

State of Montana
Legislative Services Division

January 14, 2015

RE: LC-1922 "AN ACT REMOVING MADISON BUFFALO JUMP STATE PARK FROM THE LIST OF PRIMITIVE PARKS; AND AMENDING SECTION 23-1-116, MCA."

Dear Sirs,

I write this letter in support of LC-1922, a bill that proposes to remove Madison Buffalo Jump State Park from the list of Primitive Parks, amending Section 23-1-116, MCA. I approve of the removal of Madison Buffalo Jump from the list of primitive parks because I believe that the park should provide easier access to the visitor pavilion atop the steep hill north of the entrance. The park should improve this road and provide parking atop the hill near the pavilion. I worked as an archaeologist at the park in Summer, 2014, and witnessed several cars arrive at the park and leave without walking to the pavilion. Either these visitors were not aware of the pavilion or they simply could not walk up the steep hill to see the display at the pavilion. These visitor displays are wonderful and should be visited by all who take the effort to drive to the park. Improvement of the access road and parking atop the hill near the pavilion is essential to provide all visitors access to the wonderful experience of Madison Buffalo Jump. The first step in allowing this road/parking construction is the removal of it from the Primitive Parks list.

The University of Montana conducted an archaeological survey in the area of the existing dirt road and pavilion during summer, 2014. No archaeological resources were observed in these areas during this survey. Assuming that the new road will be built in the same location as the existing dirt road, there will be no impacts to archaeological resources if the road is improved. However, I recommend use of an archaeological monitor during road construction to avoid any impacts to unidentified resources that might be present.

Thanks for consideration of my opinion on LC-1922. I approve of the removal of Madison Buffalo Jump from this list of Primitive Parks.

Sincerely,



Douglas H. MacDonald, Ph.D.
Dept. of Anthropology Chair & Associate Professor
University of Montana, Missoula
douglas.macdonald@umontana.edu
406-243-5814

Department of Anthropology

Social Science Building | Missoula, Montana 59812-5112 | t: 406.243.2693 | f: 406.243.4918

HB 263
Vandenberg
7