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: JS080-05
September 12, 2005

TO: *Governor's Office, Attn: Mike Volesky, PO Box 200801, Helena, 59620-0801
Environmental Quality Council, PO Box 201704, Helena, 59620-1704
*Dept. of Environmental Quality, Planning, Prevention & Assistance, PO Box 200901, Helena, 59620-0901
*Dept. of Environmental Quality, Permitting Compliance, PO Box 200901, Helena, 59620-0901
DNRC, PO Box 201601, Helena, 59620-1601; Kalispell: Bob Sandman*
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks - Director's Office: Reg Peterson, Parks: Tom Reilly, Walt Timmerman, Design & Construction: Paul Valle, Field Services: Bardell Mangum, & Legal Unit: Brandi Fisher
*Montana Historical Society, SHPO, 225 North Roberts, Veteran's Memorial Building, Helena, 59620-1201
*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. Bernie Olson, 161 Lakeside Blvd., Lakeside, 59922-9723
Sen. Bob Keenan, Box 697, Bigfork, 59911-0697
Flathead County Commissioners, 800 S Main Street, Kalispell, 59901
Flathead County Library, 247 First Avenue E, Kalispell, 59901
Interested Parties

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP), Region One, has written a draft environmental assessment (EA) for the purpose of renovating the Lone Pine State Park Interpretive Center. The project includes interior and exterior renovations, as well as new construction. A copy of the draft is enclosed for your review.

Please direct your questions or comments to Dave Landstrom at the FWP Headquarters, 751-4574 or e-mail to dlandstrom@mt.gov.

Sincerely,

Jim Satterfield
Regional Supervisor

/ni
Enclosure

*E-mailed

LONE PINE INTERPRETIVE CENTER CAPITAL PROJECT PROPOSAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

September 1, 2005

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

MONTANA
STATE PARKS

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS
MEPA/NEPA CHECKLIST

MISSION. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, through its employees and citizen commission, provides for the stewardship of the fish, wildlife, parks, and recreational resources of Montana, while contributing to the quality of life for present and future generations

All Montanans have the right to live in a clean and healthful environment. This brief environmental analysis is intended to provide an evaluation of the likely impacts to the human environment from proposed actions of the project cited below. This analysis will help Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks to fulfill its oversight obligations and satisfy rules and regulations of both the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The project sponsor has a responsibility to ensure that all impacts have been addressed. Some effects may be negative; others may be positive. Please provide a discussion for each section. If no impacts are likely, be sure to discuss the reasoning that led to your determination.

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. Type of proposed action:

Development_____
Renovation __X___
Maintenance ___X____
Land Acquisition_____
Equipment Acquisition_____
Other (Describe)_____

2. If appropriate, agency responsible for the proposed action:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP)

3. Name, address, phone number, and e-mail address of project sponsor:

FWP Region One Parks
c/o David Landstrom
490 N. Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901
406-751-4574
dlandstrom@mt.gov

4. Name of project:

Lone Pine State Park Interpretive Center (LPIC) Renovation Project

5. If applicable:

Estimated construction/commencement date: 2007

Estimated completion date: 2007

Current status of project design (% complete): The project is in the initial planning phase.

6.Location affected by proposed action (county, range, and township):

Flathead County, Section 24, Township 28 North, Range 22 West

7.Project size: Estimate the numbers of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:

(a) Developed:
residential .....____acres
industrial .....25 acres

(b) Open Space/Woodlands/
Recreation .....25 acres

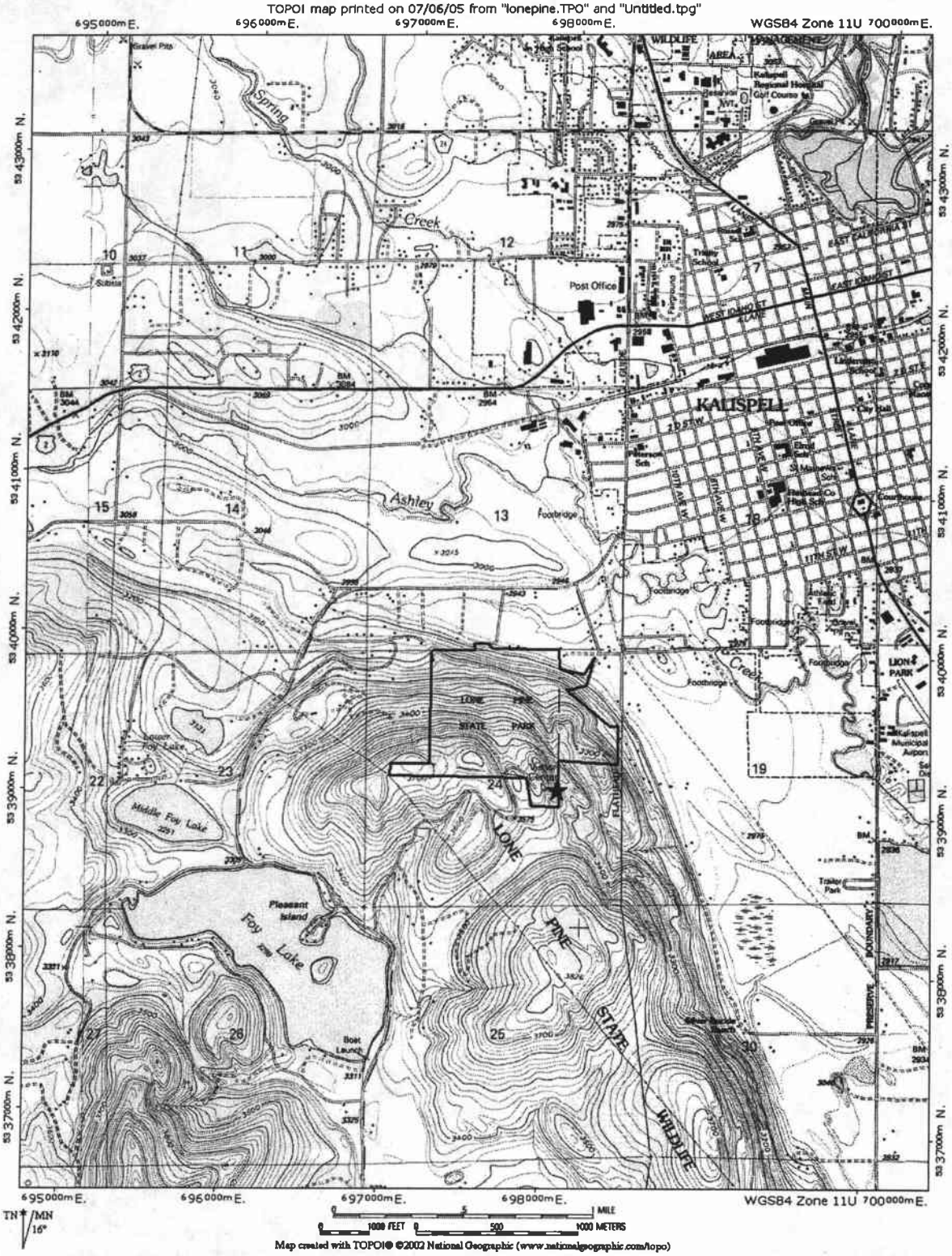
(c) Wetlands/Riparian Areas.....0 acres

(d) Floodplain.....0 acres

(e) Productive:
irrigated cropland.....0 acres
dry cropland.....0 acres
forestry.....0 acres
rangeland.....0 acres
other.....0 acres

8. Map/site plan: Attach an original 8 1/2" x 11" or larger section of the most recent USGS 7.5' series topographic map showing the location and boundaries of the area that would be affected by the proposed action. A different map scale may be substituted if more appropriate or if required by agency rule. If available, a site plan should also be attached.

TOPO! map printed on 07/06/05 from "lonepine.TPO" and "Untitled.tpg"



Map created with TOPO!® ©2002 National Geographic (www.nationalgeographic.com/topo)

9. Narrative summary of the proposed action or project, including the benefits and purpose of the proposed action:

Proposed Action

This proposed action is for the renovation of the Lone Pine Interpretive Center (LPIC), located in Lone Pine State Park, five miles southwest of Kalispell. Lone Pine State Park is becoming an increasingly important recreational resource to the Flathead Valley. In the past five years, Lone Pine has added 41 additional acres of recreational land, and 1½ miles of new trails, bringing the total to 6.5 miles. Visitation to Lone Pine State Park has steadily increased over the past five years. FWP estimates that 28,154 visits were made to Lone Pine in 2004, up from an estimated 16,224 in 2000. The LPIC is the focal point of this 229-acre park located in Montana's fastest growing county. The building was constructed in 1984 with state park capital improvement funds and has served Lone Pine visitors for 20 years. This project is intended to address two issues:

1) The LPIC is very energy inefficient, and is in need of ADA upgrades and major infrastructure improvement.

2) The LPIC requires capital improvements to create professional interpretive displays that convey the themes and stories within the Lone Pine State Park Interpretive Plan, and to accommodate increases in programming services.

Through this project, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) seeks to develop high-quality, thematic interpretive displays highlighting urban/wildland interface issues, promote fire-wise building and landscaping principles, and create additional space for classroom and community activities.

The alternatives in this proposal address interpretive displays, interior renovations, exterior renovations, building expansion, and outdoor amenities. Montana State Parks capital improvement funds and Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) monies would be utilized for this project, estimated to cost approximately $1.2 million.

Interior Renovations

Design and install interpretive displays.
The primary function of the LPIC is to offer interpretive displays, programs, and recreational opportunities for park visitors. In 2004, the Lone Pine State Park Master Interpretive Plan was completed, updating the 1987 plan. The interpretive mission at Lone Pine State Park is to highlight people's relationship to the land through interpretation of the past, present, and potential future changes to Flathead Valley as a result of natural and human influences.

This proposal would create professional-grade interpretive displays that explore the cultural and natural wonders of the Flathead Valley. Interpretive displays would be designed to tell the stories that are identified in the Lone Pine Master Interpretive Plan. Professional interpretive display designers would be contracted to develop, build, and install displays that would have appeal to both resident and nonresident visitors.

LPIC Interpretive Themes

- The Flathead Valley was formed by natural forces, working both in concert and opposition.
- The Flathead Valley's natural resources have provided humans with a means for survival and opportunity.
- Managing natural resources such as fish, wildlife, and recreational lands is challenging in a rapidly changing landscape.

LPIC INTERPRETIVE DISPLAY AREA.

Replace climate control system with propane system.
The LPIC is currently heated with electric baseboard fixtures and lacks adequate insulation. Heating bills during the period of November through March average over $300 per month. The building is not equipped with air conditioning, and temperatures within the center often exceed 80 degrees during the summer months. Lack of climate control creates serious storage issues for natural or cultural displays. This project would replace the baseboard heating with a forced air system and add insulation to increase energy efficiency.

Replace windows and doors with energy-efficient models.
The windows and doors within the LPIC are dated and worn. Replacement parts for the doors are nonexistent, making repairs difficult. These doors are also difficult for persons with disabilities to use. The windows that were installed throughout the building are extremely inefficient for maintaining heat and do not function well in a display room setting. This project would replace all of the center's doors and windows with high-efficiency models, thus improving energy conservation, security, and interpretive display lighting.

Replace lighting systems.
The LPIC lighting system is difficult to service and eliminates significant display space in the classroom area of the building. The display room lighting is not adequate or versatile enough to accommodate high-quality interpretive displays. This project would replace aging light fixtures with energy-efficient models and would also create a display room lighting system designed to enhance interpretive displays.

Upgrade audiovisual system.
The audiovisual system within the LPIC is utilized both for interpretive displays and for classroom exercises. The current audiovisual system is antiquated and is not able to take advantage of current medias. This project would include an integrated audiovisual system that would facilitate active interpretive displays and classroom exercises, and would be available to community groups utilizing the LPIC meeting room.

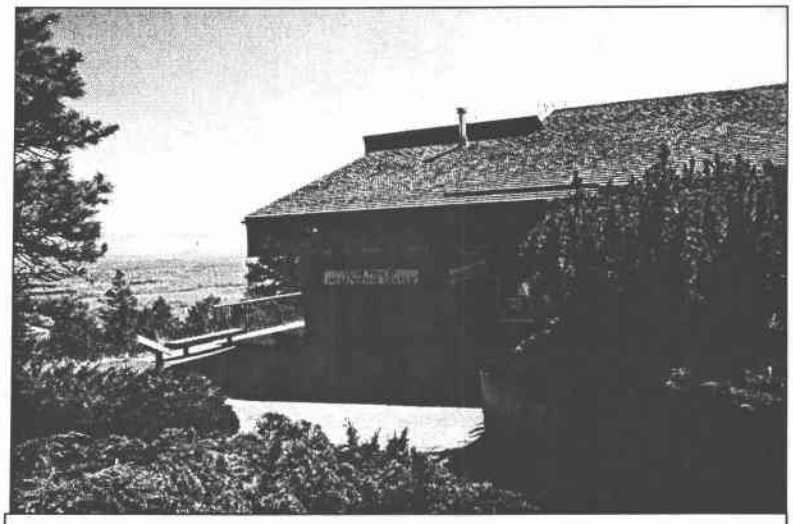
Replace flooring.
Flooring materials in the LPIC are either carpeting or tile. The tile has become cracked in several locations, and the carpeting is heavily worn and stained. These materials would be replaced with low-maintenance, high-wear materials.

Update Restrooms.
The LPIC restrooms are not designed to accommodate persons with disabilities and thus require upgrades to be compliant with current ADA standards. Furthermore, the appliances within the restrooms are in poor repair and pose significant maintenance problems. This project would update the restrooms with efficient, industrial-grade appliances, and reconfigure the restrooms to provide service to all visitors.

Reconfigure Entrance Area.
This project would reconfigure the LPIC to create a visitor services station immediately inside the front entrance of the building. This would enhance customer service by providing information about the park and surrounding area, and would provide a more efficient setting for employees by allowing them a clear view of the entrance while remaining at their workstation. The space would also provide a small retail sales area for park merchandise.

Exterior Renovations

Replace cedar roofing and siding with fire-retardant materials.
The LPIC was constructed with cedar shake roofing and cedar siding, thus creating a potential fire hazard. The cedar shake roof has reached the end of its 20-year useful life. This project would replace these materials with fire-resistant and more energy-efficient products.

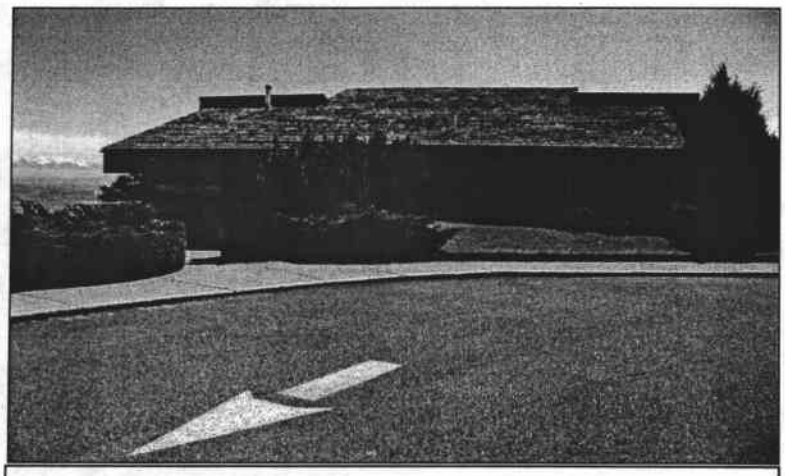


CEDAR SHAKE ROOFING AND SIDING ON THE LPIC.

Replace exterior landscaping materials.
The landscaping that surrounds the LPIC presents several issues:

- Dense, heavy vegetation creates a significant fire hazard.
- The landscaping at the LPIC is extremely high-maintenance.
- Plantings around the center obscure the building from view.

This project would replace the existing landscaping with native plantings that have lower maintenance requirements. Additionally, fire-wise principles would be used for landscaping design to enhance visitor safety.



LPIC LANDSCAPING MATERIALS.

Replace exterior sidewalk.
The sidewalks leading to the LPIC are severely cracked and pitted, and direct rain and snowmelt directly toward the main entrance. This project would replace these sidewalks.

Upgrade entrance and approach at the west end of the LPIC.
This project would add a concrete sidewalk and landing at the west end of the building to facilitate access to that entrance.

Install ADA-compliant park benches and picnic tables.
This project would replace aged picnic tables and benches with new equipment that is easier for all visitors to use.

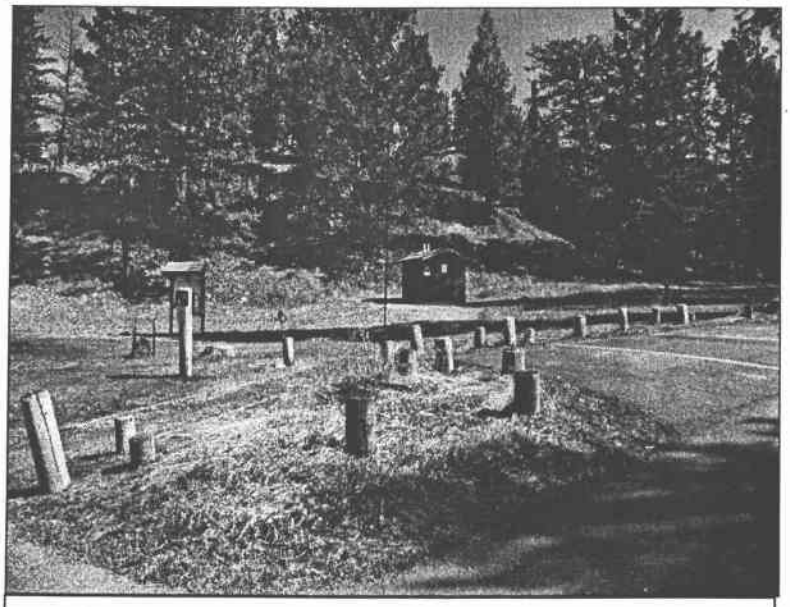
New Construction

Expand classroom/public meeting room.
The LPIC currently provides a space that is utilized both as a classroom and public meeting room. This space is separated from the interpretive display room by an accordion-style folding wall. The capacity of this room is currently 35-to-40 persons. This proposal would increase the floor plan of this room by approximately 1,000 square feet to accommodate up to 75 persons and would create a permanent classroom and display area.

Expand the LPIC office to include a "safe" room.
This project would increase the north side of the park office to include a small room with a solid, locking door for park staff in the event of a police emergency.

Construct amphitheater with seating for up to 50 persons.
This project would create an open-air amphitheater near the current volleyball court area to accommodate outside interpretive and entertainment programs. The amphitheater would provide bench seating for up to 50 persons.

Upgrade and repair parking lot and traffic barriers.
This project would add additional parking spaces by reconfiguring areas of the current lot. Rotten wooden traffic barricades would be replaced with landscaping rocks to provide more durable parking delineations.



LONE PINE TRAFFIC BARRIERS.

Benefits and Purpose

The LPIC provides a centrally located facility for providing interpretive programming related to urban/wildland interface topics and outdoor recreation. Lone Pine State Park is located five miles from Kalispell, in the center of Montana's Flathead Valley, a popular tourist destination, attracting approximately 1.5 million visitors a year. The area not only experiences high levels of visitation, but also a high level of population growth. From 1990-2000, the Flathead County population grew by over 25% to 79,485, and it is still increasing. Flathead County is now growing more rapidly than any county in Montana. The city of Kalispell contains approximately 17,381 people (Census, 2004) and grew by 36% in the 1990s. Visitation to Lone Pine State Park has steadily increased over the past five years. FWP estimates that 28,154 visits where made to Lone Pine in 2004, up from an estimated 16,224 in 2000.

The Flathead Valley is also home to an overwhelming wealth of wildlife and natural resources, including grizzly bears, mountain lions, gray wolves, lynx, bull trout, westslope cutthroat trout, and tundra swans. The park overlooks the Flathead drainage, one of the most pristine watersheds in the lower 48 states, and offers bird's-eye views of Glacier National Park, the Bob Marshall Wilderness, and Flathead Lake (largest natural freshwater body west of the Mississippi River). The LPIC has been used effectively as a

classroom and field study location for interpreting and studying the relationship between people and this amazing landscape. In 2004, following the development of an Interpretive Specialist staff position, 33 school programs were conducted at Lone Pine, reaching 833 students. This is an 85 % increase, and the Lone Pine staff have turned away several schools interested in programs due to demand and inadequate facilities to provide programs. Within a 50-mile radius of Lone Pine State Park, over 40 private and public schools have the potential to benefit from the programs offered at Lone Pine State Park.

Visitation to the LPIC by park visitors interested in viewing interpretive displays and learning about the Flathead region has increased dramatically over the past five years. This is in part due to the elimination of daily entrance fees for Montana residents in 2004. Nonresident visitation has increased as well. Lone Pine is a close and convenient attraction for visitors who are in the Flathead Valley to explore northwest Montana. Interpretive displays currently available at the LPIC are far below the quality of those offered in similar facilities throughout the state.

In terms of offering conservation-oriented interpretation, there is no other facility in the Flathead Valley that speaks specifically to conservation, outdoor recreation, and cultural preservation issues. Since the inception of the Interpretive Specialist position, evening and weekend program participation has increased by 56%, demonstrating a clear demand for these services. Lone Pine State Park, with a capital investment to repair and update the LPIC, could fill the void and fill an important niche in the educational/ recreational spectrum.

10. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the required no-action alternative) to the proposed action, whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider, and a comparison of the alternatives with the proposed action/preferred alternative:

Alternative A – No Action
Under this alternative, repairs and upgrades would not be made to the LPIC, and a piecemeal approach would be taken to keeping the building functional. FWP would continue to operate the facility seasonally, and interpretive services and facility rentals would continue to be conducted April through September. FWP would not increase school programming, and interpretive displays would not be upgraded.

Alternative B – LPIC Interpretive Display Upgrades
Interpretive displays would be upgraded to create a high-quality learning experience for visitors by creating interactive displays that highlight people's relationship to the land through interpretation of the past, present, and potential future changes to Flathead Valley as a result of natural and human influences. In this alternative, FWP would invest approximately $419,000 to design and build a series of thematic, interactive interpretive displays for seasonal viewing.

This alternative would not address the energy efficiency and ADA compliance issues that currently face the LPIC. Lone Pine would continue to be closed from October through March to avoid excessive heating costs. The LPIC would not increase interpretive and educational programming beyond the current capacity of the building and operational

season. This alternative would also fail to address the summer climate control issue of excessive heat within the display area and classroom.

Alternative C – LPIC Renovation (preferred alternative)
Under this alternative, FWP would renovate the LPIC to make it energy-efficient and fire-wise. Interior space would be maximized, and classroom/public meeting room size would be increased. The entire facility would be improved to meet all current ADA requirements.

Interpretive displays would be upgraded to create a high-quality learning experience for visitors by creating interactive displays that highlight people's relationship to the land through interpretation of the past, present, and potential future changes to Flathead Valley as a result of natural and human influences. Classroom and public meeting room rentals and interpretive programming would be available year-round.

In this alternative, FWP would invest approximately $419,000 to design and build a series of thematic, interactive interpretive displays for year-round viewing. Approximately $877,000 would be invested to renovate the LPIC to improve efficiency, ADA access, fire safety, a larger public classroom/rental facility, and an outdoor amphitheater with improved parking.

FWP believes this is the best alternative because it provides the highest level of visitor service and prepares Lone Pine State Park to be a vital part of the rapidly growing Flathead region.

11. Listing of each local, state, or federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction:

(a)Permits		
Agency Name:	Permit:	Date Filed:
Flathead County	Building Permit	NA

(b)Funding	
Agency Name:	Funding Amount:
FWP funds	$800,000
Federal LWCF funds	$477,032

(c)Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities	
Agency Name:	Type of Responsibility:
N/A	N/A

12. List of agencies consulted during preparation of this Environmental Checklist:

None

13. Name of Preparer(s) of this Environmental Checklist:

David Landstrom
FWP Region One Parks
490 N. Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901
406-751-4574
dlandstrom@mt.gov

14. Date submitted: September 9, 2005

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Land Resources" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on land resources. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects of the action as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

1. LAND RESOURCES **Will the proposed action result in:**	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		x				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil, which would reduce productivity or fertility?		x			no	1b.
c. Destruction, covering, or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		x				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition, or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?		x				
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		x				
f. Other		x				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

1b. Approximately 1,000 square feet of interior floor space would be added to the south end of the LPIC, thus increasing the building's footprint.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Air" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on air resources. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects of the action as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

2. AIR **Will the proposed action result in:**	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (also see 13 (c))		x				
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		x				
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		x				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		x				
e. Any discharge that will conflict with federal or state air quality regs?		x				
f. Other		x				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

There would be no alteration of air quality as a result of this project.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Water" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on water resources. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

3. WATER **Will the proposed action result in:**	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality, including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen, or turbidity?		x				
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?		x				
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of floodwater or other flows?		x				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		x				
e. Exposure of people or property to water-related hazards such as flooding?		x				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		x				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?			x		no	3g.
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		x				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		x				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		x				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		x				
l. Effects to a designated floodplain?		x				
m. Any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations?		x				
n. Other:		x				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

3g. A small increase in ground water usage may result from a longer operating season. The primary requirement for water usage at Lone Pine, however, is summer irrigation. This usage may be decreased when landscape plantings are replaced with native, drought-resistant planting.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Vegetation" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on vegetative resources. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

4. VEGETATION	IMPACT					
Will the proposed action result in:	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity, or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?		x				
b. Alteration of a plant community?			X		yes	4b.
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		x				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		x				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?		x				
f. Effects to wetlands or prime and unique farmland?		x				
g. Other:		x				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

4b. Nonnative landscaping plants would be replaced with native plantings that are suitable to the climate at Lone Pine. The effect would be an increase in plant diversity surrounding the Lone Pine Interpretive Center.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Fish/Wildlife" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on fish and wildlife resources. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

5. FISH/WILDLIFE Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant,		
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		x				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		x				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		x				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		x				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		x				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		x				
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest, or other human activity)?		x				
h. Adverse effects to threatened/endangered species or their habitat?		x				
i. Introduction or exportation of any species not presently or historically occurring in the affected location?		x				
j. Other:		x				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

This project would affect only the immediate grounds surrounding the Interpretive Center. There would be no loss of wildlife habitat.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Noise/Electrical Effects" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects of noise and electrical activities. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

6. NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS	IMPACT					
Will the proposed action result in:	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Increases in existing noise levels?			X		yes	6a.
b. Exposure of people to severe or nuisance noise levels?		X				
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				
e. Other:		x				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

6a. There would be an increase in noise associated with an outdoor amphitheater. The location for this structure would be in an area of the park that is not near any current residential dwellings. The amphitheater location would also be in an area sheltered by terrain features that would prevent program noise from traveling far.

There would be a temporary increase in noise during the construction phase of this project.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Land Use" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on land use. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects.

7. LAND USE Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		x				
b. A conflict with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		x				
c. A conflict with any existing land use, the presence of which would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		x				
d. Adverse effects on, or relocation of, residences?		x				
e. Compliance with existing land policies for land use, transportation, and open space?		x				
f. Increased traffic hazards, traffic volume, or speed limits, or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?			x		yes	7f.
g. Other:		x				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

7f. There may be increased traffic volume associated with an increase in visitor services. FWP would mitigate this effect by scheduling events to avoid peak traffic hours. FWP would continue to encourage group travel via bus or van to reduce the number of personal vehicles attending interpretive programs. There would be a short-term spike in traffic volume during the construction phase of this project.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Risk/Health Hazards" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects of risks and health hazards. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects of the action as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

8. RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS	IMPACT					
Will the proposed action result in:	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?		x				
b. Effects on existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create need for a new plan?		x				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		x				
d. Disturbance to any sites with known or potential deposits of hazardous materials?		x				
e. The use of any chemical toxicants?		x				
f. Other:		x				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

The cumulative effects of this project would not result in an increase in human health hazards. A desired outcome of this project is to update the Lone Pine Interpretive Center to increase visitor safety.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Community Impact" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on the community. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		x				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		x				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment, or community or personal income?			x		yes	9c.
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?			x		yes	9d.
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?		x				
f. Other:		x				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

9c & d. The impact of this project is expected to result in a positive effect on the level of community income. The construction phase of this project would provide short-term income to local area building trades and contractors. Visitor spending in the surrounding community is likely to increase due to the anticipated increase in visitor services and opportunities at the site.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Public Services/Taxes/Utilities" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on public services, taxes, and utilities. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

10. PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. An effect upon, or result in a need for, new or altered, governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If so, specify:		x				
b. Effects on the local or state tax base and revenues?		x				
c. A need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		x				
d. Increased use of any energy source?			x		yes	10d.
e. Other.		x				
Additional information requested:						
f. Define projected revenue sources.	Montana State Parks Capital Improvement Funds and federal Land and Water Conservation Fund.					
g. Define projected maintenance costs.	Project maintenance costs have been accounted for in the annual operations budget.					

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

10d. This project would have a minor effect on water consumption based on a year-round operating season. Water use at the facility is linked to drinking water and restrooms. Summer irrigation of landscaping may decrease as a result of selecting plants that require less water.

Energy consumption would be significantly reduced by changing from electric heat to forced air propane heat, and improvements in the Interpretive Center's roofing, siding, and window efficiency would result in further reductions in energy consumption.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Aesthetics/Recreation" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on aesthetics & recreation. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

11. AESTHETICS/RECREATION Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?		x				
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		x				
c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report)			x		yes	11c.
d. Adverse effects to any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails, or wilderness areas?		x				
e. Other:		x				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

11c. This action is expected to significantly improve the quality and quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings. The intent of this project is to maintain an aesthetically pleasing interpretive center that blends well with surrounding landscape. The natural setting of Lone Pine would not be altered.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Cultural/historical Resources" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on cultural/historical resources. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

12. CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure, or object of prehistoric, historic, or paleontological importance?		x				
b. Physical changes that would affect unique cultural values?		x				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		x				
d. Adverse effects to historic or cultural resources?		x				
e. Other:		x				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

This project would take place at an existing building structure at Lone Pine State Park and would not harm historic or cultural resources.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Summary Evaluation of Significance" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects. Even if you have checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources which create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)		x				
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		x				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard, or formal plan?		x				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		x				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?		x				
f. Have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy?		x				
Additional information requested:						
g. List any federal or state permits required.						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

This project is anticipated to have a positive effect on surrounding communities. Recreational and educational opportunities would be increased with minimal effect on public services. Outdoor recreation and interpretive opportunities are an important component of the local community and quality of life. This project is expected to greatly enhance both.

This project will enhance opportunities for resident and nonresident visitors to learn about the urban/wildland interface, potentially preventing human/animal conflict through public programs and interpretive displays.

PART III. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST CONCLUSION SECTION

1. Discuss the cumulative and secondary effects of this project as a whole:

This proposed action would increase FWP's visitor service at Lone Pine State Park. Educational programs for area schools and organizations would be expanded, and natural and cultural interpretive displays and programs would be enhanced to serve visitors. Traffic volumes associated with classroom/public meeting room uses are expected to increase during winter months.

Secondary effects are likely to include an increase to Flathead Valley's tourism economy by offering greater quality and quantity of visitor services. Construction expenses would add a short-term boost to the Kalispell building industry.

2. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this environmental checklist (Part II), is an EIS required?

YES _____

NO ___X_

If an EIS is not required, explain why the current checklist level of review is appropriate:

This project is primarily a rehabilitation project to enhance the efficiency of the LPIC. The impacts associated with new construction are considered positive in this review.

3. Describe the public involvement for this project.

During the summer of 2004 a citizens' committee worked with FWP staff to craft an interpretive plan and discuss improvements to LPIC. The public comment period for this draft will run for a minimum of 30 days, and open house scoping sessions will be conducted during that time.

4. What is the duration of the public comment period?

Thirty days, from September 12 through October 11, 2005.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Affected Environment – The aspects of the human environment that may change as a result of an agency action.

Alternative – A different approach to achieve the same objective or result as the proposed action.

Categorical Exclusion – A level of environmental review for agency action that does not individually, collectively, or cumulatively cause significant impacts to the human environment, as determined by rulemaking or programmatic review and for which an EA or EIS is not required.

Cumulative Impacts – Impacts to the human environment that, individually, may be minor for a specific project but, when considered in relation to other actions, may result in significant impacts.

Direct Impacts – Primary impacts that have a direct cause and effect relationship with a specific action; i.e., they occur at the same time and place as the action that causes the impact.

Environmental Assessment (EA) – The appropriate level of environmental review for actions that either do not significantly affect the human environment or for which the agency is uncertain whether an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required.

Environmental Assessment Checklist – An EA checklist is a standard form of an EA, developed by an agency for actions that generally produce minimal impacts.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) – A comprehensive evaluation of the impacts to the human environment that likely would result from an agency action or reasonable alternatives to that action. An EIS also serves as a public disclosure of agency decision-making. Typically, an EIS is prepared in two steps. The Draft EIS is a preliminary, detailed, written statement that facilitates public review and comment. The Final EIS is a completed, written statement that includes a summary of major conclusions and supporting information from the Draft EIS, responses to substantive comments received on the Draft EIS, a list of all comments on the Draft EIS and any revisions made to the Draft EIS, and an explanation of the agency's reasons for its decision.

Environmental Review – An evaluation, prepared in compliance with the provisions of MEPA and the MEPA Model Rules, of the impacts to the human environment that may result as a consequence of an agency action.

Human Environment – Those attributes, including but not limited to biological, physical, social, economic, cultural, and aesthetic factors, that interrelate to form the environment.

Long-term Impact – An impact, which lasts well beyond the period of the initial project.

Mitigated Environmental Assessment – The appropriate level of environmental review for actions that normally would require an EIS, except that the state agency can impose designs, enforceable controls, or stipulations to reduce the otherwise significant impacts to below the level of significance. A mitigated EA must demonstrate that: (1) all impacts have been identified, (2) all impacts can be mitigated below the level of significance, and (3) no significant impact is likely to occur.

Mitigation – An enforceable measure(s), designed to reduce or prevent undesirable effects or impacts of the proposed action.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) – The federal counterpart of MEPA that applies only to federal actions.

No-Action Alternative – An alternative, required by the MEPA Model Rules for purposes of analysis, that describes the agency action that would result in the least change to the human environment.

Public Participation – The process by which an agency includes interested and affected individuals, organizations, and agencies in decision-making.

Record of Decision – Concise public notice that announces the agency's decision, explains the reason for that decision, and describes any special conditions related to implementation of the decision.

Scoping – The process, including public participation, that an agency uses to define the scope of the environmental review.

Secondary Impacts – Impacts to the human environment that are indirectly related to the agency action; i.e., they are induced by a direct impact and occur at a later time or distance from the triggering action.

Short-Term Impact – An impact directly associated with a project that is of relatively short duration.

Significance – The process of determining whether the impacts of a proposed action are serious enough to warrant the preparation of an EIS. An impact may be adverse, beneficial, or both. If none of the adverse impacts are significant, an EIS is not required.

Supplemental Review – A modification of a previous environmental review document (EA or EIS) based on changes in the proposed action, the discovery of new information, or the need for additional evaluation.

Tiering – Preparing an environmental review by focusing specifically on narrow scope of issues because the broader scope of issues was adequately addressed in previous environmental review document(s) that may be incorporated by reference.