



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Region Three Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
1400 South 19th Ave
Bozeman, MT 59718
February 26, 2010

Decision Notice for Eight Mile Ford Fishing Access Site Proposed Property Addition Acquisition Environmental Assessment

Proposed Action

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) proposes to purchase approximately three acres of land adjacent to the southern boundary of the existing 26-acre Eight Mile Ford Fishing Access Site (FAS) on the Madison River. The site is located along County Route 249, four miles south of Ennis, Montana. The purchase of this additional acreage is necessary because the boat ramp and a portion of the ramp access road were inadvertently built on land owned by the Granger Ranch. This trespass situation remained unnoticed from the time the boat ramp was built in the 1970s until early 2009, when the landowner discovered it and brought it to FWP's attention. To resolve the situation, the Granger Ranch has offered to sell to FWP the land on which the boat ramp and a portion of the access road are located plus the adjacent wetland. The purchase price will be based upon a value of \$10,650 per acre, as has been determined by an independent appraisal commissioned by FWP. This yields an estimated total of about \$32,000 for the land, pending a survey that will determine the precise parcel size.

Montana Environmental Policy Act

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is required by the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) to assess significant potential impacts of a proposed action to the human and physical environment. In compliance with MEPA, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed for the proposed project by FWP and released for public comment on January 19, 2010.

Public comments on the proposed project were taken from January 19 through February 18, 2010. The EA was mailed to over 40 individuals and groups; legal notices were printed in the *Helena Independent Record*, *Bozeman Chronicle* and the *Madisonian*; and the Draft EA was posted on the FWP webpage: <http://fwp.mt.gov//publicnotices/>

Summary of Public Comment

The proposed project received three comments from the public. All three comments received were in favor of the proposed property acquisition.

Decision

Based on the Environmental Assessment, public comment, and FWP evaluation, it is my decision to proceed with the 3-acre property acquisition as described in the EA. Public comments included positive feedback. In the interest of providing safe, equitable access to the Madison River, Eight Mile Ford property acquisition will ensure access to the river from the boat ramp located on the 3-acre parcel.

If you have questions regarding this decision notice, please contact Molly Wainwright, River Recreation Manager at 406-994-6359.

Gerald Walker
Regional Parks Manager
