

# STATE OF MONTANA



## DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Helena, MT 59601  
October 17, 1979

Mr. Terry Carmody, Executive Director  
Environmental Quality Council  
Helena, MT 59601

Dear Terry:

Enclosed are two copies of our PER FG-N-113, Selkirk Fishing Access Site. This project consists of placing two concrete bridge abutments and constructing a pedestrian footbridge over the Musselshell River approximately 20 miles west of Harlowton.

We hope this document will satisfy the requirements of the Montana Environmental Policy Act. If you have any questions, please feel free to call on me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James A. Posewitz".

James A. Posewitz, Administrator  
Ecological Services Division

sd

cc: Region 5  
Water Quality Bureau  
Division of Architecture & Engineering  
Wheatland County Commissioners

**RECEIVED**

OCT 17 1979

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
COUNCIL

PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

FOR

SITE IMPROVEMENTS

AT

SELKIRK FISHING ACCESS SITE

WHEATLAND COUNTY

FG-N-113

Prepared by: Walt Anderson  
Montana Dept. of  
Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Parks Division  
9/17/79

## Preliminary Environmental Review

for

### Selkirk Fishing Access Site

#### I. Location of the Project

Selkirk Fishing Access Site is a 253 acre tract located approximately 20 miles west of Harlowton on the Mussellsell River.

#### II. Description of the Project

The surrounding topography is generally flat with some gently rolling hills. Vegetation consists of grasses and shrubs with cottonwoods and willows lining the meandering river.

Wildlife found in the area are whitetail deer, mule deer, antelope, smaller fur bearers, migratory waterfowl, songbirds and some pheasants and grouse.

Geologically the river lies on alluvium consisting of silts, sands and gravel bars. Outside the narrow corridor of alluvium underlying the river is the Claggert and Judith River formations. These consist of sandstone, siltstone, and shale.

The air and water quality is generally good. The primary uses of the land in the area is agriculture with livestock production predominating.

The project will consist of the construction of two concrete bridge abutments and the installation of a pedestrian footbridge. The old bridge, which has washed out, will be removed along with all the debris and the trail leading to it will be scarified and obliterated. A new gravel footpath will be built leading to the footridge. Signing will also be included.

#### III. Purpose of the Project

Approximately one-third of the 253 acre tract lies across the river from the main highway and access road. Currently, because of the washout of the existing bridge, there is no access to this isolated section. By installing a footbridge, immediate access will be provided at a low cost with a minimum amount of impact to the environment and at the same time encourage outdoor exercise on the part of the recreationists utilizing the site.

#### IV. Impacts

##### A. Fish and Wildlife

A small reduction of the fish population in the immediate area is expected due to renewed fishing pressure on the opposite side of the river. The same can be said for game animals as increased hunter pressure across the river is expected. Some larger game animals may leave the area if an increase in recreational use occurs.

##### B. Air and Water

Exhaust fumes and dust will result during the construction period. Also some roiling of the water is expected during construction of the abutments. All of these will return to normal at the completion of the project.

##### C. Vegetation

Some vegetation will be destroyed when the new gravel path leading to the footbridge is laid down. Also, temporary disruptions will occur due to construction activity.

Increased use on the opposite side of the river will result in some vegetation destruction and soil compaction along high-use trails.

The old road will be obliterated, scarified, and reseeded with natural vegetation. Also, any disruptions due to construction activities will be reseeded with natural vegetation.

##### D. Social and Economic

Since the planned improvements are not major, a large increase in use of the site from recreationists outside the local vicinity is not expected. Therefore, social and economic impacts on local residents will be small.

##### E. Historic

An archaeological survey was conducted on site by Steve Aaberg of Montana State University. Some cultural remains were found but it was determined that the proposed developments would not threaten existing cultural remains.

#### V. Basis for P.E.R. vs. E.I.S.

In general the anticipated impacts of this project are considered to be minimal. Considering the limited scope of the project a complete Environmental Impact Statement is not justified.