T2S, R12E, PARK.

2. The Preliminary Decree also includes the following notice remark:

POINT OF DIVERSION AND PLACE OF USE WERE MODIFIED AS A RESULT OF DNRC REVIEW UNDER MONTANA WATER COURT REEXAMINATION ORDERS. IF NO OBJECTIONS ARE FILED TO THIS CLAIM, THESE ELEMENTS WILL REMAIN AS THEY APPEAR ON THIS ABSTRACT AND THE REMARK WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE CLAIM.

This remark provides notice of these changes made prior to issuance of the Preliminary Decree. The claimant did object to the changes. There are no proceedings required for this remark. The remark should be removed as having served its notice purpose.

CONCLUSION OF LAW

The settlement filed by the claimant is sufficient to contradict and overcome the prima facie claim.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the above Findings of Fact and Conclusion of Law, this Master recommends

that the Court grant the Motion To Resolve Objection and make the changes specified in the Findings of Fact to correct the Preliminary Decree for this Basin. A Post Decree Abstract of Water Right Claim is served with this Report to confirm the recommended changes have been made in the state's centralized record system.

Kathryn L. W. Lambert
Senior Water Master

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POST DECREE
ABSTRACT OF WATER RIGHT CLAIM
YELLOWSTONE RIVER, ABOVE & INCLUDING BRIDGER CREEK
BASIN 43B

Water Right Number: 43B 158562-00 STATEMENT OF CLAIM

Version: 3 -- POST DECREE

Status: ACTIVE

Owners: VF FARM LLC
3350 RIVERWOOD PKWY SE STE 425
ATLANTA, GA 30339 3347

Priority Date: NOVEMBER 10, 1917

Type of Historical Right: USE

Purpose (use): STOCK

Flow Rate: A SPECIFIC FLOW RATE HAS NOT BEEN DECREED BECAUSE THIS USE CONSISTS OF STOCK DRINKING DIRECTLY FROM THE SOURCE, OR FROM A DITCH SYSTEM. THE FLOW RATE IS LIMITED TO THE MINIMUM AMOUNT HISTORICALLY NECESSARY TO SUSTAIN THIS PURPOSE.

Volume: THIS RIGHT INCLUDES THE AMOUNT OF WATER CONSUMPTIVELY USED FOR STOCK WATERING PURPOSES AT THE RATE OF 30 GALLONS PER DAY PER ANIMAL UNIT. ANIMAL UNITS SHALL BE BASED ON REASONABLE CARRYING CAPACITY AND HISTORICAL USE OF THE AREA SERVICED BY THIS WATER SOURCE.

Source Name: WEST FORK MENDENHALL CREEK

Source Type: SURFACE WATER

Point of Diversion and Means of Diversion:

<u>ID</u>	<u>Govt Lot</u>	<u>Qtr Sec</u>	<u>Sec</u>	<u>Twp</u>	<u>Rge</u>	<u>County</u>
1		E2E2	15	2S	12E	PARK

Period of Diversion: JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31

Diversion Means: LIVESTOCK DIRECT FROM SOURCE

2		N2NE	22	2S	12E	PARK
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Period of Diversion: JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31

Diversion Means: LIVESTOCK DIRECT FROM SOURCE

Period of Use: JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31

Place of Use:

<u>ID</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Govt Lot</u>	<u>Qtr Sec</u>	<u>Sec</u>	<u>Twp</u>	<u>Rge</u>	<u>County</u>
1			E2E2	15	2S	12E	PARK
2			N2NE	22	2S	12E	PARK