



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, OMAHA DISTRICT
HELENA REGULATORY OFFICE
10 WEST 15TH STREET, SUITE 2200
HELENA MT 59626

March 7, 2014

Regulatory Branch
Montana State Program
Corps No. NWO-2010-02126-MTH

Subject: Ravalli County Airport Improvements

RECEIVED

MAR 12 2014

Ravalli County Commissioners



Robert Peccia & Associates, Inc.
Attn: Rick Donaldson
Post Office Box 5653
Helena, Montana 59604-4817

Dear Mr. Donaldson:

We have reviewed your letter submitted on behalf of Ravalli County concerning the above-referenced project, which was received in our Helena office on January 31, 2014. The proposed work is located in Section 29, Township 6 North, Range 20 West, in Ravalli County, Montana.

The mission of the U.S. Corps of Engineers (Corps) Regulatory Program is to protect the Nation's aquatic resources while allowing reasonable development through fair, flexible and balanced permit decisions. In particular, under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA), we work to protect the biological, physical, and chemical integrity of the Nation's aquatic resources. Projects are evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine the potential benefits and detriments that may occur as a result of the proposal. In all cases an applicant must avoid and minimize impacts to aquatic resources to the greatest extent practicable.

Under the authority of Section 404 of the CWA, Department of the Army (DA) permits are required for the discharge of fill material into waters of the U.S. Waters of the U.S. include the area below the ordinary high water mark of stream channels and lakes or ponds connected to the tributary system, and wetlands adjacent to these waters. Isolated waters and wetlands, as well as man-made channels, may be waters of the U.S. in certain circumstances, which must be determined on a case-by-case basis. If waters of the U.S. will be impacted by the project, a DA permit is required.

Waters of the U.S. appear to be present in or near the project area identified on the map provided. If wetlands are identified within the project area, they must be delineated in accordance with the Corps' 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual and appropriate Regional Supplement. The wetland delineation report and mapping should be prepared in accordance with the enclosed Wetland Delineation Checklist and be less than five years old at the time of your permit application.

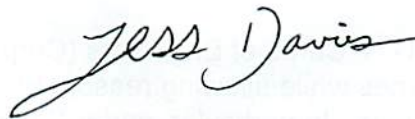
Impacts to waters of the U.S. which exceed 0.5 acres may require an Individual (Standard) DA permit. Wetland losses exceeding 0.1 acre, and stream or tributary impacts exceeding 300 linear feet will require compensatory mitigation within the watershed. In this instance, both action alternatives appear to require an Individual DA permit and compensatory mitigation.

In addition to the information above, you are reminded that any permit application must include an assessment of likely effects on federally listed threatened or endangered species and critical habitats, as well as an assessment of effects on any cultural and historic properties or resources. This would include assessments for the project areas as well as for any borrow areas needed for the work.

Note that this letter only informs you of your need to obtain a DA permit if dredged or fill material will be discharged in waters of the U.S. It is not an authorization to proceed. Although a DA permit may be required for the project, this does not eliminate the requirement that you obtain any other applicable federal, state, tribal, or local permits as required.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this proposed activity. Please contact me at (406) 441-1365 if you have questions and reference Corps File Number NWO-2010-02126-MTH.

Sincerely,



Jess J. Davies
Natural Resources Specialist

Enclosure:

Wetland Delineation Checklist

Copy Furnished:

Ravalli County Commissioners
215 South 4th Street, Suite C
Hamilton, Montana 59840-2703

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
Attn: Dan Lipscomb
Post Office Box 278
Pablo, Montana 59855-0278