



1400 South 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Bozeman, MT 59718

October 17, 2011

To: Governor's Office, Mike Volesky, State Capitol, Room 204, P.O. Box 200801, Helena, MT 59620-0801  
Environmental Quality Council, State Capitol, Room 106, P.O. Box 201704, Helena, MT 59620-1704  
Dept. of Environmental Quality, Metcalf Building, P.O. Box 200901, Helena, MT 59620-0901  
Dept. of Natural Resources & Conservation, P.O. Box 201601, Helena, MT 59620-1601

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks:

Director's Office	Parks Division	Lands Section	FWP Commissioners
Fisheries Division	Legal Unit	Wildlife Division	Design & Construction

MT Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, P.O. Box 201202, Helena, MT 59620-1202

MT State Parks Association, P.O. Box 699, Billings, MT 59103

MT State Library, 1515 E. Sixth Ave., P.O. Box 201800, Helena, MT 59620

James Jensen, Montana Environmental Information Center, P.O. Box 1184, Helena, MT 59624

Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon Council, P.O. Box 595, Helena, MT 59624

George Ochenski, P.O. Box 689, Helena, MT 59624

Jerry DiMarco, P.O. Box 1571, Bozeman, MT 59771

Montana Wildlife Federation, P.O. Box 1175, Helena, MT 59624

Wayne Hurst, P.O. Box 728, Libby, MT 59923

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The enclosed Decision Notice has been prepared by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) for the proposed Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park Water System Improvement Project. Three public comments were received during the 30-day comment period ending September 19, 2011.

It is my decision to proceed with the water system improvement project as presented, noting the delay of the project by one year to meet all permitting requirements. This will initiate the water improvements project at Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park.

Sincerely,

Gerald Walker  
Regional Parks Manager

Attachment



Region Three Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
1400 South 19<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Bozeman, MT 59718  
October 17, 2011

**Decision Notice for  
Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park  
Proposed Water System Improvement Project  
Draft Environmental Assessment**

**Proposed Action**

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) proposes to update and improve the water system at Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park that services the upper visitor center and concession buildings.

**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 August 17, 2011.

Public comments on the proposed project were taken from August 17 through September 19, 2011. The EA was mailed to 37 individuals and groups. In addition, the public was notified of the public comment period for this EA by the following methods:

- Two public notices in each of these papers: *Helena Independent Record*, *Butte Standard*, and *Bozeman Daily Chronicle*.
- One statewide press release
- Public notice on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks web page: <http://fwp.mt.gov>

**Summary of Public Comment:**

The proposed project received three (3) comments from the public. Two (2) comments expressed support for the proposed project. The proposed comments said the project made good sense and that the project was important to the public. One (1) comment stated that the system would be inefficient and that runoff from the parking lot should be considered for the water source.



**FWP response to concerns, questions and comments on the proposed action:**

The comment received was a recommendation to be considered.

Response: Using the runoff from the parking lot would not meet the Department of Environmental Quality's requirements for a water source for a public water system.

**Decision:**

There are no modifications necessary to the Draft Environmental Assessment based on public comment. The time frame for the project will be postponed for a year to meet the Department of Environmental Quality's permitting process. The Draft Environmental Assessment, together with this Decision Notice, will serve as the final document for the proposal.

I find there to be no significant impacts on the human and physical environments associated with this project. Therefore, I conclude that the Environmental Assessment is the appropriate level of analysis, and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

**Appeal**

This project is subject to appeal, which must be submitted to the FSP Director (Mr. Joe Maurier, Director, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, PO Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701) in writing and postmarked within 30 days of the date on this decision notice. The appeal must specifically describe the basis for the appeal, explain how the appellant has previously commented to the department or participated in the decision-making process, and lay out how FWP may address the concerns in the appeal. If you have question regarding this decision notice, please contact Gerald Walker, Regional Parks Manger at 406-994-3552.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Gerald Walker'.

Gerald Walker  
Regional Parks Manager