

Decision Notice
and
Finding of No Significant Impact
for
Swan River Corridor Acquisition

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Region One
490 N. Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901

December 21, 2000

Description of the Proposed Action:

The purpose of this project is to have Trust for Public Land, in association with the Swan River Corridor committee (a subcommittee of the Bigfork Development committee), Bigfork area Chamber of Commerce, and other citizens, acquire approximately 480 acres of Scottish Power Company lands and deed it to the Montana Dept. of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP). The land will be managed for public recreational use. The area is located on the eastern edge of Bigfork and is known as the Swan River Corridor. The purpose of this acquisition is the preservation of the public's right of access to a popular, multi-dimensional, and year-round recreational area. This action would have a long-term beneficial impact both on the economic health of the community and for the environment.

The Swan River Corridor property is located in Flathead County bordering on the east end of Bigfork where the Swan River flows into Flathead Lake. It is an irregularly shaped area fronting on both the north and south sides of the Swan River. River frontage on the north side is approximately one mile fronting on Bigfork Reservoir and one-half mile fronting on the Swan River. Frontage on the south side of the river is approximately one mile fronting on the reservoir and one mile fronting on the free-flowing Swan River. Montana Highway 209 runs through the property parallel to the Swan River on the south side of the river for a distance of two miles.

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Based on the analysis in the Environmental Assessment, I find Alternative #1, that FWP will hold title to the land through donation, and annual recreational operation and maintenance will be funded through a trust established for that purpose, to be the preferred alternative. If funding for this alternative is not sufficient, then Alternative #4, a partial purchase of the property, will become the acceptable alternative. I have evaluated the EA and applicable laws, regulations, and policies, and have determined that this action will not have a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

Edits were made on the Final Environmental Assessment to better reflect the impacts of this purchase. These edits did not substantially alter the EA. The Environmental Assessment and the FONSI may be viewed at or obtained from Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Region One, 490 N. Meridian Road, Kalispell, Montana. Please direct requests and questions to Marty Watkins, FWP Parks Manager, (406) 751-4573.



Dan Vincent, Regional Supervisor
490 N. Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901
(406) 752-5501

12/28/00

Date