

# BANNACK STATE PARK INTERPRETIVE TRAILS PROJECT DECISION NOTICE

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
1400 S. 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Bozeman, MT 59718

January 27, 2006

## Description of the Proposed Action:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) proposes to promote, interpret and improve about 10.75 miles of existing roads and trails in Bannack State Park, State of Montana (DNRC) property, and on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) property; to grade and gravel single vehicle turn around pads (2), grade and gravel one parking area and construct about 800 feet of new trail with a 20' bridge on park land; stabilize trail; install two cattle guards, four equestrian gates, three trailhead kiosks; install signs showing direction, regulations, modes of travel allowed on trail, user etiquette and interpretive points; manage weeds; and develop interpretive trail brochure and map design, layout and printing.

## Public Comment:

Public notification of the availability of an Environmental Assessment (EA) evaluating this proposed action was published in the Helena Independent Record, the Butte Montana Standard and the Dillon Tribune newspapers and on the FWP website. In addition, neighbors to Bannack State Park and other known interested individuals, agencies and organizations were sent copies of the EA.

Two public comments were received concerning this draft EA during a comment period running from December 12 through January 17, 2006.

One comment was supportive of the proposed action. The commenter wanted to make sure that the cattle guards and gates were bicycle friendly.

Another commenter was non-supportive and was concerned with impacts upon the primitive roads that will be part of the trail system during periods of wet weather, the spread of noxious weeds and possible negative impacts on the trail by cattle usage.

**FWP response to supportive comment on the proposed action:** Cattle guards will be installed on level ground and gates will be user friendly for bicyclists.

**FWP response to non-supportive comments on the proposed action:** Roads will be signed as impassible when wet. Interpretive literature will address road conditions, cattle ranching and noxious weeds. Bannack State Park will work with the affected rancher to combat noxious weeds.

Decision:

Based on analyses in the Draft EA, and comments on the proposed action, I find that Alternative D to promote, interpret and improve about 10.75 miles of existing roads and trails in Bannack State Park, State of Montana (DNRC) property, and on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) property; to grade and gravel single vehicle turn around pads (2), grade and gravel one parking area and construct about 800 feet of new trail with a 20' bridge on park land; stabilize trail; install two cattle guards, four equestrian gates, three trailhead kiosks; install signs showing direction, regulations, modes of travel allowed on trail, user etiquette and interpretive points; manage weeds; and develop interpretive trail brochure and map design, layout and printing, the appropriate alternative for Fish, Wildlife & Parks to implement. I have evaluated the draft document and applicable laws, regulations, and policies, and have determined that this action will not have a significant effect on the human or natural environment. The completed environmental assessment is an appropriate level of analysis to identify and address all significant issues associated with this project. For this reason, an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

There are no modifications to the Draft Environmental Assessment. The Draft Environmental Assessment, together with the Decision Notice, will serve as the final document for this proposal.

The Final EA and the Decision Notice for this project is available from Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Region Three Headquarters, 1400 S. 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Bozeman, MT 59718, or online at: <http://www.fwp.mt.gov/publicnotices>.

Please direct all inquiries to FWP Region Three Headquarters c/o Bannack State Park Volunteer Campground Host Site Improvement Project EA, at the address provided above.

Patrick J. Flowers  
Region Three Supervisor