



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

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LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL
POLICY OFFICE

Region One
490 North Meridian Rd.
Kalispell, MT 59901
(406) 752-5501
FAX: 406-257-0349
Ref:JS032-05
April 27, 2005

TO: Governor's Office, Attn: Mike Volesky, PO Box 200801, Helena, 59620-0801
Environmental Quality Council, PO Box 201704, Helena, 59620-1704
*Dept. of Environmental Quality, Planning, Prevention & Assistance, PO Box 200901, Helena, 59620-0901
*Dept. of Environmental Quality, Permitting Compliance, PO Box 200901, Helena, 59620-0901
DNRC, PO Box 201601, Helena, 59620-1601; *Kalispell: Bob Sandman
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks - Director's Office: Reg Peterson; Parks: Walt Timmerman, Allan Kuser; Legal
Unit: Brandi Fisher
*SHPO, PO Box 201202, Helena, 59620-1202
*Montana State Library, 1515 East Sixth Ave., Helena, 59620-1800 (e-mailed)
Jim Jensen, Montana Environmental Information Center, PO Box 1184, Helena, 59624
George Ochenski, PO Box 689, Helena, 59624
Wayne Hirst, Montana State Parks Foundation, PO Box 728, Libby, 59923
Montana State Parks Association, PO Box 699, Billings, 59103
Joe Gutkoski, President, Montana River Action Network, 304 N 18th Ave., Bozeman, 59715
Rep. Bernie Olson, 161 Lakeside Blvd., Lakeside, 59922
Sen. Bob Keenan, Box 697, Bigfork, 59911-0697
Flathead County Commissioners, 800 S Main Street, Kalispell, 59901
Flathead County Library, 247 First Avenue E, Kalispell, 59901

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP), Region One, has completed an environmental assessment (EA) for the Somers fishing access site for the purpose of granting funding through the Motorboat Enhancement Program to Flathead County Parks and Weeds for the purpose of expanding the parking area, establishing and maintaining greenbelt vegetation to intercept runoff from the expanded parking area, and developing a paved trail to control pedestrian/bicycle traffic in the area of the boat ramp.

Based on the analysis in the EA, I find funding this project through Motorboat Enhancement Program to be the preferred alternative, with the modifications to the parking area as outlined in the final environmental assessment.

Copies of the record of decision and final EA are enclosed. Please direct your questions or comments to Regional Parks Manager Marty Watkins, FWP, 490 N. Meridian Rd., Kalispell, MT 59901, or e-mail mawatkins@state.mt.us.

Sincerely,

Jim Satterfield
Regional Supervisor

/ni
Enclosure

*E-mailed

Record of Decision
and
Finding of No Significant Impact
for
Somers FAS Parking Expansion
Environmental Assessment

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Region 1
490 N. Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901

April 27, 2005

Description of the Proposed Action:

The proposed action is to grant funding through the Motorboat Enhancement Program to Flathead County for the purpose of expanding the parking area at the Somers swim area.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) proposes to grant \$35,000 to Flathead County Parks and Weeds for the purpose of expanding the vehicle/boat trailer parking, to establish/maintain greenbelt vegetation to intercept runoff from the expanded parking area, and to develop a paved trail to control pedestrian/bicycle traffic in the area of the boat ramp.

Public Comment:

No public comment was received on this EA; however, public comment was received during the grant writing/approval process.

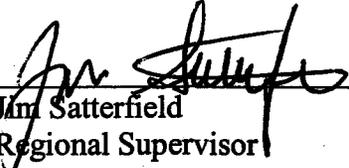
Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI):

Based on the analysis in the environmental assessment (EA), I find funding this project through Motorboat Enhancement Program to be the preferred alternative, with the modifications to the parking area as outlined in the final environmental assessment. 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.

Copies of the final environmental assessment and/or the record of decision (ROD) and FONSI may be obtained from FWP, 490 N. Meridian Road, Kalispell, MT 59901, or the FWP web site at fwp.mt.gov. Please direct requests and questions to:

Marty Watkins, Regional Parks Manager
Fish, Wildlife & Parks
490 N. Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901
(406) 752-5501
mawatkins@mt.gov

In accordance with FWP policy, an appeal may be made by any person who has either commented in writing to the department on the proposed project, or who has registered or commented orally at a public meeting held by the department on the proposed project, or who can provide new evidence that would otherwise change the proposed plan. An appeal must be submitted to the Director of FWP in writing and must be postmarked or received within 30 days of this decision notice. The appeal must describe the basis for the appeal, how the appellant has previously commented to the department or participated in the decision-making process, and how the department can provide relief. The appeal should be mailed to: Director, FWP, 1420 East 6th Ave., Helena, MT 59620.



Jim Satterfield
Regional Supervisor

4/20/05

Date

MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS



FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS MEPA/NEPA CHECKLIST

MISSION. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, through its employees and citizen commission, provides for the stewardship of the fish, wildlife, parks, and recreational resources of Montana, while contributing to the quality of life for present and future generations.

All Montanans have the right to live in a clean and healthful environment. This brief environmental analysis is intended to provide an evaluation of the likely impacts to the human environment from proposed actions of the project cited below. This analysis will help Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks to fulfill its oversight obligations and satisfy rules and regulations of both the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The project sponsor has a responsibility to ensure that all impacts have been addressed. Some effects may be negative; others may be positive. Please provide a discussion for each section. If no impacts are likely, be sure to discuss the reasoning that led to your determination.

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. Type of proposed action:

Development X

Renovation

Maintenance

Land Acquisition

Equipment Acquisition

Other (Describe)

2. If appropriate, agency responsible for the proposed action:

Flathead County Parks and Weeds

3. Name, address phone number and E-mail address of project sponsor:

Jed Fisher, Director of Flathead County Parks and Weeds

1257 Willow Glenn Drive

Kalispell, MT 59901

758-5798

4. Name of project: **Somers FAS Parking Expansion**
5. Estimated construction/commencement date: **April 2005**
 Estimated completion date: **Spring 2006**
 Current status of project design (% complete): **100%**
6. Location affected by proposed action (county, range and township):
T.27.N. R.21.W. Gov. Lots 1 & 2, Flathead County, Montana
7. Project size: estimate the numbers of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:
 - (a) Developed:
 - residential..... ___ acres
 - industrial ___ acres
 - (b) Open Space/Woodlands/
 Recreation (roads, parking, trail) **≤5** acres
 - (c) Wetlands/Riparian
 Areas ___ acres
 - (d) Floodplain..... ___ acres
 - (e) Productive:
 - irrigated cropland ___ acres
 - dry cropland..... ___ acres
 - forestry..... ___ acres
 - rangeland ___ acres
 - other ___ acres
8. Map/site plan: attach an original 8 1/2" x 11" or larger section of the most recent USGS 7.5' series topographic map showing the location and boundaries of the area that would be affected by the proposed action. A different map scale may be substituted if more appropriate or if required by agency rule. If available, a site plan should also be attached.

Please see Appendix A for the location of this project and the final site plan.

9. Narrative summary of the proposed action or project including the benefits and purpose of the proposed action:

Expand the parking area at an existing FAS, establish/maintain greenbelt vegetation to intercept runoff from expanded parking area, and develop a paved trail to control pedestrian/bicycle traffic in the area of the boat ramp.

10. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the required no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider, and a comparison of the alternatives with the proposed action/preferred alternative:

There is inadequate parking at the state fishing access site in Somers, resulting in congestion and safety concerns for site users. The alternatives for this project would be to not grant the funding to complete the additional parking, or to design and complete alternative vehicle/boat trailer parking at the Somers swim beach area.

11. Listing of each local, state or federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction:

(a) Permits		
Agency Name:	Permit:	Date Filed:

(b) Funding	
Agency Name:	Funding Amount:

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities	
Agency Name:	Type of Responsibility:

12. List of agencies consulted during preparation of this Environmental Checklist:

13. Name of Preparer(s) of this Environmental Checklist: **Written by Kevin Coates; final edits by Parks Manager Marty Watkins, FWP, 490 N Meridian Road, Kalispell, MT 59901; (406) 751-4573; mwatkins@mt.gov.**

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Land Resources" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on land resources. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects of the action as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

1. LAND RESOURCES Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		X				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil which would reduce productivity or fertility?		X				
c. Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other						

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Air" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on air resources. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects of the action as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

2. AIR Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (also see 13 (c))		X				
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		X				
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. Any discharge that will conflict with federal or state air quality regs?		X				
f. Other						

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Water” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on water resources. Even if you checked “none” in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

3. WATER	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?			X		YES	3.a.
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?		X				
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of floodwater or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
l. Effects to a designated floodplain?		X				
m. Any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations?		X				
n. Other:						

3.a. A narrow greenbelt of vegetation is being established to intercept any runoff of undesirable sediments from the parking area before entering Flathead Lake.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Vegetation" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on vegetative resources. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

4. VEGETATION	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?		X				
b. Alteration of a plant community?		X				
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?		X				
f. Effects to wetlands or prime and unique farmland?		X				
g. Other:						

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Fish/Wildlife" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on fish and wildlife resources. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

5. FISH/WILDLIFE	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		X				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?			X		YES	5.f.
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?		X				
h. Adverse effects to threatened/endangered species or their habitat?			X		YES	5.f.
i. Introduction or exportation of any species not presently or historically occurring in the affected location?		X				
j. Other:						

5.f. A greenbelt of vegetation is being established and maintained, as part of the proposed parking expansion, to intercept runoff of any potential undesirable sediments from the parking area before entering Flathead Lake.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Noise/Electrical Effects" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects of noise and electrical activities. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

6. NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Increases in existing noise levels?		X				
b. Exposure of people to severe or nuisance noise levels?		X				
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				
e. Other:						

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Land Use" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on land use. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects.

7. LAND USE	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		X				
b. A conflict with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. A conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on, or relocation of, residences?		X				
e. Compliance with existing land policies for land use, transportation, and open space?		X				
f. Increased traffic hazards, traffic volume, or speed limits or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?		X				7.f
g. Other:						

7.f. Upon project completion, the Montana Department of Transportation will evaluate the need for a turn lane.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Risk/Health Hazards" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects of risks and health hazards. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects of the action as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

8. RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?		X				
b. Effects on existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				
d. Disturbance to any sites with known or potential deposits of hazardous materials?		X				
e. The use of any chemical toxicants?		X				
f. Other:						

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Community Impact" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on the community. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		X				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?	X					9.e.
f. Other:						

9.e. If use of the site significantly increases upon project completion, the Montana Department of Transportation will inspect ingress/egress from the parking area and evaluate traffic hazards to determine need for a turn lane off of Highway 93.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Public Services/Taxes/Utilities" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on public services, taxes and utilities. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

10. PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. An effect upon, or result in a need for new or altered, governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If so, specify:		X				
b. Effects on the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				
c. A need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Increased used of any energy source?		X				
e. Other.						
Additional information requested:						
f. Define projected revenue sources.	State of Montana Grant: "Motor boat facility program"					
g. Define projected maintenance costs.	Site administered by Flathead County Parks and Weeds Dept.					

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Aesthetics/Recreation” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on aesthetics & recreation. Even if you checked “none” in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

11. AESTHETICS/RECREATION	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?		X				
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		X				
c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report)		X				
d. Adverse effects to any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas?		X				
e. Other:						

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Cultural/historical Resources” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on cultural/historical resources. Even if you checked “none” in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

12. CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance?		X				
b. Physical changes that would affect unique cultural values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. Adverse effects to historic or cultural resources?		X				
e. Other:						

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Summary Evaluation of Significance" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects. Even if you have checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:						
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources which create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)		X				
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?		X				
f. Have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy?		X				
Additional information requested:						
g. List any federal or state permits required.						

PART III. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST CONCLUSION SECTION

1. Discuss the cumulative and secondary effects of this project as a whole:

The project has no cumulative or secondary effects on the aquatic resources of Flathead Lake. The proposed action is to provide parking for 16 vehicle/trailer combinations and seven single vehicles. The proposal also includes establishing a greenbelt of vegetation to intercept runoff from the expanded parking area before it can enter Flathead Lake. In addition improvements to a pedestrian/bicycle trail will be completed.

2. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this Environmental Checklist (Part II), is an EIS required?

YES _____

NO X

If an EIS is not required, explain why the current checklist level of review is appropriate:

No significant environmental effects were identified that would result from project implementation. Several potentially minor effects were identified, but they can and will be mitigated.

3. Describe the public involvement for this project:

This has been a community-sponsored project, first initiated in 2001. While there was not public comment on this environmental assessment, there has been a complete public comment process on the bike trail and swim beach development.

4. What is the duration of the public comment period?

Thirty days, from July 22 through August 22, 2004.

5. Contact person:

**Marty Watkins, Regional Parks Manager
Fish, Wildlife & Parks
490 N. Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901
(406) 751-4573
mawatkins@mt.gov**



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PARKING LOT PLAN

FOR
MT FW&P

SOMERS/AMESIDE MT

PARKING PLAN

DRAWN BY: RCJ
CHECKED BY: MAL
JOB # 17003.04
DATE: 03-14-2004

ISSUE FOR:
REVIEW

Appendix A

