

Montana Water Court  
PO Box 1389  
Bozeman, MT 59771-1389  
(406) 586-4364  
1-800-624-3270  
watercourt@mt.gov

40A-0172-R-2021

December 10, 2021

Montana Water Court

IN THE WATER COURT OF THE STATE OF MONTANA  
LOWER MISSOURI DIVISION  
MUSSELSHELL RIVER ABOVE ROUNDUP BASIN (40A)  
PRELIMINARY DECREE

\* \* \* \* \*

CLAIMANT: Cavan Spencer Cooney, LLC

**CASE 40A-0172-R-2021**

40A 109355-00

40A 109366-00

40A 113124-00

40A 113125-00

40A 113130-00

OBJECTOR: Cooney Brothers Family Partnership

**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 be added to the 10-day objection period. Rule 6(d), M.R.Civ.P. If you file an objection, you must serve 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

### FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Cavan Spencer Cooney, LLC is the record owner of claims 40A 109355-00, 40A 109366-00, 40A 113124-00, 40A 113125-00, 40A 113130-00.

2. Claims 40A 109355-00, 40A 109366-00, 40A 113124-00, 40A 113125-00, 40A 113130-00 were decreed without DNRC issue remarks.

3. Cooney Brothers Family Partnership (Cooney Brothers) objected to claims 40A 109355-00, 40A 109366-00, 40A 113124-00, 40A 113125-00, 40A 113130-00.

4. A December 3, 2021 deadline was set for Cooney Brother to file documentation addressing the Objections to the claims in this Case with specificity. The Order Setting Filing Deadline stated:

*If documentation addressing the Objections is not filed by the deadline, this Master will conclude Cooney Brothers Family Partnership has decided not to prosecute the Objections and a Master's Report will be issued recommending the Objections be dismissed. [emphasis in original]*

The following language was included in the September 7, 2021 Order Setting Filing Deadline:

Failure to comply with the terms of this Order may result in sanctions, up to and including entry of default and termination of a water right claim or dismissal of objections. Rule 22, W.R.ADJ.R.

Nothing was filed by the deadline.

5. This Master began drafting this Master's Report on December 4, 2021. The abstracts were sent for correction on the morning of December 6, 2021.

6. On December 6, 2021, Colleen A. Coyle, counsel Cooney Brothers, filed a Filing to Address Issue Remarks and Objections. The December 6, 2021 filing is late.

### PRINCIPLES AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Water Court is required to address any issue remarks that appear on a claim as well as all objections the claim receives. Sections 85-2-233, 85-2-247, and 85-2-248, MCA.

2. A properly filed Statement of Claim for an existing water right is prima facie proof of its content. Section 85-2-227, MCA. This prima facie validity may be overcome by evidence showing that one or more elements of the claim are incorrect. This standard of proof applies to objectors or claimants objecting to their own water right claims. Rule 19, W.R.Adj.R., *Nelson v. Brooks*, 2014 MT 120; 375 Mont.86, 95; 329 P.3d 558, 564.

3. Pursuant to Rule 22, W.R.Adj.R., if a claimant, objector, or intervenor fails to appear at a scheduled conference or hearing or fails to comply with an order issued by the Water Court, the Water Court may issue such orders of sanction with regard thereto as are just. The Objector failed to meet the December 3, 2021 deadline set in the Order Consolidating and Order Setting Filing Deadline.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Cooney Brothers' Objections to claims 40A 109355-00, 40A 109366-00, 40A 113124-00, 40A 113125-00, 40A 113130-00 should be dismissed.

2. No changes should be made to the elements of the claims in this Case.

Post Decree Abstracts of Water Right Claims are served with the Report to confirm the terms of the claims in the DNRC's water rights database.

---

Anika M. Stern  
Senior Water Master

**Service Via Electronic Mail:**

Colleen Coyle  
Coyle Law Firm, PLLC  
PO Box 1326  
Bozeman, MT 59771  
(406) 551-4868  
(406) 570-2740  
colleen@coylelawmt.com

**Service via USPS Mail:**

Cavan Spencer Cooney, LLC  
PO Box 626  
Harlowtown, MT 59036-0626

**WATER COURT**  
**ABSTRACT OF WATER RIGHT CLAIM**  
**MUSSELSHELL RIVER, ABOVE ROUNDUP**  
**BASIN 40A**

**Water Right Number:** **40A 109355-00** STATEMENT OF CLAIM

**Version:** 3 -- POST DECREE

**Status:** ACTIVE

**Owners:** COONEY, CAVAN SPENCER LLC  
PO BOX 626  
HARLOWTON, MT 59036 0626

**Priority Date:** DECEMBER 31, 1958

**Type of Historical Right:** FILED

**Purpose (Use):** STOCK

**Flow Rate:** 5.00 GPM

**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:** GROUNDWATER

**Source Type:** GROUNDWATER

**Point of Diversion and Means of Diversion:**

<u>ID</u>	<u>Govt Lot</u>	<u>Otr Sec</u>	<u>Sec</u>	<u>Twp</u>	<u>Rge</u>	<u>County</u>
1		SENWSE	21	6N	16E	WHEATLAND

**Period of Diversion:** APRIL 1 TO DECEMBER 31

**Diversion Means:** WELL

**Period of Use:** APRIL 1 TO DECEMBER 31

**Place of Use:**

<u>ID</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Govt Lot</u>	<u>Otr Sec</u>	<u>Sec</u>	<u>Twp</u>	<u>Rge</u>	<u>County</u>
1			SENWSE	21	6N	16E	WHEATLAND

**WATER COURT**  
**ABSTRACT OF WATER RIGHT CLAIM**  
**MUSSELSHELL RIVER, ABOVE ROUNDUP**  
**BASIN 40A**

**Water Right Number:** **40A 109366-00** STATEMENT OF CLAIM

**Version:** 3 -- POST DECREE

**Status:** ACTIVE

**Owners:** COONEY, CAVAN SPENCER LLC  
PO BOX 626  
HARLOWTON, MT 59036 0626

**Priority Date:** DECEMBER 31, 1958

**Type of Historical Right:** USE

**Purpose (Use):** STOCK

**Flow Rate:** 6.00 GPM

**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:** GROUNDWATER

**Source Type:** GROUNDWATER

**Point of Diversion and Means of Diversion:**

<u>ID</u>	<u>Govt Lot</u>	<u>Otr Sec</u>	<u>Sec</u>	<u>Twp</u>	<u>Rge</u>	<u>County</u>
1		NWSWNE	23	6N	16E	WHEATLAND

**Period of Diversion:** APRIL 1 TO DECEMBER 31

**Diversion Means:** WELL

**Period of Use:** APRIL 1 TO DECEMBER 31

**Place of Use:**

<u>ID</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Govt Lot</u>	<u>Otr Sec</u>	<u>Sec</u>	<u>Twp</u>	<u>Rge</u>	<u>County</u>
1			NWSWNE	23	6N	16E	WHEATLAND

**WATER COURT**  
**ABSTRACT OF WATER RIGHT CLAIM**  
**MUSSELSHELL RIVER, ABOVE ROUNDUP**  
**BASIN 40A**

**Water Right Number:** **40A 113124-00 STATEMENT OF CLAIM**

**Version:** 3 -- POST DECREE

**Status:** ACTIVE

**Owners:** COONEY, CAVAN SPENCER LLC  
PO BOX 626  
HARLOWTON, MT 59036 0626

**Priority Date:** MAY 10, 1957

**Type of Historical Right:** USE

**Purpose (Use):** STOCK

**Flow Rate:** 5.00 GPM

**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:** GROUNDWATER

**Source Type:** GROUNDWATER

**Point of Diversion and Means of Diversion:**

<u>ID</u>	<u>Govt Lot</u>	<u>Otr Sec</u>	<u>Sec</u>	<u>Twp</u>	<u>Rge</u>	<u>County</u>
1	14		3	6N	16E	WHEATLAND

**Period of Diversion:** APRIL 1 TO DECEMBER 31

**Diversion Means:** WELL

**Period of Use:** APRIL 1 TO DECEMBER 31

**Place of Use:**

<u>ID</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Govt Lot</u>	<u>Otr Sec</u>	<u>Sec</u>	<u>Twp</u>	<u>Rge</u>	<u>County</u>
1		14		3	6N	16E	WHEATLAND

**WATER COURT**  
**ABSTRACT OF WATER RIGHT CLAIM**  
**MUSSELSHELL RIVER, ABOVE ROUNDUP**  
**BASIN 40A**

**Water Right Number:** **40A 113125-00 STATEMENT OF CLAIM**

**Version:** 3 -- POST DECREE

**Status:** ACTIVE

**Owners:** COONEY, CAVAN SPENCER LLC  
PO BOX 626  
HARLOWTON, MT 59036 0626

**Priority Date:** DECEMBER 31, 1958

**Type of Historical Right:** FILED

**Purpose (Use):** STOCK

**Flow Rate:** 5.00 GPM

**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:** GROUNDWATER

**Source Type:** GROUNDWATER

**Point of Diversion and Means of Diversion:**

<u>ID</u>	<u>Govt Lot</u>	<u>Otr Sec</u>	<u>Sec</u>	<u>Twp</u>	<u>Rge</u>	<u>County</u>
1	3		5	6N	16E	WHEATLAND

**Period of Diversion:** APRIL 1 TO DECEMBER 31

**Diversion Means:** WELL

**Period of Use:** APRIL 1 TO DECEMBER 31

**Place of Use:**

<u>ID</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Govt Lot</u>	<u>Otr Sec</u>	<u>Sec</u>	<u>Twp</u>	<u>Rge</u>	<u>County</u>
1		3		5	6N	16E	WHEATLAND

**WATER COURT**  
**ABSTRACT OF WATER RIGHT CLAIM**  
**MUSSELSHELL RIVER, ABOVE ROUNDUP**  
**BASIN 40A**

**Water Right Number:** **40A 113130-00** STATEMENT OF CLAIM

**Version:** 3 -- POST DECREE

**Status:** ACTIVE

**Owners:** COONEY, CAVAN SPENCER LLC  
PO BOX 626  
HARLOWTON, MT 59036 0626

**Priority Date:** MAY 31, 1957

**Type of Historical Right:** FILED

**Purpose (Use):** STOCK

**Flow Rate:** 5.00 GPM

**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:** GROUNDWATER

**Source Type:** GROUNDWATER

**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	4		3	6N	16E	WHEATLAND

**Period of Diversion:** APRIL 1 TO DECEMBER 31

**Diversion Means:** WELL

**Period of Use:** APRIL 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		4		3	6N	16E	WHEATLAND