Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

DECISION RECORD
Brewery Flats Sediment Removal

Water Name: Big Spring Creek **County:** Fergus County
Legal Description: T15N R18E S23; 109.41134; 47.04319

Proposed Action: The proposed project is located on Big Spring Creek about 1 mile south of Lewistown, MT at the Brewery Flats Fishing Access Site (FAS) The project would involve removal of sediment (gravel and silt) deposited at the interface between a new re-meandered channel constructed in 2000 and a channel straightened in 1912. Due to the deposition, the channel lost about 2 feet of depth for a 100 yard linear distance. As a result, Big Spring Creek is spreading out and flooding the Brewery Flats FAS at base flow. Water is also flooding a downstream outhouse, sections of trail and vegetation. To prevent channel migration and limit further impacts to infrastructure, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) proposes to dredge the 100 yards of Big Spring Creek to the approximate depth of 2 ft that was present in 2005. FWP proposes to hire a contractor to excavate the approximately 700 cubic yards of silt and gravel with a dump truck and excavator using best management practices. Excavated material would be removed off-site and deposited in an area away from wetlands. Equipment would access the site via the trail and road system. Failure to perform remediation work may result in a channel change at the location, which would have significant adverse impacts to nearby infrastructure, including a road, waterline, trails, FAS parking and a vault latrine.

Description of Public Notification/Review Process: The Environmental Assessment (EA) was placed on the FWP web site on November 15, 2011. The comment period ended December 16, 2011. Local watershed group members and Trout Unlimited were contacted about the EA. This project was discussed during a public Fergus County Planning Board and Commission meeting.

Summary of Public Comments: There were seven written comments from individuals and one comment from an organization in support of the project as described. There were no negative comments in response to the EA. At the public county planning meeting some concerns were expressed. These concerns were addressed in the EA and included comments regarding the longevity of the project and government funding for the project.

Recommendation: Based on the Environmental Assessment, public comment, and benefits and risks associated with this project, it is my decision 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. It is my decision to proceed with FWP's proposed alternative to dredge approximately 700 cubic yards of sediment from Big Spring Creek under wet conditions. The draft EA along with this decision notice will serve as the final documents for this proposal.

Gary Bertellotti
Gary Bertellotti
Regional Supervisor

1/13/2012
Date