



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

Region 2
3201 Spurgin Road
Missoula, MT 59804-3101
August 2, 2006

RECEIVED

AUG 22 2006

LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL
POLICY OFFICE

- *Governor's Office, Attn: Mike Volesky, PO Box 200801, Helena, MT 59620-0801
- Environmental Quality Council, PO Box 201704, Helena, MT 59620-1704
- *Dept. of Environmental Quality, PO Box 200901, Helena, MT 59620-0901
- *Dept. of Natural Resources & Conservation, POB 201601, Helena, MT 59620-1601
- *Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks:

Website, Commission Secretary, Division Secretaries, Regional Office Managers, Region 2 Information Officer

- *State Historic Preservation Office, PO Box 201202, Helena, MT 59620-1202
- *MT State Library, PO BOX 201800, Helena, MT 59620-1800
- Jim Jensen, MT Environmental Information Center, POB 1184, Helena, MT 59624-1184
- DNRC, Attn: Tony Liane, 1401 27th Ave, Missoula, MT 59804
- Mike Priske, 2892 Sandalwood Ct, Missoula, MT 59804
- Todd Peters, 4640 Nicole Ct, Missoula, MT 59803

Adjacent property owners

- **Region 2 Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Citizens Advisory Council
- Missoula City-Co Health Dept, Attn: Ben Schmidt, 301 W Alder, Missoula, MT 59802
- Missoula Co Commissioners, 200 W. Broadway, Missoula, MT 59802
- Missoula Co Public Works, Attn: Greg Robertson, 200 W. Broadway, Missoula, MT 59802
- Missoula County Parks, Attn: Lisa Moisey, 200 W. Broadway, Missoula, MT 59802
- Missoula County Floodplain Administrator, Attn: Todd Kliezt, 435 Ryman, Missoula, MT 59802
- **MT Audubon Council, Attn: Janet Ellis, PO Box 595, Helena, MT 59624
- **Wildlife Federation, PO Box 1175, Helena, MT 59624
- MT Parks Foundation, Attn: Wayne Hirst, PO Box 728, Libby, MT 59923
- George Ochenski, PO Box 689, Helena, MT 59624
- Bob Rainey, 212 S. 6, Livingston, MT 59047
- **Sen. Carol Williams, PO Box 9176, Missoula, MT 59807-9176
- **Sen. Jon Ellingson, 141 North Ave. E, Missoula, MT 59801-6011
- **Sen. Vicki Cocchiarella, 535 Livingston Ave., Missoula, MT 59801-8003
- **Sen. Greg Lind, PO Box 16720, Missoula, MT 59808-6720
- **Sen. Carolyn Squires, 211 South 10th St W, Missoula, MT 59801-3412
- **Rep. Rosalie Buzzas, 233 University Ave., Missoula, MT 59801-1809
- **Rep. Gail Gutsche, 1530 Cooper St., Missoula, MT 59802-2220
- **Rep. David Wanzenried, 903 Sky Dr., Missoula, MT 59804-2793
- **Rep. Holly Raser, 4304 Spurgin Road, Missoula, MT 59804-4520
- **Rep. Teresa Henry, 204 Chestnut St., Missoula, MT 59801-1809
- **Rep. Kevin Furey, PO Box 56, Milltown, MT 59802-4903
- **Rep. Dave McAlpin, 800 Woodworth Ave., Missoula, MT 59801-7046
- **Rep. John Balyeat, 4879 Scott Allen Dr., Missoula, MT 59803-2793
- **Rep. Robin Hamilton, 330 Daly Dr., Missoula, MT 59801-4338
- **Rep. Tom Facey, 418 Plymouth, Missoula, MT 59801-4133

*Mailed electronically

** Received postcard notification of the availability of the EA.

Dear Interested Citizen:

The enclosed Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared for the proposal to develop and manage 2.5 acres of land owned by Missoula County as a new Fishing Access Site (FAS) on the

Draft Environmental Assessment



KONA BRIDGE DEVELOPMENT and MANAGEMENT PROJECT

August 2006



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

Kona Bridge Development and Management Project Draft Environmental Assessment MEPA, NEPA, MCA 23-1-110 CHECKLIST

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

- 1. Type of proposed state action:** Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) proposes to manage 2.56 acres of land from Missoula County as a new Fishing Access Site (FAS). Missoula County will develop the new FAS with funds from both Missoula County and MFWP. The site will be called the Kona Bridge FAS.
- 2. Agency authority for the proposed action:** The 1977 Montana Legislature enacted statute 87-1-605, which directs Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) to acquire, develop and operate a system of fishing accesses. The legislature established an earmarked funding account to ensure that this fishing access site function would be established.
- 3. Name of project:** Kona Bridge FAS Development and Management Project
- 4. Name, address and phone number of project sponsor (if other than the agency):** Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks is the project sponsor.
- 5. If applicable:**
Estimated Construction/Commencement Date: Fall 2006
Estimated Completion Date: Fall 2006
Current Status of Project Design (% complete): 50
- 6. Location affected by proposed action (county, range and township):** The Kona Bridge FAS is in Missoula County, T13N, R20W, Sec. 8. The site is on the west side of the Clark Fork River and just south of the Kona Ranch Road.



Figure 1. Approximate location of the proposed FAS within Montana.

7. Project size -- estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:

	<u>Acres</u>		<u>Acres</u>
(a) Developed:		(d) Floodplain	<u>2</u>
Residential	<u>0</u>		
Industrial	<u>0</u>	(e) Productive:	
(b) Open Space/Woodlands/Recreation	<u>0</u>	Irrigated cropland	<u>0</u>
		Dry cropland	<u>0</u>
(c) Wetlands/Riparian Areas	<u>0</u>	Forestry	<u>0</u>
		Rangeland	<u>0</u>
		Other	<u>0</u>

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

(a) **Permits:** permits will be filed at least 2 months prior to project start.

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>
US Corps of Engineers	Section 404
US Corps of Engineers	Section 10
Montana Dept of Environmental Quality	318
Montana Dept of Fish, Wildlife & Parks	124
Missoula County	Floodplain

(b) **Funding:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
Montana FWP	\$50,000
Missoula County Parks Board	up to \$50,000
Total	up to \$100,000

(c) **Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
Missoula County	Matching Funds

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

Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks proposes to manage 2.56 acres of land from Missoula County as a new FAS for inclusion in the statewide FAS system. The new FAS would be located adjacent to a new subdivision called Riverwood Meadows in southwest Missoula (see figures 1 and 2). When Riverwood Meadows was being developed, 1.06 acres was set aside as county parkland, as dictated by subdivision rules. Mike Priskie and Todd Peters, the developers, proposed that the dedicated acreage be located next



Figure 2. Map showing the proposed FAS location.



Figure 3. View of the Kona Bridge Site.

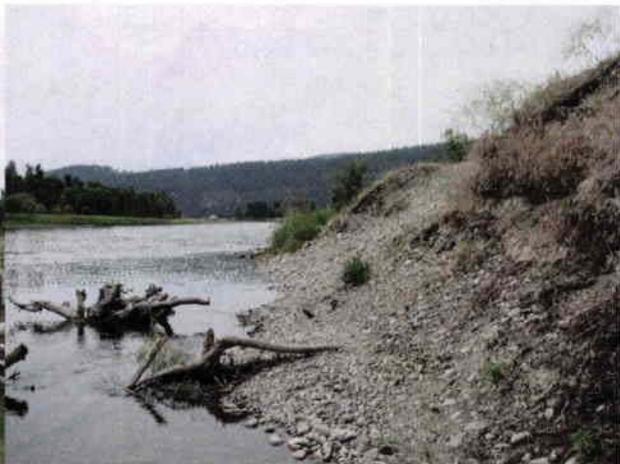


Figure 4. An example of streambank instability.

to an existing 1.5 acre piece bordering the Clark Fork River that was already County property (see figure 2). The developers then approached MFWP to see if the agency would be interested in developing the site as a FAS. Prior to this opportunity, the public did not have legal public access to that 1.5 acre parcel.

The public now uses this combined county parcel to access the Clark Fork River at this site and the county has already constructed a gravel approach and entrance road (see Figure 3). Missoula Co. and FWP are jointly funding the development of the combined 2.56 acres of land into a new FAS, to be managed by MFWP. MFWP and Missoula

County would sign a management agreement for FWP to manage the new FAS, which would be called Kona Bridge FAS. It would include the existing entrance road, a paved interior road, paved and striped parking, concrete boat ramp, an ADA-accessible parking space, and ADA-accessible vault latrine, rock barriers, fencing, and signing.

Managers with FWP are interested in managing this land and seeing it developed as a new FAS for several reasons.

- 1) The Kona Bridge site is located halfway between Kelly Island FAS (4 miles upstream) and Deep Creek FAS (4 miles downstream) on the middle Clark Fork River. An FAS situated there would provide easy ½-day floats for anglers and other recreationists between those sites, as well as provide an additional put-in and take-out site for longer floats, as the bridge adjacent to the site is one of the few crossings of the Clark Fork River below Missoula.
- 2) Public access is currently occurring at the site. Heavy recreational use of the undeveloped site is causing site degradation. As a result, much of the site has been denuded of vegetation causing severe soil erosion on the steeper sections of the site. This has led to excessive sediment delivery to the river at this location. The construction of a boat ramp and the implementation of other site protection measures outlined in this proposal would reduce erosion and other problems that the site is currently experiencing.
- 3) Fishing pressure and the demand for fishing access is increasing rapidly in many parts of the State and especially in Region 2. The other FAS's in the Missoula area are very popular and FWP managers would like to ease the pressure on those other access points. The middle Clark Fork River has a robust, mixed salmonid fishery that can support the current levels of pressure.
- 4) Missoula County, along with Mike Priskie and Todd Peters, the developers of the adjacent subdivision, are very supportive of this site becoming an official FAS managed by FWP. It is believed that there would be good public support of the proposed project. Missoula County has promised up to \$50,000 in matching funds toward the development of the proposed project.
- 5) The Kona Bridge site has also been identified as a location to put a Lewis & Clark interpretive sign. It is believed that this site is close to the original crossing Lewis made with his men when exploring this stretch of the Clark Fork River. Such a panel would be part of a sign package project with the Western Montana Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Committee.

In summary, the development of the county acreage adjacent to the Riverwood Meadows Subdivision into a new FAS would be in line with FWP's goals to provide adequate public access to the state's rivers and lakes. The growing population of the Missoula area has put a lot of pressure on the existing area FAS's such as Kelly Island and Deep Creek. An additional FAS on this stretch of the Clark Fork River would help to absorb some of this use and would not cause any significant environmental impacts.

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

- 1. 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, MFWP would lose an opportunity to see a new FAS developed in a densely populated area with high demand for public access. If this site is not developed into an FAS, pressure will continue to increase at the other FAS's in the area, and MFWP managers would need to find another alternative to ease congestion at these sites. Also, informal use of the Kona Bridge site would continue to cause site degradation and soil erosion issues.

Alternative B:

In Alternative B, MFWP would develop and manage the Kona Bridge site into a new FAS in cooperation with Missoula County. In addition to the existing approach and entrance road, the site would offer 15 spaces for vehicle and trailer parking, 2 spaces for single vehicles, an ADA-accessible parking area and latrine, and a boat ramp on the upstream end (please see Figure 5). The tentative location of the boat ramp in this Alternative would be in roughly the same location that has historically been used (see blue arrow in Figure 5 and Figure 6). The benefits to this design are threefold. 1) More trailer parking would be available in this plan than the one in Alternatives C and D,

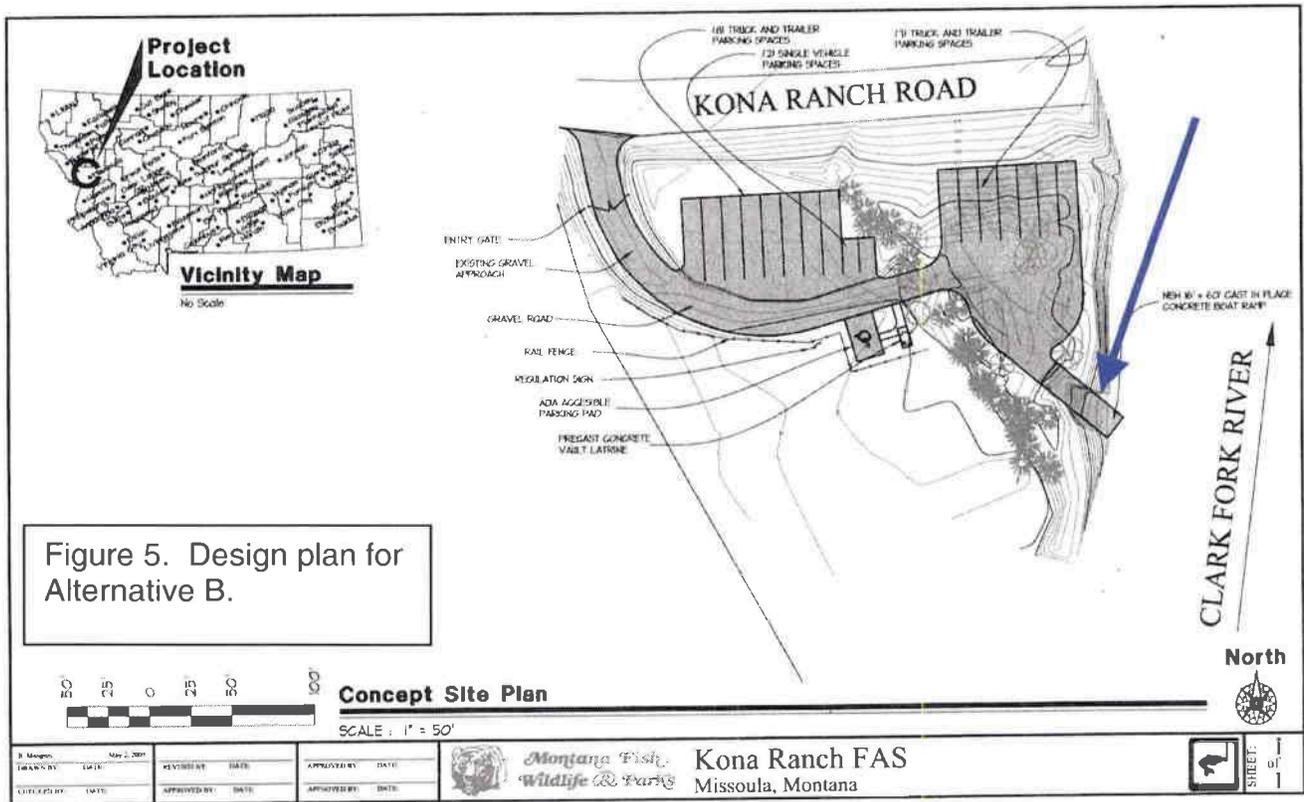


Figure 5. Design plan for Alternative B.

2) Placing the boat ramp in the historical access location would require less ground disturbance, and therefore less time and cost, and 3) this design has a better flow and is generally thought to be more aesthetic. The drawback to this design is that staff biologists have some concerns about stream bank stability and sediment movement, possibly shortening the lifespan of the boat ramp. Development of a boat ramp at this location will require substantial stream bank stabilization techniques including sloping the bank back at a shallower angle, revegetation of the slopes, and rip-rap. Bank stabilization, including the use of rip-rap would require a Missoula County floodplain permit in order to comply with County floodplain regulations.



Figure 6. Current location of undeveloped river access.

Alternative C:

Alternative C is basically the same as Alternatives B and D except for the design of the FAS. In this design the boat ramp would be placed in the downstream corner of the site and the parking areas would be arranged differently (see Figure 7). The main benefit of this design is that the location of the boat ramp would be located in a section of bank that engineers feel is less likely to be affected by flooding events than the upstream location. The main disadvantages to this Alternative are that the riverbank is quite steep in this section (see figure 8), so construction crews would have to dig fairly far back into the lower parking area in order to achieve a desired slope of 12% or less. Also, this design provides less space for trailer parking, and is generally thought to be less aesthetic than Alternative B.

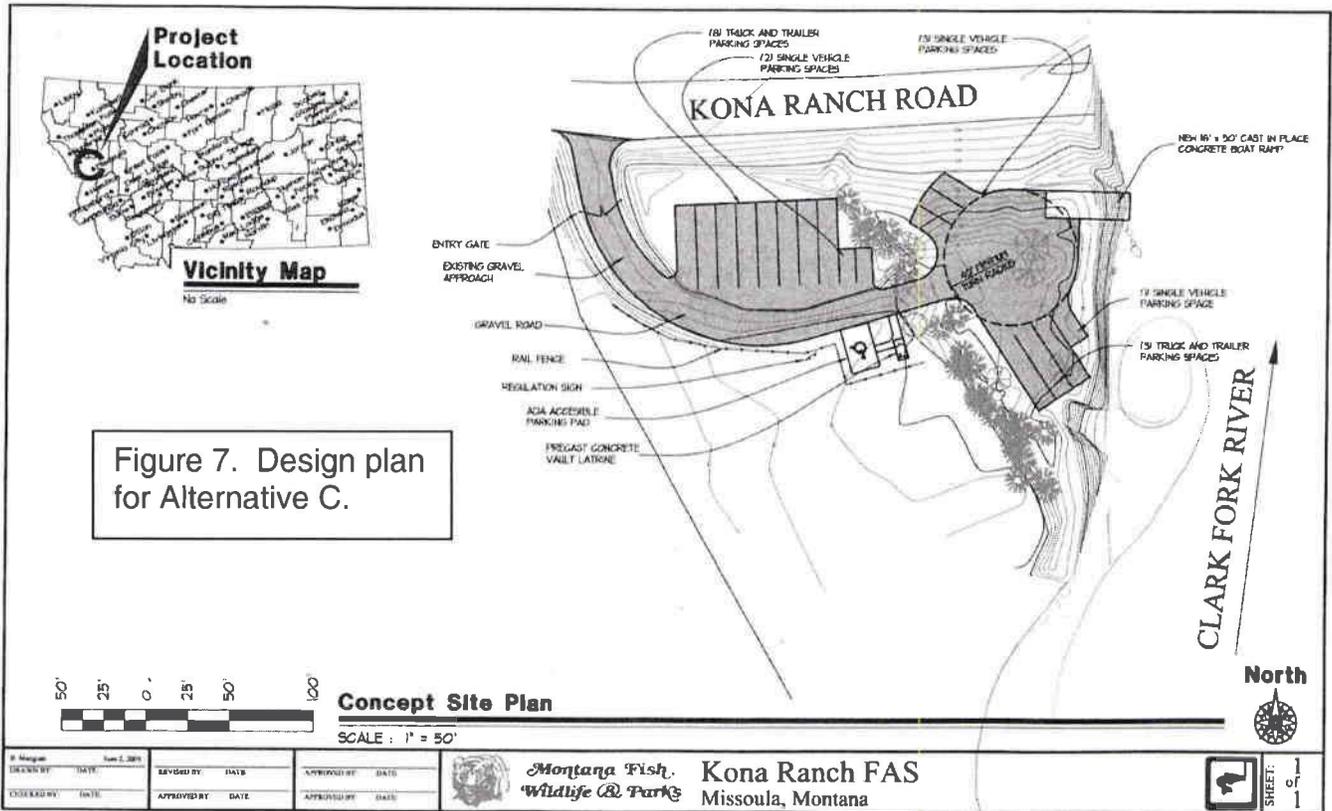


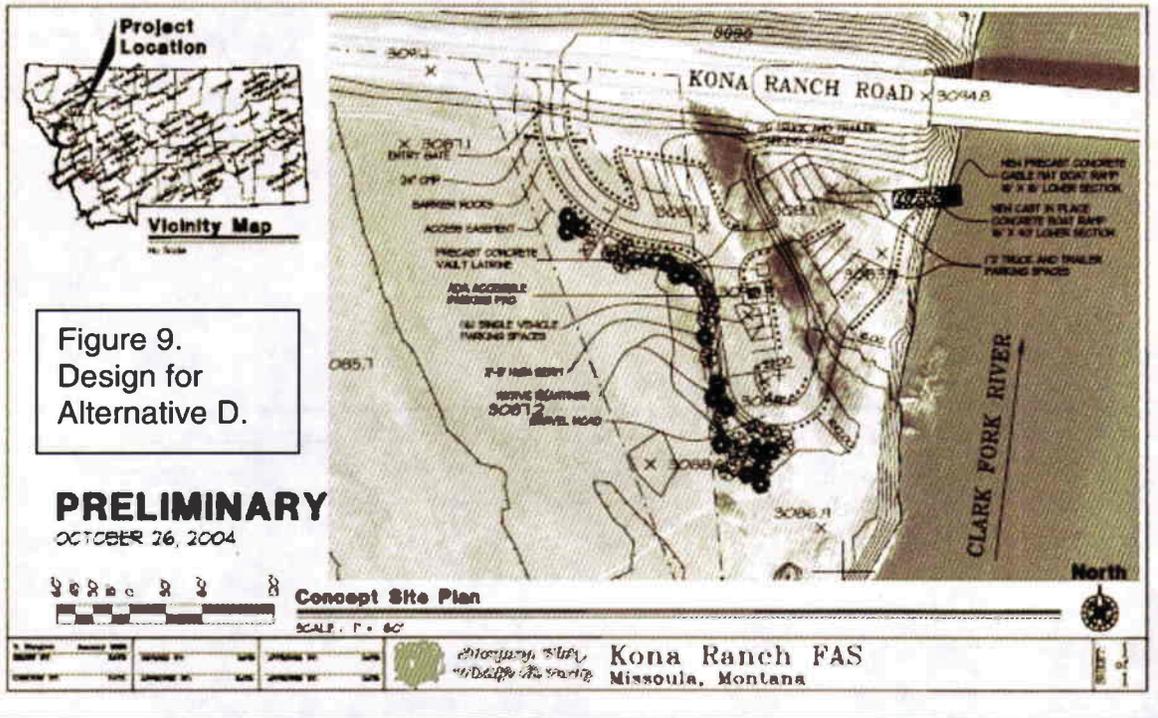
Figure 7. Design plan for Alternative C.



Figure 8. Proposed location of boat ramp in Alternative C.

Alternative D:

In Alternative D, there would be an upper and lower parking area as in Alternatives B and C, but there would also be a third parking area in the grassy field in the southern end of the site (see Figure 10). This Alternative is no longer being considered because it is too costly, the berm for the vegetative buffer does not meet floodplain regulations, too many of the trees in the current natural buffer area would have to be removed, and there would be a negative visual impact to the neighboring subdivision.



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

There are no formal stipulations of mitigation or other controls associated with the proposed action. This action does not involve any permits or granting of a license on which stipulations would be placed.

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

The stretch of the Clark Fork River that the proposed new FAS would be located on is ranked first in Region 2 and 6th for the state for number of angler days (64,917 in 2003). The existing FAS's in the Missoula area are often crowded and available parking spaces fill up by mid-morning during the height of the summer fishing season. The proposed project would add a new FAS in this popular area and would help accommodate the growing number of local users and tourists. The Clark Fork fishery in this section can support the current level of fishing pressure. The proposed project offers an excellent opportunity to cooperate with Missoula County to improve public access to the Clark Fork River without any significant impacts to the human or physical environment.

PART IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- 1. 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 by way of one statewide press releases, and legal notices in the *Missoulian* and the *Helena Independent Record* and by public notice on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks web page: <http://fwp.mt.gov/publicnotices>. Individual notices will be sent to the region's standard EA distribution list and to those that have requested one.

- 2. Duration of comment period, if any.**

A 30-day comment period is proposed, and it will run from August 21 through 5p.m. September 19, 2006. This level of public involvement is appropriate for this scale of project.

PART V. EA PREPARATION

- 1. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? (YES/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 the primary, secondary, and cumulative impacts to the physical and human environment under the Montana Environmental Protection Act (MEPA), this environmental review found no significant impacts from the proposed development and management project at Kona Bridge. In determining the significance of the impacts, FWP assessed the severity, duration, geographic extent, and frequency of the impact, the probability that the impact would occur or reasonable assurance that the impact would not occur, growth-inducing or growth inhibiting aspects of the impact, the importance to the state and to society of the environmental resource or value affected, and precedent that would be set as a result of the proposed action that would commit FWP to future actions; and potential conflicts with local, federal, or state laws. Therefore, an EA is the appropriate level of review and an EIS is not required.

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

Allan Kuser
FAS Coordinator
1420 East 6th Ave
Helena, MT 59620
(406)444-7885

Lee Bastian
Regional Parks Manager
3201 Spurgin Rd.
Missoula, MT 59804
(406)542-5517

Linnaea Schroeer-Smith
Independent Contractor
1027 9th Ave
Helena, MT 59601
(406)495-9620

3. List of agencies consulted during preparation of the EA:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Parks Division

Wildlife Division

Fisheries Division

Design & Construction Bureau

Lands Division

Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

Montana Department of Commerce – Tourism

Montana Natural Heritage Program – Natural Resources Information System (NRIS)

Missoula County-Public Works and County Parks

PART VI. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CHECKLIST

3. 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			1a.
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil, which would reduce productivity or fertility?			X			1b.
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?						
f. Other:						

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

- 1a. Informal use of the Kona Bridge site has created several areas with steep slopes and bare soil that has resulted in some soil instability on the site. Engineering the site and introducing proper slopes and other features will improve soil stability. Construction will require the movement of more than 20 c.y. of earth, which will cause some temporary soil instability, but the final product will be a more stable site than before. Rip-rap will be used on the slopes of the boat ramp to minimize sediment delivery to the river, and all other surfaces that have not been paved will be re-seeded following construction. Best Management Practices (BMP's) will be followed in all aspects of the project.
- 1b. The construction of the two parking areas, boat ramp, and installation of the vault latrine would cause soil disruption, displacement and compaction of soil. Disturbed areas not covered by parking or road would be reseeded or otherwise reclaimed. Most of the Kona Bridge site has already been disturbed and the majority of the area that will be paved for the parking area is currently void of vegetation and already used for parking and driving.
- 1d. The changes to a river's deposition and erosion patterns that the construction of a boat ramp might cause are negligible.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.
 ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
 *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
 **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

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 positive			2a.
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		X				2b.
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.)						
f. Other:		X				

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

- 2a. Minor and temporary dust and vehicle emissions will be created by heavy equipment during construction. Dust levels will be reduced from current levels after completion because the parking areas and interior road will be paved.
- 2b. A vault latrine will be installed in the upper parking area and maintained regularly to avoid offensive odors. A temporary portable latrine is currently maintained on the site.

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

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			3a.
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				
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.)						
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.)						
n. Other:		X				

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

2a. Minor and temporary turbidity would occur in the immediate area of the boat ramp during construction. The installation of a new boat ramp would have the positive effect of concentrating boat launching activities in one designated location on a concrete footing, instead of being spread out over a larger area on soft soils, causing bank erosion and sedimentation.

3b. Paving the parking areas and interior road would likely increase surface run-off.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

4. <u>VEGETATION</u> Will the proposed action result in?	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?			X			4a.
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				4e.
f. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?						
g. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Vegetation (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 4a. The vegetation of the Kona Bridge site consists of some scattered black cottonwood trees on the lower bench of the site, a grove of ponderosa pine trees on the upper bench, and grasses and forbs on the river bank and meadow. There is very little understory. The development that MFWP has proposed would not cause significant changes to the diversity or productivity of the plant community. Two or three small cottonwood trees and patches of grass would be removed in all of the Alternatives except the No Action Alternative. The loss of these trees is not significant from a biological standpoint, but the trees act as a visual and noise buffer between the residents of Riverwood Meadows and the Kona Ranch Road and recreational use of the site. However, the most significant visual screening and noise buffering of the site is accomplished by the grove of ponderosa pines on the upper bench, and these would not be affected in any Alternative and would continue to provide a substantial buffer for subdivision residents.
- 4b. Please see Comment 4a.
- 4c. A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Database yielded one plant Species of Concern in the search area. This species, *Carex scoparia* (Pointed broom sedge) is found one mile northwest of the Kona Bridge site and therefore would not be affected by the proposed project.
- 4e. Noxious weeds such as spotted knapweed have been observed on the Kona Bridge site but are at relatively low densities. If the proposed project is accepted FWP will initiate weed control on the site in accordance with methods outlined in the Region 2 Weed Management Agreement with the Missoula County Weed Board, and this control would be ongoing.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

** 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				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				5b.
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			5f.
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?			X			5f.
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.)						
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.)						
j. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Fish and Wildlife (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 5b. It is unlikely that the proposed project would cause any changes in the diversity or abundance of game or non-game species due to the project's small scope and the previous disturbance of and current public use of the Kona Bridge site.
- 5f. A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program Database did not yield any documented observations of endangered, threatened, or sensitive species on the Kona Bridge site. The Bald Eagle, a threatened species, does occur in the area, and it is possible that this species uses the habitat within the Kona Bridge site. However, this species' population is increasing in Montana and it is unlikely that the proposed project would significantly affect the ongoing recovery. The property is adjacent to territory that was the historic range of the Canada Lynx, a threatened species, but Lynx have not been seen in the Missoula valley for several decades due to the high level of human development and presence there. Westslope cutthroat trout and bull trout can be found in this section of the Clark Fork River, and all FWP fishing regulations will apply and be enforced. These regulations stipulate that anglers cannot purposely attempt to catch Bull trout, and if they catch one by mistake they must release it immediately. Westslope cutthroat trout are also catch-and-release only.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

Populations of Bull trout are very low in this section of the river, averaging only 1-2 fish per mile, and westslope cutthroat trout numbers are also fairly scarce in this stretch. An angler is much more likely to catch a rainbow or brown trout, whose populations are robust, than either of these species of concern. A sign stating these fishing regulations will be installed on site. The small amount of sediment that will be produced during construction of the boat ramp would not be enough to affect these or other fish species. Please see Appendix 2 for a complete discussion of all Species of Concern found within the larger Kona Bridge area.

- 5g. The proposed improvements would likely cause a small increase in site visitation, which could cause additional stress to wildlife populations. However, the Kona Bridge site is in a moderately developed suburban setting, and area wildlife is already fairly accustomed to the presence of humans.

B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS 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 positive			6b.
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 Noise/Electrical Effects (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 6a. There would be a temporary increase in noise level during construction of the parking lots and boat ramp, but it would not be excessive and would end after completion. Homeowners in the Riverwood Meadows Subdivision live close enough to the proposed FAS to hear the construction noise, but construction will not continue in evening or weekend hours and will be temporary. Most residents in the adjacent subdivision support the project in spite of these inconveniences.
- 6b. The proposed FAS will be a fairly regular source of noise to the neighborhood, from vehicles and people recreating, but the site is already used for the same purpose.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

7. LAND USE 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				7a.
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 Use (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

7a. The proposed project would not alter or interfere with the productivity or profitability of existing land use in the area.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

8. RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
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)						
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Risk/Health Hazards (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

8a. The MFWP Region 2 Weed Management Plan calls for an integrated method of managing weeds, including the use of herbicides. The use of herbicides would be in compliance with application guidelines and conducted by people trained in safe handling techniques to limit the possibility of a spill. Weeds would also be controlled using mechanical or biological methods in certain areas to reduce the risk of a chemical spill or water contamination. The vault latrine would be regularly maintained. There is a slight potential for petroleum products to enter the water from towing vehicles at the boat ramp.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
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				9a.
f. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Community Impact (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 9e. Visitation to the Kona Bridge site would increase under the proposed plan, resulting in more vehicles entering and exiting the Kona Ranch Rd. However, this slight increase in traffic should not result in any increased traffic hazards because the approach is well sighted and traffic on the Kona Ranch Rd is fairly light.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.
 ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
 *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
 **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

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 use of any energy source?		X				
e. **Define projected revenue sources						10e.
f. **Define projected maintenance costs.						10f.
g. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Public Services/Taxes/Utilities (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 10e. The estimated cost of the proposed project is \$100,000. Missoula County will contribute up to \$50,000 of matching funds towards the cost and FWP will contribute \$50,000.
- 10f. The estimated yearly maintenance costs of the site are \$2,000. This includes the cost to maintain the latrine, necessary weed control, and to pay a caretaker to visit the site twice a week.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

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

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Aesthetics/Recreation (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

11a. Please see comment 11b.

11b. The aesthetic character of the neighborhood would be improved if the proposed project went forward.

11c. Please see Attachment A for Tourism report.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

12. CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
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? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a.)						
e. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Cultural/Historical Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

12a. A cultural and historical review of the site has been initiated and SHPO clearance will be obtained before any development begins.

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

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				13a.
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.)						
g. ****For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Significance Criteria (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

13a. This evaluation of the proposed project revealed no significant t impacts to the human or physical environment.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

APPENDIX 1
HB495
PROJECT QUALIFICATION CHECKLIST

Date July 19, 2006

Person Reviewing Linnaea Schroeer-Smith

Project Location: Kona Bridge, Missoula County. T13N, R20W, Sec. 8.

Description of Proposed Work: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks proposes leasing approximately 2.5 acres of land from Missoula County for development of a new Fishing Access Site. New development would include two paved parking areas, a paved interior road, a concrete boat ramp, and an ADA-accessible vault latrine.

The following checklist is intended to be a guide for determining whether a proposed development or improvement is of enough significance to fall under HB 495 rules. (Please check all that apply and comment as necessary.)

- A. New roadway or trail built over undisturbed land?**
Comments: None. All parking and road areas would be constructed over previously disturbed areas.
- B. New building construction (buildings <100 sf and vault latrines exempt)?**
Comments: None
- C. Any excavation of 20 c.y. or greater?**
Comments: Construction of the boat ramp and other work would likely require excavation of 20 c.y. or greater. Please see Comment 1a on page 11.
- D. New parking lots built over undisturbed land or expansion of existing lot that increases parking capacity by 25% or more?**
Comments:
- E. Any new shoreline alteration that exceeds a double wide boat ramp or handicapped fishing station?**
Comments: None.
- F. Any new construction into lakes, reservoirs, or streams?**
Comments: None
- G. Any new construction in an area with National Registry quality cultural artifacts (as determined by State Historical Preservation Office)?**
Comments: SHPO clearance will be obtained before any development begins.

H. **Any new above ground utility lines?**

Comments: None

I. **Any increase or decrease in campsites of 25% or more of an existing number of campsites?**

Comments: None.

J. **Proposed project significantly changes the existing features or use pattern; including effects of a series of individual projects?**

Comments: None

If any of the above are checked, HB 495 rules apply to this proposed work and should be documented on the MEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST. Refer to MEPA/HB495 Cross Reference Summary for further assistance.

APPENDIX 2

Sensitive Plants and Animals in the proposed Kona Bridge FAS area.

A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP) element occurrence database (nhp.nris.state.mt.us/eoportal) indicates no known occurrences of federally listed threatened, endangered, or proposed threatened or endangered plant or animal species in the proposed project site.

Species of Concern Terms and Definitions

Montana Species of Concern. The term "**Species of Concern**" includes taxa that are at-risk or potentially at-risk due to rarity, restricted distribution, habitat loss, and/or other factors. The term also encompasses species that have a special designation by organizations or land management agencies in Montana, including: Bureau of Land Management Special Status and Watch species; U.S. Forest Service Sensitive and Watch species; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Threatened, Endangered and Candidate species.

▼ **Status Ranks (Global and State)**

The international network of Natural Heritage Programs employs a standardized ranking system to denote global (**G** -- range-wide) and state status (**S**) (NatureServe 2003). Species are assigned numeric ranks ranging from 1 (critically imperiled) to 5 (demonstrably secure), reflecting the relative degree to which they are "at-risk". Rank definitions are given below. A number of factors are considered in assigning ranks -- the number, size and distribution of known "occurrences" or populations, population trends (if known), habitat sensitivity, and threat. Factors in a species' life history that make it especially vulnerable are also considered (e.g., dependence on a specific pollinator).

Status Ranks

Code	Definition
G1 S1	At high risk because of extremely limited and/or rapidly declining numbers, range, and/or habitat, making it highly vulnerable to global extinction or extirpation in the state.
G2 S2	At risk because of very limited and/or declining numbers, range, and/or habitat, making it vulnerable to global extinction or extirpation in the state.
G3 S3	Potentially at risk because of limited and/or declining numbers, range, and/or habitat, even though it may be abundant in some areas.
G4 S4	Uncommon but not rare (although it may be rare in parts of its range), and usually widespread. Apparently not vulnerable in most of its range, but possibly cause for long-term concern.
G5 S5	Common, widespread, and abundant (although it may be rare in parts of its range). Not vulnerable in most of its range.

1. *Oncorhynchus clarkii lewisi* (Westslope Cutthroat Trout)

State: **S2**
Global: **G4T3**

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
U.S. Forest Service: **Sensitive**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Sensitive**

This sensitive species occurs in many sections of the Clark Fork River and its tributaries. The proposed project is minor in scope and would not affect the long-term success of this species.

2. *Carex scoparia* (Pointed Broom Sedge)

Natural Heritage Ranks:
State: **S1S2**
Global: **G5**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
U.S. Forest Service:
U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

This species of concern can be found in an area about one mile northwest of the Kona Bridge site, and therefore would not be affected by the proposed project.

3. *Zapada cordillera* (a Stonefly).

Natural Heritage Ranks:
State: **S2**
Global: **G3**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
U.S. Forest Service:
U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

This species of stonefly has been observed in Butler and Grant Creeks, both tributaries to the Clark Fork River. It is unknown whether this species inhabits this section of the Clark Fork River.

4. *Dolichonyx oryzivorus* (Bobolink).

Natural Heritage Ranks:
State: **S2B**
Global: **G5**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
U.S. Forest Service:
U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Sensitive**

This species has been documented in an area about 2.5 miles north of the Kona Bridge site. It is possible that this species uses the habitat in the proposed project area, but would not likely be affected, as the vast majority of development will occur on disturbed ground. The portion of the Kona Bridge property that this species would be most likely to use is the meadow complex, which will remain largely undisturbed, except in Alternative D.

5. *Lynx canadensis* (Canada Lynx).

Natural Heritage Ranks:

State: **S3**
Global: **G3**

Federal Agency Status:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: **LT**
U.S. Forest Service: **Threatened**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Special Status**

While the Kona Bridge site does not fall within the documented element occurrence area for this threatened species, the majority of the Missoula valley does; and it is probable that the Kona Bridge property is part of the Canada lynx's historic range. However, this species has not been observed in the area for several decades, most likely due to the heavy human presence in the Missoula valley. Therefore, the proposed project is unlikely to affect this species.

6. *Salvelinus confluentus* (Bull Trout).

Natural Heritage Ranks:

State: **S2**
Global: **G3**

Federal Agency Status:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: **LT**
U.S. Forest Service: **Threatened**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Special Status**

Populations of Bull trout in this section of the Clark Fork River are low; about 1-2 fish per mile, so it is unlikely that the proposed project would affect this species. Fishing regulations stipulate that anglers cannot purposely attempt to catch Bull trout, and if they catch one by mistake they must release it immediately. The low numbers of Bull trout in this section make it unlikely that anglers would catch this species in either case.

7. *Haliaeetus leucocephalus* (Bald Eagle)

Natural Heritage Ranks:

State: **S3**
Global: **G5**

Federal Agency Status:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: **LT**
U.S. Forest Service: **Threatened**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Special Status**

Populations of this species are rebounding through-out Montana and in many parts of the United States, and de-listing was proposed in 1999. It is unlikely that the proposed project would affect this species' recovery.

8. *Melanerpes lewis* (Lewis's Woodpecker)

Natural Heritage Ranks:

State: **S2B**
Global: **G4**

Federal Agency Status:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
U.S. Forest Service:
U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

This species of concern is found within the larger Kona Bridge area, but it is unknown if it uses the proposed project area for any part of its life history. As the Kona Bridge site is already being used for recreational access and little additional ground disturbance would occur from the formal development of the site, it is unlikely that the proposed project would have a significant affect on the population of this species in the area.

Interested parties may contact MFWP Region 7 offices for a detailed map of sensitive species Element Occurrences (EOs).

Information courtesy of Montana Natural Heritage Program.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Tourism Report – Department of Commerce
- B. Clearance Letter – State Historic Preservation Office *PENDING***

09/03 sed

ATTACHMENT A
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: Kona Bridge FAS Development and Management Project

Project Location: The Kona Bridge site is in Missoula County, T13N, R20W, Sec. 8.

Project Description: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks proposes to lease 2.56 acres of land from Missoula County and develop a new Fishing Access Site (FAS) on that land, to be called the Kona Bridge FAS. The site is currently used as an informal access site, with the public using the county easement to park and hand-launch small boats and inner tubes on the Clark Fork River. Missoula County and FWP would work cooperatively to develop the site, sharing the costs, but FWP would manage the daily activities. The new FAS would have parking for 12-15 vehicles and trailers, an ADA-accessible latrine, and a concrete boat ramp.

1. Would this site development project have an impact on the tourism economy?
NO YES If YES, briefly describe:
The formal development of this FAS should provide benefits to the tourism economy.

2. Does this impending improvement alter the quality or quantity of recreation/tourism opportunities and settings?
NO YES If YES, briefly describe:
The project appears to improve both the quality and quantity of recreation/tourism opportunities in this area. Formal development of this informal access site will assist with management, quality of visitors services provided and the overall visitor experience.

Signature Victor Bjornberg, Tourism Development Coordinator, MT Commerce Dept.
Date August 3, 2006