



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

*Stillwater
county*

2300 Lake Elmo Drive
Billings, MT 59105

NOTICE OF DECISION

November 8, 2000

TO: Environmental Quality Council
Director's Office, Dept. of Environmental Quality
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks:

Director's Office	Lands Section
Parks Division	Design & Construction
Fisheries Division	Legal Unit
Wildlife Division	Bobbi Keeler
Regional Supervisors	

Montana Historical Society, State Preservation Office
Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon Council
Montana Wildlife Federation
Montana State Library
George Ochenski
Montana Environmental Information Center
Wayne Hirst, Montana State Parks Foundation
Montana Parks Association Representative Bob Raney
County Commissioners
Other Local Interested People or Groups

Ladies and Gentlemen:

A Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared for Cooney Reservoir State Park improvements. The draft EA was circulated for 30 days and legal notices were published in the Billings Gazette and the Carbon County News as well as Montana's electronic bulletin board.

We received two formal comments during the comment period.

Comment: There are some private inholdings at Cooney Reservoir, which may cause some problems with the proposed park improvements.

Response: Proposed improvements in the Marshall Cove area do not affect the private inholding within that area. The trail may require easements from landowners or it can be routed completely on state controlled lands.

Comment: There are recorded historic features located close to the project areas. These cultural properties may be impacted by project activities.

Response: During the planning process the Montana Historic Preservation Office (MHPO) was contacted and requested to review the location and status of recorded cultural sites at Cooney State Park. It was the opinion of the MHPO that the recorded sites were not located within the proposed project areas, therefore clearance to proceed with the projects as proposed was granted.

The Billings Boat Club also met with Harley Sorrells, Cooney State Park manager and voiced the need for floating tie-up docks at some of the boat launch areas around the reservoir. In response, the Region Five office has submitted floating docks at Cooney State Park as a Boating-in-Lieu proposal for the 2001 Montana State Legislature.

Based on the analysis in the Environmental Assessment, applicable laws, regulations and policies, and the response to the above comments, the Department has decided to implement the proposed action to allow for improvements at Cooney Reservoir State Park.

This decision is subject to appeal, which must be submitted to the FWP Director 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 might address the concerns in the appeal. If you have questions regarding this decision notice, please contact me at 247-2951.

Sincerely,


Harvey E. Nyberg
Regional Supervisor