



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

54078 US Hwy 2 West
Glasgow, MT 59230

April 27, 2011

Governor's Office – Mike Volesky
Montana State Library, Helena
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
 Director's Office
 Wildlife Division
 Lands Section
 Fisheries Division
 Parks Division
 Communication & Education Division
 Commission Secretary
 Legal Unit

Environmental Quality Council
MT Environmental Information Center
State Historic Preservation Office
Montana Audubon Council
Representative Wayne Stahl
Phillips County Commissioners
Phillips County Planner
Malta Irrigation
Bureau of Reclamation
Leroy Costin
Dave Costin
Hansen Ranch

Ladies and Gentlemen:

You received documents relating to the proposed action of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) to burn 78 acres of cattail marsh on the Milk River Wildlife Management Area (Area 7) wetlands. There are three managed wetlands on Area 7 that are currently being choked out by cattail growth. This project would be a prescribed burning of these cattail marshes to create more open water areas and increase the productivity of these wetlands for waterfowl production. No comments were received through the public comment effort that ran from April 8 through April 22, 2011.

Based on the lack of issues or concern regarding this action, the draft documents were not changed from the public review period and the Draft EA has become the Final EA. Because no issues were raised and the lack of opposing comments indicates support for this project, it is my recommendation through the attached Decision Notice, to proceed with the planned prescribed burn.

Thank you very much for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

Patrick Gunderson

DECISION NOTICE
MILK RIVER WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA
PRESCRIBED BURN
Prepared by Region 6, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
April 27, 2011

PROPOSAL

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) is proposing to do a prescribed burn of cattail marshes on the Milk River Wildlife Management Area (Area 7). There are three managed wetlands on Area 7 that are currently being choked out by cattail growth. This project would be a prescribed burning of these cattail marshes which consists of 78 acres. The burning would create more open water areas and increase the productivity of these wetlands for waterfowl production and for shore birds. The burn would be scheduled for spring 2011. Following burning the 2 smaller wetlands will be managed as seasonal wetlands to maintain productivity and reduce cattail growth in future years. Water levels on the large wetland will also be managed to minimize cattail invasion.

MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA) PROCESS

The proposal has been outlined in an Environmental Assessment (EA) to satisfy the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). FWP is required to assess the impacts of the proposed action to the human and natural environment as directed by MEPA.

Under the MEPA process a 15-day public comment period ran from April 8 through April 22, 2010.

ISSUES RAISED IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)

No issues were raised in the public comment period.

GENERAL SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

No verbal or written comments were received.

DECISION

Based on the lack of issues or concern regarding this action, the draft documents were not changed from the public review period and the Draft EA has become the Final EA. Because no issues were raised and no opposition was voiced on this project, it is my recommendation through the attached Decision Notice, to proceed with the planned prescribed burn.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Patrick Gunderson", written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Patrick Gunderson
Region 6 Supervisor
Glasgow, Montana
April 27, 2011