

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

MONTANA WATER COURT  
YELLOWSTONE DIVISION  
YELLOWSTONE RIVER, FROM BRIDGER CREEK TO CLARKS FORK YELLOWSTONE  
BASIN 43QJ  
SECOND PRELIMINARY DECREE

\* \* \* \* \*

CLAIMANTS: ~~Deborah Jo Hathaway; Marc Hathaway;~~  
Hathaway Work Creek Family Partnership

**CASE 43QJ-0183-R-2025**

43QJ 30144580

43QJ 30144581

43QJ 30144583

**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 have **13 days** from the service date of the notice of filing of this report to file a written objection or request an extension of the objection period. Rule 23, Water Right Adjudication Rules; Rule 6, Montana Rules of Civil Procedure. 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**

These claims appeared in the Second Preliminary Decree with the following remarks:

THIS CLAIM NUMBER WAS NOT INCLUDED IN THE BASIN 43QJ DECREE ISSUED 07/23/1985.

ACCORDING TO CADASTRAL PROPERTY OWNERSHIP RECORDS, AS OF 07/20/2023 , THE PROPERTY ON WHICH THIS WATER RIGHT IS USED APPEARS TO BE OWNED BY HATHAWAY WORK CREEK FAMILY LTD PARTNERSHIP , PO BOX 1606 , BIG TIMBER, MT , 59011-1606.

On November 3, 2025 Deborah Jo Hathaway, Marc Hathaway, and Hathaway Work Creek Family Partnership filed the Affidavit of Marc L. Hathaway and Deborah Jo Hathaway concerning the claims in Cases 43QJ-0182-R-2025 and 43QJ-0183-R-2025. The Affidavit 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 85-2-222, 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. Paragraph 4 of the Affidavit states that the claimants included themselves individually and their partnership as owners, because they were unsure which they should identify at the time they filed the Statements of Claim, and that the owner of the water rights is just Hathaway Work Creek Family Partnership. Marc L. Hathaway and Deborah Jo Hathaway should be removed as owners on all three claims. The ownership remark should be removed from all three abstracts as having served its notice purpose.

2. The second remark provides notice that these claims were not in the first Preliminary Decree. They should be removed as having served their notice purposes.

### **CONCLUSION OF LAW**

The information provided by the claimants is sufficient to contradict and overcome the prima facie claims.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the above Findings of Fact and Conclusion of Law, this Master recommends that the Court make the changes specified in the Findings of Fact to correct the Second Preliminary Decree for this Basin. A Post Decree Abstract of Water Right Claim for each claim is served with this Report to confirm the recommended changes have been made in the state's centralized record system.

### **ELECTRONICALLY SIGNED AND DATED BELOW**

#### **Service Via Electronic Mail:**

Page C. Dringman  
DRINGMAN LAW FIRM, PLLC  
drlawfirm2@itstriangle.com  
drlawfirm@itstriangle.com  
(Atty for: Deborah Jo Hathaway; Marc Hathaway; Hathaway Work Creek Family Partnership)

***\*Note: Caption Updated 12/11/2025\****

**POST DECREE**  
**ABSTRACT OF WATER RIGHT CLAIM**  
**YELLOWSTONE RIVER, FROM BRIDGER CREEK TO CLARKS FORK YELLOWSTONE**  
**BASIN 43QJ**

**Water Right Number:** 43QJ 30144580 STATEMENT OF CLAIM

**Version:** 2 -- POST DECREE

**Status:** ACTIVE

**Owners:** HATHAWAY WORK CREEK FAMILY PARTNERSHIP  
50 WORK CREEK ROAD  
REED POINT, MT 59069

**\*Priority Date:** DECEMBER 31, 1919

**Type of Historical Right:** USE

**Purpose (Use):** STOCK

**Flow Rate:** 6.00 GPM

**\*Volume:** THIS RIGHT INCLUDES THE AMOUNT OF WATER CONSUMPTIVELY USED FOR STOCKWATERING 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:** SPRING, UNNAMED TRIBUTARY OF WORK CREEK

**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	NWNWNW	4	2S	17E	SWEET GRASS

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

**Diversion Means:** SPRING BOX

**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		4	NWNWNW	4	2S	17E	SWEET GRASS

**POST DECREE**  
**ABSTRACT OF WATER RIGHT CLAIM**  
**YELLOWSTONE RIVER, FROM BRIDGER CREEK TO CLARKS FORK YELLOWSTONE**  
**BASIN 43QJ**

**Water Right Number:** 43QJ 30144581 STATEMENT OF CLAIM

**Version:** 2 -- POST DECREE

**Status:** ACTIVE

**Owners:** HATHAWAY WORK CREEK FAMILY PARTNERSHIP  
50 WORK CREEK ROAD  
REED POINT, MT 59069

**\*Priority Date:** DECEMBER 31, 1919

**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 STOCKWATERING 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:** SPRING, UNNAMED TRIBUTARY OF WORK 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	2	NWNWNE	5	2S	17E	SWEET GRASS

**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		2	NWNWNE	5	2S	17E	SWEET GRASS

**POST DECREE**  
**ABSTRACT OF WATER RIGHT CLAIM**  
**YELLOWSTONE RIVER, FROM BRIDGER CREEK TO CLARKS FORK YELLOWSTONE**  
**BASIN 43QJ**

**Water Right Number:** 43QJ 30144583 STATEMENT OF CLAIM

**Version:** 2 -- POST DECREE

**Status:** ACTIVE

**Owners:** HATHAWAY WORK CREEK FAMILY PARTNERSHIP  
50 WORK CREEK ROAD  
REED POINT, MT 59069

**\*Priority Date:** DECEMBER 31, 1919

**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 STOCKWATERING 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:** SPRING, UNNAMED TRIBUTARY OF WORK 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		NESENE	5	2S	17E	SWEET GRASS

**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			NESENE	5	2S	17E	SWEET GRASS