



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

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LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL
POLICY OFFICE

Region One
490 North Meridian Rd.
Kalispell, MT 59901
(406) 752-5501
FAX: 406-257-0349
Ref:JS033-05
April 28, 2005

To: Governor's Office, Attn: Mike Volesky, PO Box 200801, Helena, 59620-0801
Environmental Quality Council, PO Box 201704, Helena, MT 59620-1704
*Dept. of Environmental Quality, Planning, Prevention & Assistance, PO Box 200901, Helena, 59620
*Dept. of Environmental Quality, Permitting Compliance, PO Box 200901, Helena, 59620-0901
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks: Director's Office – Reg Peterson; Legal Unit - Brandi Fisher; Parks – Walt Timmerman, Allan Kuser, Paul Valle
*Montana Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, PO Box 201202, Helena, 59620-1202
*Montana State Library, 1515 East Sixth Ave., Helena, 59620-1800
Jim Jensen, Montana Environmental Information Center, PO Box 1184, Helena, 59624
George Ochenski, PO Box 689, Helena, 59624
Wayne Hirst, Montana State Parks Foundation, PO Box 728, Libby, 59923
Montana State Parks Association, PO Box 699, Billings, 59103
Joe Gutkoski, President, Montana River Action Network, 304 N 18th Ave., Bozeman, 59715
Rep Gordon Hendrick, P O Box 262, Superior, MT 59872-0262
Rep Paul Clark, 20 Fox Lane, Trout Creek, MT 59874-9510
Sen Jim Elliott, 100 Trout Creek Road, Trout Creek, MT 59874-9609
Thompson Falls Library, P O Box 99, Thompson Falls, MT 59873
Sanders County Commissioners, P O Box 519, Thompson Falls, MT 59873
Interested Parties

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP), Region One, has completed an environmental assessment (EA) for the Heron Boat Ramp project for the purpose of granting funding to Sanders County from the Community Grants through the Motorboat Enhancement Program to improve the facilities at the Heron boat ramp so the site can be easily accessed by the public for boat launching, day-use recreation, and fishing on the Cabinet Gorge Reservoir.

Based on the analysis in the EA and public comment, I find Alternative II to be the preferred alternative, with modifications as set forth in the record of decision (ROD). There were no changes to the draft EA; therefore, the draft becomes the final EA. A copy of the record of decision is enclosed.

Please direct your questions or comments to Regional Parks Manager Marty Watkins, FWP, 490 N. Meridian Rd., Kalispell, MT 59901, or e-mail mawatkins@state.mt.us.

Sincerely,

Jim Satterfield
Regional Supervisor

/ni
Enclosure

*E-mailed

Record of Decision
and
Finding of No Significant Impact
for
Heron Boat Ramp Proposal
Environmental Assessment

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Region 1
490 N. Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901

April 28, 2005

Description of the Proposed Action:

The proposed action was to grant \$12,500 in funding from the Community Grants through the Motorboat Enhancement Program to Sanders County to improve the facilities at the Heron boat ramp so the site can be easily accessed by the public for boat launching, day-use recreation, and fishing on the Cabinet Gorge Reservoir. This funding would be matched with \$12,750 in funding from Avista and \$15,000 in-kind contributions to do the following:

- Replace the current ramp with a new one-lane concrete-log boat ramp.
- Provide a 6' x 20' dock with synthetic, low-maintenance decking.
- Provide a gravel parking area adjacent to the boat ramp to accommodate up to 15 vehicles with boat trailers.
- Provide universal access between the parking area and boat launch.
- Provide a picnicking area, including universally accessible tables; provide a universally accessible, hardened-surface pathway to the picnic area.
- Provide a shoreline fishing area and a universally accessible trail that leads to the area.
- Install a rustic perimeter fence.
- Install directional signing on the road leading to the site.
- Install educational signing at the boat launch.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks proposes to grant \$12,500 in funding from the Community Grants through the Motorboat Enhancement Program to Sanders County to improve the facilities at the Heron boat ramp so the site can be easily accessed by the public for boat launching, day-use recreation, and fishing on the Cabinet Gorge Reservoir.

Public Comment:

Three comments were received. One comment simply asked where the site was located. The other two comments stated that, while they supported the project, they were concerned that it was turning into a bigger development than they had anticipated when they encouraged the project earlier.

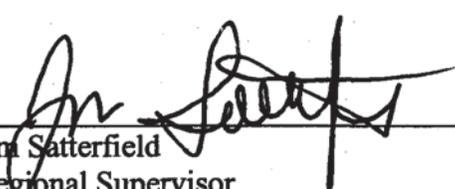
Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI):

Based on the analysis in the environmental assessment (EA) and public comment, I find Alternative II to be the preferred alternative, with the following modifications: (1) reduce the number of picnic tables to one table, and (2) reduce the parking to spaces for 5-6 vehicles with trailers instead of the original proposal of 15. All other aspects of Alternative II will remain as stated above. I have evaluated the EA and applicable laws, regulations, and policies and have determined that this action will not have a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

The final environmental assessment and the record of decision/FONSI may be viewed at or obtained from Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Region One, 490 N. Meridian Road, Kalispell, MT 59901. Please direct requests and questions to:

Marty Watkins, Regional Parks Manager
Fish, Wildlife & Parks
490 N. Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901
(406) 752-5501
mawatkins@mt.gov

In accordance with FWP policy, an appeal may be made by any person who has either commented in writing to the department on the proposed project, or who has registered or commented orally at a public meeting held by the department on the proposed project, or who can provide new evidence that would otherwise change the proposed plan. An appeal must be submitted to the Director of FWP in writing and must be postmarked or received within 30 days of this decision notice. The appeal must describe the basis for the appeal, how the appellant has previously commented to the department or participated in the decision-making process, and how the department can provide relief. The appeal should be mailed to: Director, Fish, Wildlife and Parks, 1420 East 6th Ave., Helena, MT 59620.



Jim Satterfield
Regional Supervisor

4/29/05

Date