



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

1400 South 19th
Bozeman, MT 59718

June 16, 2001

To: Governor's Office, Todd O'Hair, Room 204, State Capital, POB 200801, Helena, MT 59620-0801
Environmental Quality Council, Capitol Building, Room 106, POB 201704, Helena, MT 59620
Dept. Environmental Quality, Metcalf Building, POB 200901, Helena, MT 59620-0901
Dept. of Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Director's Office	Legal Unit
Parks Division	FWP Commissioners
Fisheries Division	Dennis Flath
Wildlife Division	
Lands Section	

MT Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, POB 201202, Helena, MT 59620-1201
MT State Parks Association, POB 699, Billings, MT 59103
MT State Library, 1515 E. Sixth Ave., POB 201800, Helena, MT 59620
James Jensen, Montana Environmental Information Center, POB 1184, Helena, MT 59624
Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon Council, POB 595, Helena, MT 59624
George Ochenski, POB 689, Helena, MT 59624
Broadwater County Commissioners, Courthouse, Townsend, MT 59644
Jerry DiMarco, POB 1571, Bozeman, MT 59771
Wildlife Federation, POB 1175, Helena, MT 59624
Wayne Hurst, POB 728, Libby, MT 59923
Glen Hockett, 745 Doane Road, Bozeman, MT 59715
Tom Sather, Headwaters Fish & Game Association, POB 1941, Bozeman, MT 59771-1941
Perry Backus, 65 Redtail, Dillon, MT 59725

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The enclosed decision notice has been prepared for the Broadwater Snowmobile Club's MEPA compliance/grooming proposal. This is a proposal for groomed snowmobile trails in the Big Belt Mountains east of Townsend, MT.

Questions and comments were accepted from April 23, 2001 through 5 p.m., May 22, 2001. The decision has been made to proceed with the proposed action Alternative Three.

Sincerely,

Patrick J. Flowers
Regional Supervisor

Broadwater

DECISION NOTICE
BROADWATER SNOWMOBILE CLUB SNOWMOBILE GRANT
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
Region 3, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
June 14, 2001

PROPOSAL

The proposed action is for Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) to complete a Montana Environmental Policy Act review of the Broadwater Snowmobile Club grooming proposal.

Prior to the granting of snowmobile grooming funds, FWP completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) to address those issues outlined under the Montana Snowmobile Grant Program Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS). This assessment reviewed what, if any, influence the new groomed trails would have on the human and natural environment and presented reasonable measures to mitigate identified impacts.

MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT PROCESS

FWP is required to assess impacts to the human and physical environment by the Montana Environment Policy Act (MEPA). The Broadwater Snowmobile Club Grooming Proposal and its impacts were documented by FWP in an EA to comply with MEPA. The Montana Snowmobile Grant PEIS was reviewed to determine the issues to be addressed in the draft Broadwater Snowmobile Club Snowmobile Trail Grooming Proposal.

Public comments were solicited for 30 days from April 23 through May 22, 2001. Legal notices regarding the proposed action were printed in area newspapers. Approximately 40 copies of the draft EA were mailed out to FWP's standard distribution list and interested parties.

No significant issues were identified or generated during the EA review and/ or public comment period.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENT

FWP received a total of two letters during the comment period. A summary of the comments follows.

Two written responses to the draft EA were received. The first comment, from a private citizen, expressed strong support for the proposed grooming. The second written response, from John Gatchell, Conservation Director of the Montana Wilderness Association expressed support for the project, encouraging provisions for education, and a commitment by the land managing agency (USFS) and FWP to regularly monitor and enforce the approved travel plan.

DECISION NOTICE

Based on the analysis in the Environmental Assessment (EA) and comments received on the proposal, I find that Alternative Three to be the preferred alternative. Alternative Three authorizes FWP funds, if available to be used to help groom the proposed 36 miles of trails in the Southern Big Belt Mountains near Townsend. Trails are located on approximately 15 square miles of public land, which is approximately 9,450 acres. A tradition of public recreation has developed in the area of the proposed grooming over many years. A state-grooming grant would guarantee a joint commitment of FWP, USFS, and Broadwater Snowmobile Club to promote ethical public land use.

The draft EA will be accepted as the final EA.

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 (EIS) will not be prepared.

The Final EA may be viewed at or obtained upon request from the Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Region 3, Bozeman, Montana.



Patrick J. Flowers
Regional Supervisor
Bozeman, MT