



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

2300 Lake Elmo Drive
Billings MT 59105

August 23, 2005

RECEIVED

AUG 25 2005

LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL
POLICY OFFICE

TO: Environmental Quality Council
Director's Office, Dept. of Environmental Quality*
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Director's Office	Lands Section
Parks Division	Design & Construction
Fisheries Division	Legal Unit
Wildlife Division	Regional Supervisors

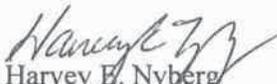
Mike Volesky, Governor's Office*
Sarah Elliott, Press Agent, Governor's Office*
Montana Historical Society, State Preservation Office
Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon Council
Montana Wildlife Federation
Montana State Library*
George Ochenski
Montana Environmental Information Center
Wayne Hirst, Montana State Parks Foundation
FWP Commissioner Shane Colton
Bob Raney
Sharon Moore, DNRC Area Manager, Southern Land Office
Other Local Interested People or Groups
* (Sent electronically)

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The enclosed draft Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared for development to Chief Plenty Coups State Park, and is submitted for your consideration. Improvements will include irrigation of the picnic area, electrical service to the irrigation system and picnic area, and a playground for children. Questions and comments will be accepted until **September 26, 2005**.

If you have questions or need additional copies of the draft EA, please contact Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks at 247-2940. Please send any written comments by mail to: Susan Stewart Medicine Horse, POB 100 Pryor, MT 59066 or e-mail to plentycoups@plentycoups.org.

Thank you for your interest,


Harvey E. Nyberg
Regional Supervisor

Enclosure



***Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks***

Environmental Assessment

**Chief Plenty Coups State Park Proposed Picnic Area
Electrical/Irrigation and Playground Improvements**

August 2005

MEPA/NEPA/23-1-110 MCA CHECKLIST

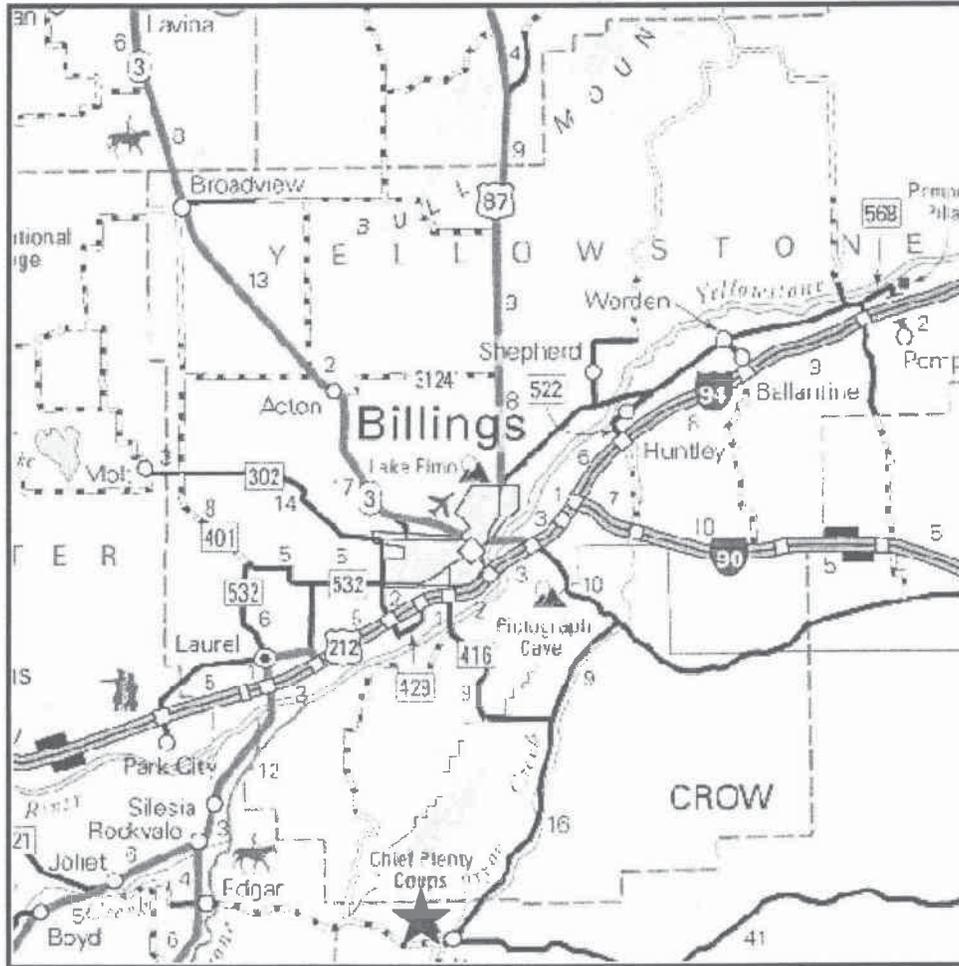
PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. **Type of Proposed State Action:** Development
2. **Name of Project:** Chief Plenty Coups State Park Picnic Area Electrical/Irrigation and Playground
3. **Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor (if other than the agency):**
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Region 5
2300 Lake Elmo Drive
Billings, MT 59105
(406) 247-2955
4. **If Applicable:**
Estimated Construction/Commencement Date: September 15, 2005

Estimated Completion Date: May 1, 2006

Current Status of Project Design (75 % complete):

5. **Location Affected by Proposed Action (county, range and township):** Chief Plenty Coups State Park is located in Township 5 South, Range 26 East, Section 5 and 6, Bighorn County, Montana. The park is 194 acres.

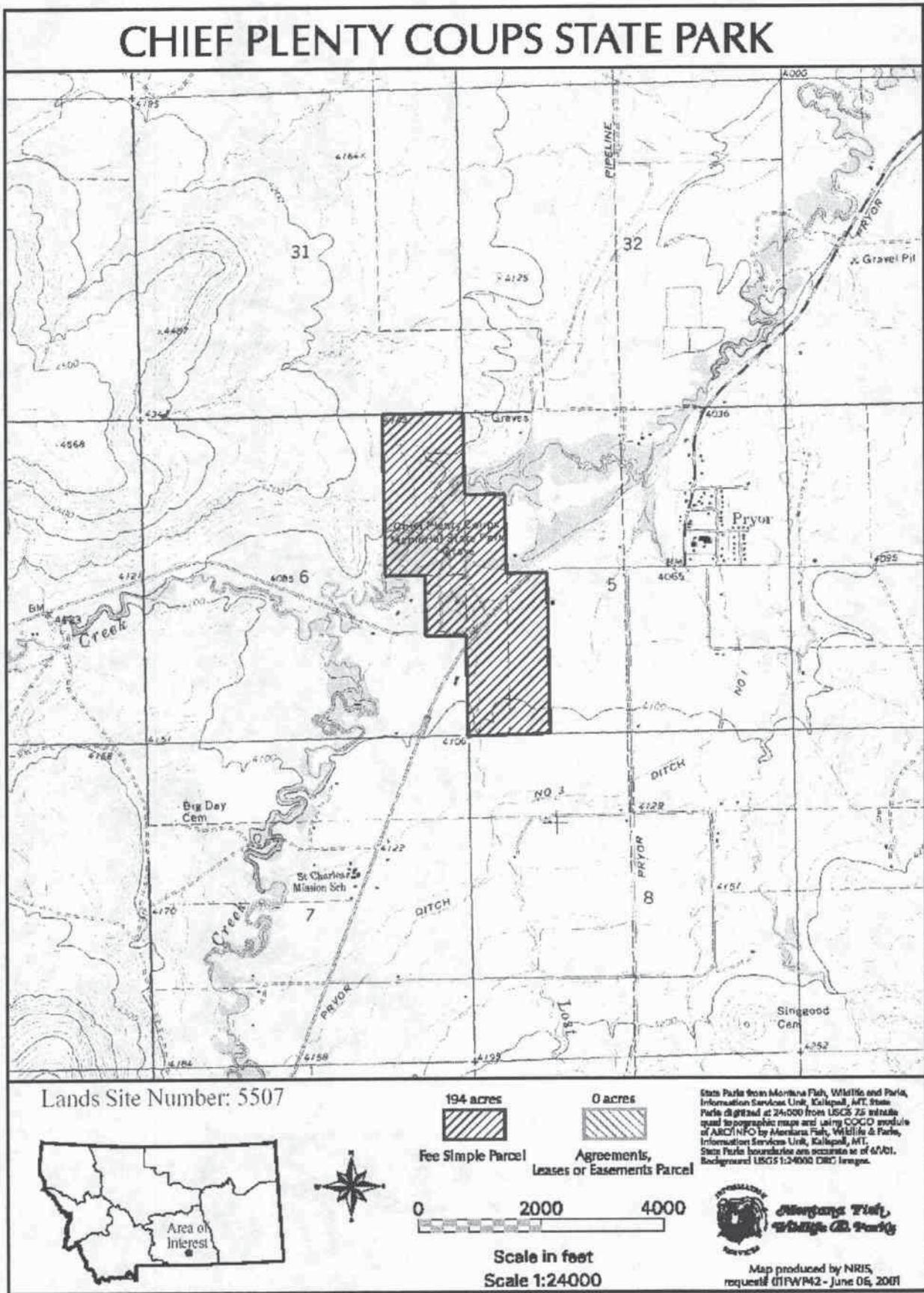


Blue star delineates location of Chief Plenty Coups State Park.

6. **Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:**

Acres	Acres
(a) Developed:	(d) Floodplain 0
Residential 0	(e) Productive:
Industrial 0	irrigated cropland 0
(b) Open Space/Woodlands/Recreation 6	dry cropland 0
(c) Wetlands/Riparian Areas 0	Forestry 0
	Rangeland 0
	Other 0

7. Map/site plan:



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

History of Chief Plenty Coups State Park

Chief Plenty Coups was the last traditional Chief of the Crow Nation. He and his wife, Strikes The Iron, willed their home and land as a place for all cultures to come together in a cooperative nature. He dedicated his home to honor the culture of the Crow Nation and to bring people together. Chief Plenty Coups State Park is the result of this dedication.

Chief Plenty Coups State Park is a heavily used recreation area. In 2004 it received 45,000 visitors. The park offers interpretive walking tours (Chief Plenty Coups' home, medicine spring, and grave site), a museum about Chief Plenty Coups and the Crow Nation, a gift shop, and a large picnic area. Many visitors come to the park for the historical and cultural value. Residents of Pryor and the surrounding communities also utilize the park as a gathering place for local events (e.g., graduation parties, family reunions, other local events). The next closest park to Pryor is in the Billings area (35 miles).

Proposed Action, Purpose and Benefits of the Action

This project proposes to:

- o install electrical service to the day-use picnic area;
- o install an irrigation system in the day-use picnic area; and
- o install a playground in the picnic area.

The intentions of these projects are to enhance and provide additional and higher quality experiences for visitors to Chief Plenty Coups State Park while protecting the heritage and cultural values of the park.

In 2004, Big Horn County agreed to provide \$43,000 in funding for these projects. This was in response to a request from the Friends of Chief Plenty Coups (Chief Plenty Coups Advisory Council) and on-site meeting with the park manager. This funding is from coal extraction fees provided to the county.

Irrigation system

The irrigation system will increase aesthetic appeal of and provide fire prevention for the picnic area at Chief Plenty Coups State Park. The picnic / day-use area is used heavily by both non-resident visitors and, particularly, by local Pryor and Crow Reservation residents. This includes both casual use by families, small groups and individuals, but also by large groups celebrating graduations, weddings, and special events like the Day of Honor or arrow-throwing tournaments. These groups can number in the several hundreds.

During the 1970's, an underground irrigation system was installed but subsequently became inoperable. Increased attention was placed on museum management and provision for day-use was lower priority. In the last 10 years, the importance of the day-use area for individual and group use has been recognized and improvements have been made including latrine replacement, road-graveling and fire rings and picnic tables. Larger areas are being mowed and regularly maintained. In the mid to late summer the grass has usually turned brown due to lack of water. Irrigating the picnic

area would keep the area green and enjoyable into the late summer and increase the aesthetics of the picnic area.

The town of Pryor has a local volunteer fire department, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) also provides fire prevention support. Mobilizing these units would not be immediate in the event of a fire, and cultural items and recreational facilities could be threatened. Irrigation of this area would keep moisture in the grass, reducing fire danger.

The irrigation system will irrigate approximately 3 acres of the picnic area (Appendix 2). We are proposing an aboveground system to prevent impacts to buried cultural resources. Water will be pumped from Pryor Creek to run the irrigation system; the park has original water rights from Plenty Coups to allow for this. An electric pump with an intake screen/filter and trash rack will be used. The bank area immediate to the pump intake may need to be stabilized, dependent on final design of the intake system.

Electrical

An electrical supply system to run the pump station will be installed at the same time as the irrigation system. The electrical system will consist of a power transformer for the pump station and four drop lines throughout the picnic area (Appendix 2). The electrical drops will be power pedestals similar to an RV power plug-in (50 or 100 Amps). A total of 2,316 feet of electrical line will be trenched (1,016 feet to pump station and 1300 feet to all electrical drops). Other than the line to the pump, trenched lines would be along the existing roadway on the upper bench area around the alluvial picnic area. This bench area has typically had fewer buried cultural resources. The project would provide power for special events and group gatherings and allow for respectful electrical lighting of Plenty Coups gravesite after dark.

Play Area

Installation of the manufactured playground equipment would increase the recreation opportunities for families with children ages 5-12 years. Local residents would utilize the play area during the numerous local gatherings at the park. A designated recreation area for kids has been missing at this park, and would enhance the park greatly. Chief Plenty Coups viewed his home as an gathering place for all peoples, including children. Adding a play area is in keeping with the Chief's vision of the park. Out of town visitors could utilize the play area after viewing the cultural sites and before getting into their cars for the long drive home. A play area was identified as an important improvement in both the Chief Plenty Coups State Park Management Plan and Interpretive Plan, both of which had extensive public participation. The playground will be in the southeast corner of the picnic area, on the lower terrace and tucked against the hillside. This will allow easy supervision by adults and facilitate further improvements such as benches and signage. Visual impact on the historic zone of the park will be minimal with the playground visually screened from Plenty Coups house by distance, vegetation and topography.

The play system (Appendix 2) will occupy approximately 1,650 square feet. All equipment will meet standards set by the Consumer Products Safety Commission and the American Society for Testing and Materials, as well as being certified by the International Play Equipment Manufacturers Association. This will include providing a safe buffer zone surrounding the equipment. These standards are set according to how

equipment is designed. Installation will require removal of the turf and 24 concrete footings 20" deep. A gravel trail will be made from adjacent parking areas to the playground. The trail will be laid over the surface once the lawn turf has been removed.

Cultural Issues

This proposal balances the needs to preserve the historic setting of Plenty Coups house with Plenty Coups stated will to have his land "definitely set apart as a park and recreation ground". The design and construction of these improvements will minimize effects on buried cultural resources, with appropriate recovery and recording of any objects disturbed.

9. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:

Alternative A: No Action

If no action is taken, Chief Plenty Coups State Park would continue to provide ample opportunities for local and non-local visitors. However the picnic area would continue to turn brown in late summer, the grave site would only be viewed during daylight hours, power would not be available for special events and gatherings and there would be limited outdoor recreational activities for children.

Alternative B: Install a manufactured playground in the picnic area

Installation of the play area would increase the recreation opportunities for families with children ages 5-12 years. Out of town visitors could utilize the play area after viewing the cultural sites and before getting into their cars for the long drive home. Local residents would utilize the play area during the numerous local gatherings at the park.

Alternative C: Install electrical service and irrigation system in the day-use picnic area

The irrigation system would provide area fire prevention and increase the aesthetic appeal of the picnic area at Chief Plenty Coups State Park.

Undertaking both projects at the same time makes sense, as an electrical system must be installed in conjunction with the irrigation system to provide electricity to run the pump station.

Alternative D: Install electrical service and irrigation system in the day-use picnic area, and install a play area in the picnic area.

This is our preferred alternative. The benefits of all three projects have been described in the Alternatives B and C. Undertaking all projects at the same time makes sense as they are all occurring in the same area in the park. Recreation time lost in the picnic area would be minimized. Noise and other construction activities would be completed at one time. Finally, mobilization costs would be kept to a minimum, as construction would occur at one time.

10. Listing of any other Local, State or Federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction.

(a) Permits:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Date Filed/#</u>
Multi	124 – Streambank permit	Prior to project

(b) Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>	<u>Funding Source</u>
Bighorn County	\$43,000	Infrastructure Fund
MFWP	\$21,000 – playground equipment	Parks Revenue
Additional funding may be required depending on final design and costs. Design, engineering, project supervision costs are not included and primarily include existing staff time.		

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
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11. List of agencies consulted during preparation of the EA

Board of Commissioners Bighorn County
PO Box 908
Hardin, MT 59034
406-665-9700

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks
Parks Division, Wildlife Division, Fisheries Division,
Design and Construction Bureau

Montana Department of Commerce—Tourism
PO Box 200533, 1424 9th Ave., Helena, MT 59620-0533

Montana Natural Heritage Program—Natural Resources Information System
PO Box 201800, 1515 East Sixth Avenue, Helena, MT 59620-1800

State Historic Preservation Office

Montana Historical Society, 1410 8th Avenue, Helena, MT 59620

US Fish and Wildlife Service, Lewistown MT
Robin Wagner 406-538-2391

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

1. Evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment.

A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. <u>LAND RESOURCES</u> 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			1d.
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 1d. The irrigation system may minimally change erosion patterns in the stream. The natural erosion of the stream will be greater than the erosion caused by the irrigation system. The stream bank in the immediate vicinity of the pump intake will need to be stabilized to protect the intake. The stream channel will not be modified as a result of this project.

2. <u>AIR</u> 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			2a.
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. ***For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge, which will conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a)		NA				
f. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

2a. Air quality may decrease during installation of the irrigation system, electrical system and play area. This alteration will be minor and temporary.

3. <u>WATER</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. *Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?		X				
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?			X			3b.
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			3j.
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. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c)		NA				
m. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a)		NA				
n. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

3b. Surface runoff will be minimally increased during use of irrigation system.
 3i. The park has an existing water right from the original allotment to Chief Plenty Coups. The water right allows irrigation of up to 95.5 acres under these rights.

4. VEGETATION	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Will the proposed action result in:	Unknown *	None	Minor *		
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			4b.
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				4c.
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?		X				
f. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		NA				
g. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 4b. Increased water due to irrigation will maintain green grass throughout the dry summer months. The plant community composition will not be altered, but growth will increase.
- 4c. The Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP) identified Joe-pye Weed *Eupatorium maculatum* as located along Pryor Creek at Chief Plenty Coups State Park. This plant is on the U.S. Bureau of Land Management watch list. The state rank is imperiled (S2) and the global rank is secure (G5). The first observation date is July 29, 1952 and there have been no records since this time.

** 5. <u>FISH/WILDLIFE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				5a.
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				5b.
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of non-game 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				5f.
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?		X				
h. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f)		NA				
i. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d)		NA				
j. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 5a. This project will not deteriorate critical fish and wildlife habitat. Fish species in Pryor Creek include brook trout (dominant species), white sucker, long nose dace, and rainbow trout. Historically, Yellowstone cutthroat trout were the dominant species. They have been eradicated from this portion of Pryor Creek. Pryor Creek is minimally impaired due to upstream housing developments and grazing. This project will not further deteriorate the stream habitat. The irrigation system should not create much erosion in the stream. Natural erosion will be greater than erosion from the sprinkling system.
- 5b. There are few big game animals in the area, and this project will have no impact on their diversity or abundance. There are pheasants and sharp tailed grouse in the area and this project will have no impact on their abundance.
- 5f. The MNHP did not identify any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species within 1 mile of the site. There are no known bald eagle nests in the area; however, bald eagles may winter in the area of Chief Plenty Coups State Park. This project should cause no impacts on bald eagles.

B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Increases in existing noise levels?			X			6a.
b. Exposure of people to serve 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:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

6a. Noise will increase during installation of the irrigation system, installation of the electrical system and installation of the play area. This noise will be temporary and during daylight hours.

7. <u>LAND USE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		X				
b. Conflicted with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. 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. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

This project will not impact land use.

8. <u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u>	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Will the proposed action result in:	Unknown *	None	Minor *		
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				8a.
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				
d. ***For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)		NA				
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

8a. Best Management Practices will be used to minimize the chance of health risks and health hazards.

9. <u>COMMUNITY IMPACT</u>	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Will the proposed action result in:	Unknown *	None	Minor *		
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				
f. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Will the proposed action have 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 any, specify:		X				
b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				
c. Will the proposed action result in 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. Will the proposed action result in increased used of any energy source?		X				
e. **Define projected revenue sources						
f. **Define projected maintenance costs.						
g. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

There will be no alterations to public services, taxes or utilities due to the proposed projects.

10f: Maintenance Costs are difficult to exactly define. Additional utility cost will be associated with the electrical, primarily to provide power for the electrical pumps. It is hoped that these improvements will increase visitation to the park, which will result in higher caretaking, latrine and litter service. It is not estimated to be over \$750 in additional cost on an annual basis.

** 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				11c.
d. ***For P-R/D-J, will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c)		NA				
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

11c. Please see attached tourism report (Appendix 3). This project will raise the quality of the site for both tourist and local visitors.

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				12a.
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? (Also see 12.a)						
e. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

12a. Design of the irrigation and electrical systems is intended to have no negative impacts on cultural resources. Archeological testing will be done to mitigate any below ground surface activities such as burying of the power lines. The playground will be installed on the surface, except for footings, which will be monitored and any materials recovered.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

13. <u>SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE</u> Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources that 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. ***For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e)		NA				
g. ****For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.		NA				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW, CONTINUED

2. Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:

Best Management Practices will be utilized during all construction.

SHPO mitigation

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

The proposed project will have minor and temporary negative impacts. The benefits will be significant, with a more enjoyable park and better provision for both local users and out of area visitors. This project is supported by the park management plan and is a partnership project with Big Horn County and the Chief Plenty Coups Advisory Council (aka The Friends of Chief Plenty Coups).

PART IV. EA CONCLUSION SECTION

1. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required (YES/NO)? **NO** If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action.

Based on an evaluation of impacts to the physical and human environment under MEPA, this environmental review found no significant negative impacts from the proposed action at Chief Plenty Coups State Park. Thus, an EIS is not necessary and an environmental assessment is the appropriate level of analysis.

2. Describe the level of public involvement for this project if any and, given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?

The public will be notified in the following ways to comment on the EA of the Chief Plenty Coups State Park Improvements:

1. Legal notices will be published in the *Billings Gazette*, the *Big Horn County News* and the *Helena Independent Record*.
2. Legal notice and the draft EA will be posted on the Fish, Wildlife, & Parks web page: <http://fwp.state.mt.us>

This level of public involvement is appropriate since this project will provide positive benefit and all negative impacts are considered minor.

3. Duration of comment period, if any.

The public comment period will be from August 23 through September 26, 2005.
Comments may be emailed to plentycoups@plentycoups.org, or written
comments may be sent to the following address:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Attention: Chief Plenty Coups State Park EA
POB 100
Pryor, MT 59066

4. Name, title, address and phone number of the person(s) responsible for preparing the EA:

Sally Schrank
Independent contractor
112 Riverview C
Great Falls, MT 59404
406-268-0527

Doug Habermann
Regional Park Manager
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
2300 Lake Elmo Drive
Billings, MT 59105
406-247-2940

APPENDICES

1. 23-1-110 MCA Project Qualification Checklist
2. Site Plan
3. Tourism Report – Department of Commerce

APPENDIX 1
HB495
Project Qualification Checklist

Date April 19, 2005

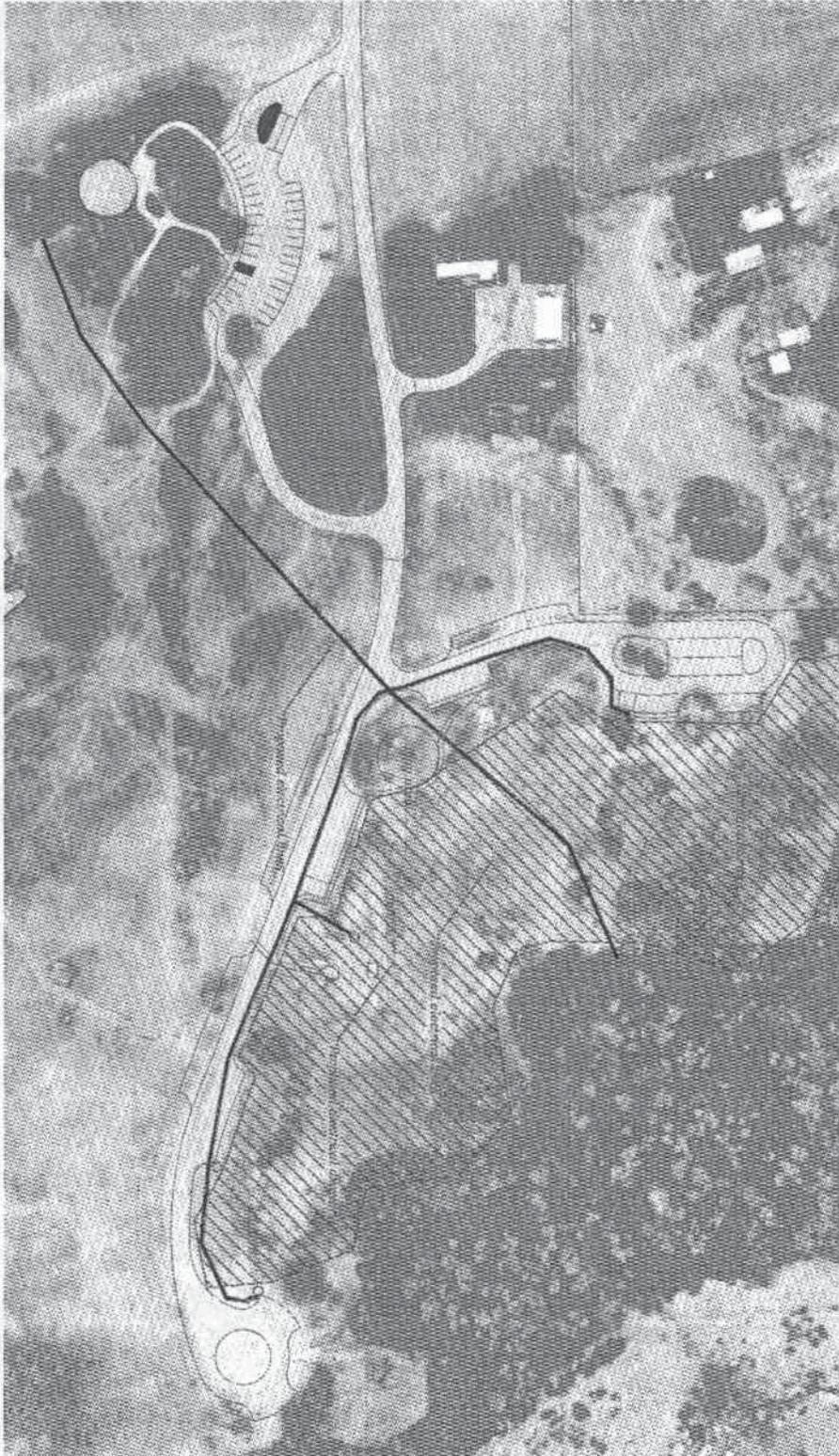
Person Reviewing : Doug Habermann

Project Location: Chief Plenty Coups State Park

Description of Proposed Work: The proposed project includes installation of electrical and irrigation service and a playground in the Chief Plenty Coups State Park Picnic Area.

- A.** New roadway or trail built over undisturbed land?
Comments: A gravel trail will lead from the parking area to the playground.
- B.** New building construction (buildings <100 sf and vault latrines exempt)?
Comments:
- C.** Any excavation of 20 c.y. or greater?
- D.** New parking lots built over undisturbed land or expansion of existing lot that increases parking capacity by 25% or more?
- E.** Any new shoreline alteration that exceeds a doublewide boat ramp or handicapped fishing station?
- F.** Any new construction into lakes, reservoirs, or streams?
Comments: Intake structures and stream bank stabilization in the immediate area of the intake may be necessary, depending on final design.
- G.** Any new construction in an area with National Registry quality cultural artifacts (as determined by State Historical Preservation Office)?
Comments: The project is designed to have no impact on the cultural resources. Any ground disturbance will be monitored and cultural materials recovered.
- H.** Any new above ground utility lines?
Comments:
- I.** Any increase or decrease in campsites of 25% or more of an existing number of campsites?
Comments:
- J.** Proposed project significantly changes the existing features or use pattern; including effects of a series of individual projects?

APPENDIX 2
Site Plan: Irrigation System and Electrical System



APPENDIX 2, continued
Site Plan: Playground Pictures



APPENDIX 3
TOURISM REPORT
MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA)/HB495

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks has initiated the review process as mandated by HB495 and the Montana Environmental Policy Act in its consideration of the project described below. As part of the review process, input and comments are being solicited. Please complete the project name and project description portions and submit this form to:

Victor Bjornberg, Tourism Development Coordinator
Travel Montana-Department of Commerce
PO Box 200533
1424 9th Ave.
Helena, MT 59620-0533

Project Name: Chief Plenty Coups State Park Improvements

Project Description: The proposed project is threefold: 1) install an irrigation system in the day-use picnic area; 2) install a light at the Chief Plenty Coups Grave site; and 3) install a play area in the picnic area. The intentions of these projects are to enhance the park and protect its cultural value.

1. Would this site development project have an impact on the tourism economy?
NO YES If YES, briefly describe:

While there would be little impact to the tourism economy with these proposed projects, we hope that FWP has consulted with the Crow Tribe regarding these projects and have received approval that they will fit well with Chief Plenty Coups State Park, the Chief's gravesite, and cultural significance of this area.

2. Does this impending improvement alter the quality or quantity of recreation/tourism opportunities and settings?
NO YES If YES, briefly describe:

Ditto the above statement.

Signature Victor A. Bjornberg, Tourism Development Coordinator, Travel Montana
Date April 22, 2005