

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

\* \* \* \* \*

CLAIMANT: Langford Living Trust

CASE 43QJ-0167-R-2025

43QJ 30138290

**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**

Langford Living Trust claim 30138290 appeared in the Second Preliminary Decree with the following remark:

ACCORDING TO CADASTRAL PROPERTY OWNERSHIP RECORDS, AS OF 07/19/2023 , THE

PROPERTY ON WHICH THIS WATER RIGHT IS USED APPEARS TO BE OWNED BY GREG LANGFORD.

On November 12, 2025, Langford Living Trust filed a Response To Order Setting Filing Deadline including a copy of Co-Trustees' Deed Of Distribution dated January 10, 2019, stating that the property described in the place of use was transferred to Greg Langford. When the Statement of Claim was filed on June 27, 2019, Greg Langford should have been identified as the owner rather than Joan B. Langford Living Trust, Greg Langford Trustee. The Response 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.

#### FINDING OF FACT

The Second Preliminary Decree states that the owner of claim 43QJ 30138290 is Langford Living Trust. The ownership should be corrected to Greg Langford. The ownership remark should be removed as addressed and resolved.

#### CONCLUSION OF LAW

The information provided by the claimant is sufficient to contradict and overcome the *prima facie* claim.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the above Finding of Fact and Conclusion of Law, this Master recommends that the Court make the changes specified in the Finding of Fact to correct the Second 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.

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

**Service Via Electronic Mail:**

Christopher T. Scoones  
Scoones Law PLLC  
chris@scooneslaw.com  
(Atty for: *Langford Living Trust and Greg Langford (potential owner)*)

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

**Water Right Number:** 43QJ 30138290 STATEMENT OF CLAIM

**Version:** 2 -- POST DECREE

**Status:** ACTIVE

**Owners:** GREG H LANGFORD  
145 LOWER SWEET GRASS RD  
BIG TIMBER, MT 59011-7773

**Priority Date:** DECEMBER 31, 1958

**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:** WHISTLE CREEK

**Source Type:** SURFACE WATER

**\*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         |                              | SWNWSE                       | 33         | 1S         | 18E        | STILLWATER    |
|           | <b>Period of Diversion:</b>  | JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31     |            |            |            |               |
|           | <b>Diversion Means:</b>      | LIVESTOCK DIRECT FROM SOURCE |            |            |            |               |
| 2         |                              | NENWSE                       | 33         | 1S         | 18E        | STILLWATER    |
|           | <b>Period of Diversion:</b>  | JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31     |            |            |            |               |
|           | <b>Diversion Means:</b>      | LIVESTOCK DIRECT FROM SOURCE |            |            |            |               |
| 3         |                              | SESWNE                       | 33         | 1S         | 18E        | STILLWATER    |
|           | <b>Period of Diversion:</b>  | JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31     |            |            |            |               |
|           | <b>Diversion Means:</b>      | LIVESTOCK DIRECT FROM SOURCE |            |            |            |               |
| 4         |                              | NESWNE                       | 33         | 1S         | 18E        | STILLWATER    |
|           | <b>Period of Diversion:</b>  | JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31     |            |            |            |               |
|           | <b>Diversion Means:</b>      | LIVESTOCK DIRECT FROM SOURCE |            |            |            |               |
| 5         |                              | NWNWSE                       | 33         | 1S         | 18E        | STILLWATER    |
|           | <b>*Period of Diversion:</b> | JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31     |            |            |            |               |
|           | <b>Diversion Means:</b>      | LIVESTOCK DIRECT FROM SOURCE |            |            |            |               |
|           | <b>*Period of Use:</b>       | JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31     |            |            |            |               |

**\*Place of Use:**

| <b><u>ID</u></b> | <b><u>Acres</u></b> | <b><u>Govt Lot</u></b> | <b><u>Qtr Sec</u></b> | <b><u>Sec</u></b> | <b><u>Twp</u></b> | <b><u>Rge</u></b> | <b><u>County</u></b> |
|------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1                |                     |                        | SWNWSE                | 33                | 1S                | 18E               | STILLWATER           |
| 2                |                     |                        | NENWSE                | 33                | 1S                | 18E               | STILLWATER           |
| 3                |                     |                        | SESWNE                | 33                | 1S                | 18E               | STILLWATER           |
| 4                |                     |                        | NESWNE                | 33                | 1S                | 18E               | STILLWATER           |
| 5                |                     |                        | NWNWSE                | 33                | 1S                | 18E               | STILLWATER           |