Draft
Environmental Assessment

Bank of the Rockies Property Acquisition
Big Spring Creek

August 16, 2013

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Bank of the Rockies Property Acquisition, Big Spring Creek
Draft Environmental Assessment
MEPA, NEPA, MCA 23-1-110 CHECKLIST

PART I: PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. **Type of Proposed Action**: Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) proposes to purchase a 20.7 acre property on Big Spring Creek by fee title. The dilapidated structures on the property will be removed. This parcel contains or is adjacent to about one mile of Big Spring Creek. This purchase would increase access to the adjacent publicly accessible properties and allow for future stream restoration work on Big Spring Creek. If needed, development of the property will be evaluated later in a later EA.

2. **Agency authority for the proposed action:** The 1977 Montana Legislature enacted statute 87-1-605 MCA, which directs FWP to acquire, develop and operate a system of fishing accesses. The legislature established a funding account to ensure that this function would be accomplished. Sections 12-8-213, 23-1-105, 23-1-106, 15-1-122, 61-3-321, and 87-1-303, MCA, authorize the collection fees and charges for the use of state park system units and fishing access sites, and contain rule-making authority for their use, occupancy and protection.

   Section 23-1-110 MCA, or House Bill 495, and the guidelines established in 12.8.604 (ARM) (1) relate to changes in state park and fishing access site features or use patterns. The proposed acquisition will not change site features or historical use; therefore, Section 23-1-110 MCA is not initiated by the proposed fishing access site acquisition.

2. **Name of Project**
   Bank of the Rockies Property Acquisition, Big Spring Creek

3. **Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor**

   Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
   Big Spring Creek – Bank of the Rockies
   Acquisition EA
   PO Box 938
   Lewistown, MT 59457

   (406) 538-4658

4. **If Applicable:**
Estimated Construction/Commencement Date: NA
Estimated Completion Date: Fall 2013
Current Status of Project Design (% complete): NA

5. **Location Affected by Proposed Action (county, range and township)**
The Bank of the Rockies Property is located in Township 15 North, Range 18 East, section 9 in Fergus County, Montana. Approximate center of parcel is 47.0763˚; 109.44085˚. The proposed acquisition is 20.72 acres. The parcel is located immediately to the south and east of the Carroll Trail Fishing Access Site (FAS), to the east of the Machler Conservation Easement and NW of the Lewistown Wastewater Treatment Plant.

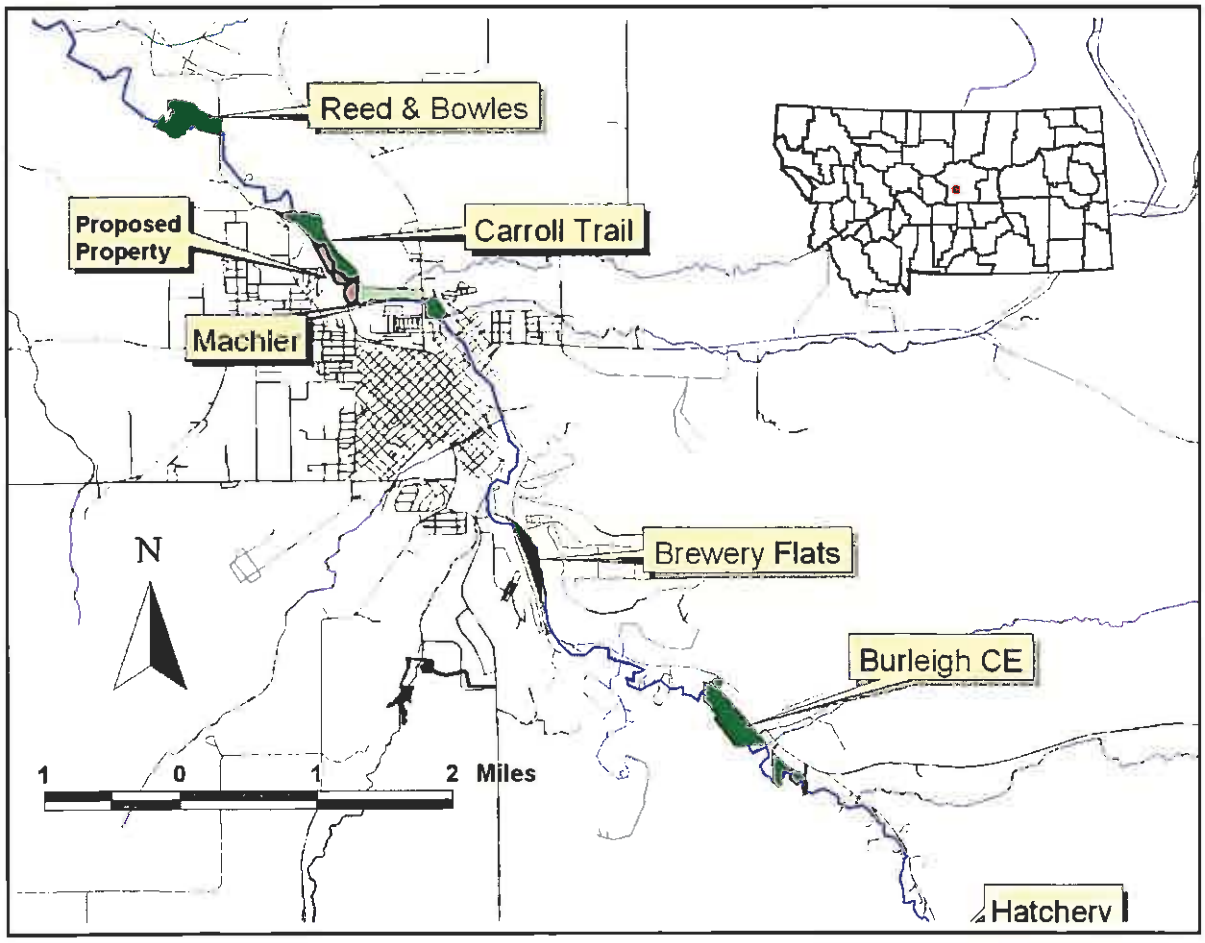

Figure 1: Location of Bank of the Rockies Property (Red section) near Lewistown, MT. Green sections are existing Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks fishing access sites on Big Spring Creek. Light blue Machler section is a conservation easement.

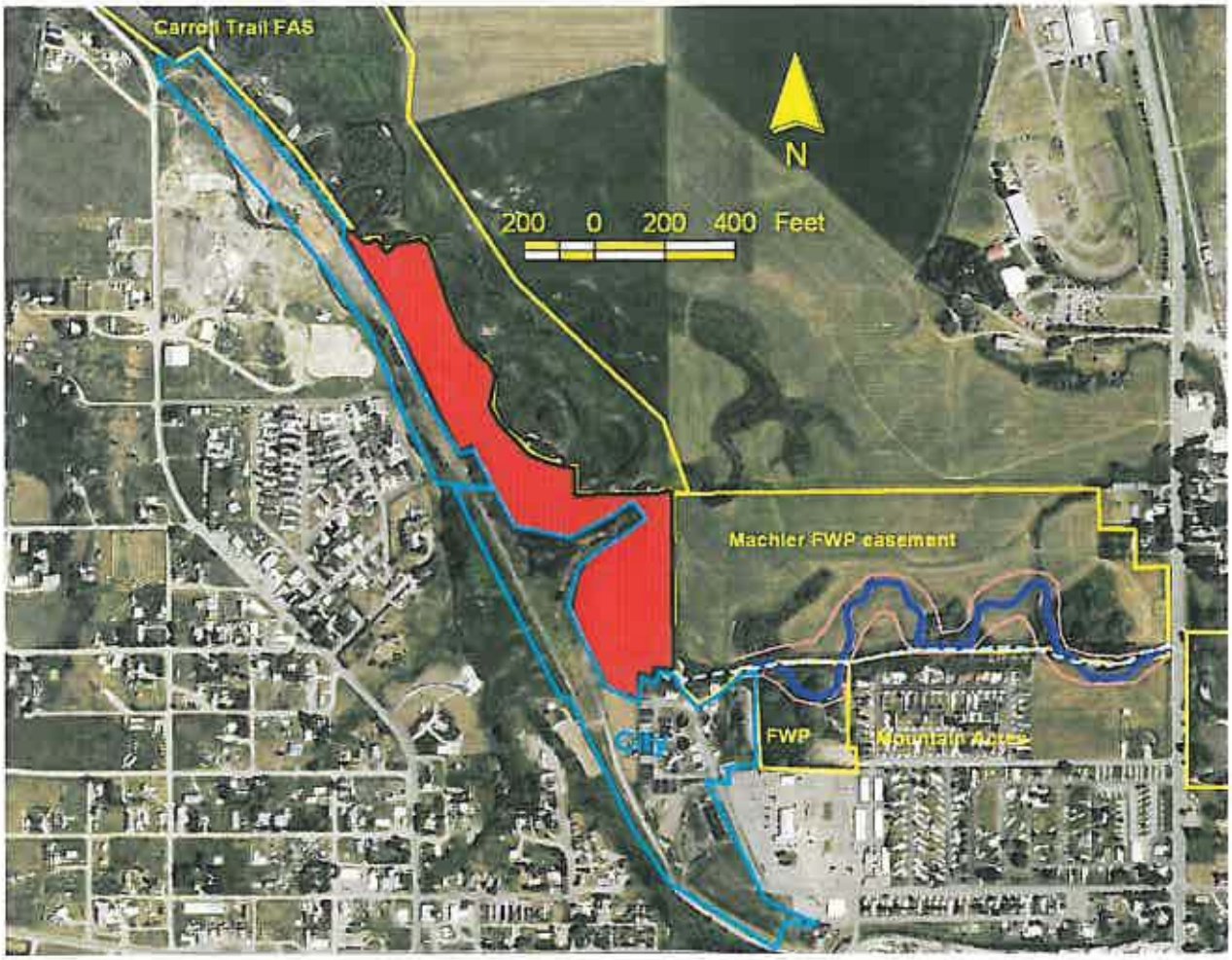

Figure 2: Map of proposed parcel in relationship to other Big Spring Creek FAS (upper) and nearby ownership (lower). Approximate center of parcel is 47.0763°; 109.44085°. Parcel is marked in red. Dark blue line on Machler easement is proposed Phase 1 stream restoration location, dashed line is existing creek.

6. Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently (20.7 total acres):

(a) Developed:
Residential ..... 2 acres
Industrial ..... 0 acres

(b) Open Space/Woodlands/
Recreation ..... 0 acres

(c) Wetlands/Riparian
Areas ..... 18.7 acres

(d) Floodplain ..... 18.7 acres

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

7. **Listing of any other Local, State or Federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction.**

(a) Permits: None Required

Agency Name	Permit	Date Filed/#

Appropriate permits will be obtained for building demolition

(b) Funding: $188,000

Agency Name	Funding Amount
Montana Fish & Wildlife Conservation Trust	$60,000
Monsanto 2010 settlement	$128,000

The Fair Market Value of the real property was determined to be $250,000 and the Seller is providing a Bargain Sale of the property to the FWP for $188,000.

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:

Agency Name	Type of Responsibility
City of Lewistown	Adjacent property, trail system and access.

8. **Narrative summary of the proposed action or project including the benefits and purpose of the proposed action.**

Description

The proposed property Acquisition is for a 20.72-acre parcel of land owned by the Bank of the Rockies. It is located along the south side of Big Spring Creek northwest of the city of Lewistown and includes approximately one mile of Big Spring Creek. The property is bordered by FWP lands to the north, a FWP conservation easement to the east, both of which will provide access to the parcel. The City of Lewistown owns the lands to the south and west. The parcel is primarily riparian/wetland habitat with willows and shrubs within the Big Spring Creek floodplain (Photo 1). There are buildings present on the property that are in poor condition with wiring exposed. These buildings would be demolished if the property was acquired by FWP. If acquired, the parcel would provide public access for approximately two miles from the Carroll Trail FAS to the Lazy KB FAS. The parcel is also necessary to complete Phase 2 of the Big Spring Creek stream restoration (commonly called the Machler project) to restore a more natural riffle pool stream and enlarge the floodplain. It will benefit the Lewistown trail system and provide excellent non-motorized access to this area of Big Spring Creek.

Big Spring Creek originates from one of the largest freshwater springs in Montana. The creek meanders for 30 miles before flowing into the Judith River of the Missouri River drainage. Big Spring Creek supports an excellent fishery of naturally reproducing brown and rainbow trout. Recent population surveys

Photo 1: Bank of the Rockies property extending out and to the right in the photograph. Image was taken from adjacent City of Lewistown property.

immediately adjacent and downstream of the Bank of the Rockies property at the Carroll Trail FAS indicate that trout numbers are very high, with a 10-year average of approximately 1,500 trout ≥ 10-inches per mile and a 30-year average of approximately 1,350 trout ≥ 10-inches per mile. Similar trout numbers were found during 2009 – 2012 surveys on a section immediately adjacent and upstream of the proposed acquisition.

The creek is very popular with anglers and is central Montana's premier trout fishery. Over the past 10 years Big Spring Creek has averaged 9,100 angling days per year and in 2009, ranked 18th in use among FWP Region 4 waters. Wade access below the high water mark and boating on Big Spring Creek are difficult due to its small size, consistent flows, sharp meanders, and high current velocity. Bank and wade fishing provide the most feasible angling access, which requires several fishing access points that allow anglers to access the creek above the high water mark. Traditionally, landowners along Big Spring Creek have granted anglers access, however, there is growing concern that fishing opportunities on private lands may be diminished as the demand for recreational property increases. Public access to the creek currently consists of six FWP fishing access sites, Big Springs State Fish Hatchery, and access within the Lewistown city limits. The principle game fish in the creek are rainbow trout and brown trout. Other fish species are present but in much lower numbers and include brook trout, mountain whitefish, northern pike, yellow perch, fathead minnow, lake chub, longnose dace, northern redbelly dace, longnose sucker, mountain sucker, white sucker, and mottled sculpin.

Need and Benefits

The principle purpose for this acquisition is to provide public access to Big Spring Creek for water-based recreation. An equally important aspect of the acquisition involves a subsequent stream channel restoration project designed to improve stream function and fish habitat.

In 1961, this area of Big Spring Creek was channelized, which reduced stream length by more than 50%. Downcutting resulted in an entrenched channel with very limited flood plain, few pools and a loss of meanders. Stream straightening in this area caused so many problems that it was one of the main reasons the Streambed and Land Preservation Act (310 law) was enacted. In 2007, FWP purchased a 62-acre conservation easement (Machler easement) upstream and to the east of this parcel for Phase 1 of a stream restoration project. The Bank of the Rockies Parcel would be necessary to pursue Phase 2 of the re-meandering project and would allow public access to an additional 0.66 miles of Big Spring Creek on both banks while linking Carroll Trail FAS and the Machler easement. This purchase would also create a continuous public corridor that is adjacent/within city limits and would provide pedestrian-safe access to various recreation activities including walking, biking, swimming, and floating. The parcel would link to FWP FAS sites that would provide 2.5 river miles of contiguous angler access. The site acquisition and development would be consistent with the Lewistown trails system, providing recreational opportunities such as nature walking, birding, and trail running.

This EA addresses only the proposed acquisition of the Bank of the Rockies property and demolition of the existing structures. It does not evaluate property development or stream restoration. A separate EA would be conducted before any site development. However, it is prudent to disclose long-term plans for the property within this assessment. Plans are to manage the area as a fishing access site and riparian area. The Lewistown trail system would go through the property. FWP would install signs identifying the site as well as informational signs of rules, warnings, and relevant regulations. FWP would manage the site for open space and public recreation. A weed management plan would be developed for the property. Fish populations would be monitored to document changes to the fisheries resource. Photo points, aerial photography, and GIS would be used to document riparian and stream channel enhancements. The Bank of the Rockies property acquisition is the final property needed for Phase 2 of the stream restoration project. If this property were acquired, FWP would ensure that the necessary assessments, design and permitting for the stream restoration work are completed. FWP anticipates that process would commence before 2020.

PART II: ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

1. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the 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
If the No Action alternative were adopted, the property would not provide public access to Big Spring Creek. The Lewistown City Trail network would not be expanded through this site. Phase 2 of the stream channel restoration would likely not be implemented. The land would likely remain in private ownership which would limit public access to Big Spring Creek. The no Action alternative would not fulfill the objectives of the project which are to provide public access to the stream for recreation.

Alternative B: Purchase the Bank of the Rockies Property
The preferred alternative is to purchase the 20.72 acre Bank of the Rockies property. This alternative would satisfy objectives of FWP to provide public access and recreational opportunities to Big Spring Creek. Following the acquisition FWP would pursue the stream channel restoration effort in a separate process in order to improve natural function to a degraded portion of the creek and improve fish habitat. The purchase would provide 2.5 stream miles of continuous access to central Montana's premier trout fishery and an opportunity to expand the Lewistown city trail system. The property is in a good location to provide easy, safe access to the creek and recreation. Use is expected to be high due to its close proximity to the city limits.

2. **Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:**
Not applicable

PART III: NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

The proposed project consists of transfer of ownership from the Bank of the Rockies to Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks and demolition of the existing structures. No additional construction or improvements are included in this proposal. This document discloses several intended improvements to the site which would help justify the acquisition based on an assessment of the full potential of public benefit and recreation value. This document identifies the intent to develop the site for public recreation including signing, linking to an existing trail network and the intent to improve stream channel function and fish habitat. Those actions would be evaluated in a separate process following the acquisition.

This analysis did not reveal any significant impacts to the human or physical environment.

PART IV: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. Describe the level of public involvement for this project if any, and, given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?

The Snow Mountain Trout Unlimited Chapter, Big Spring Watershed Group and Friends of the Lewistown trails all support the project. The public will be notified in the following ways to comment on the EA of the Bank of the Rockies Property, Big Spring Creek Acquisition:

1. Legal notices will be published in the *Lewistown News-Argus*, *Great Falls Tribune*, and the *Helena Independent Record*.
2. Legal notice and the draft EA will be posted on the Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks web page: http://fwp.state.mt.us/publicnotices
3. Draft EA's will be available at the FWP Region 4 Headquarters in Great Falls, Lewistown area Resource Office and the FWP State Headquarters in Helena.
4. A news release will be prepared and distributed to a standard list of media outlets interested in FWP Region 4 issues.
5. Copies of this environmental assessment will be distributed to neighboring landowners and interested parties to ensure their knowledge of the proposed action.

If requested within the comment period, FWP will schedule and conduct a public meeting on this proposed action.

This level of public involvement is appropriate for a project of this small scale.

2. Duration of comment period, if any.

The public comment period will be 30 days spanning from August 16, 2013 to September 15, 2013. Comments may be emailed to clsmith@mt.gov, or written comments can be sent to the following address

Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks
ATTN: Bank of the Rockies EA
P.O. Box 938
Lewistown, MT 59457

PART V: EA PREPARATION

1. **Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required?**
   No, an EIS is not required.
   If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action.

   Based on an evaluation of impacts to the physical and human environment stemming from the acquisition of the Bank of the Rockies property, this assessment revealed no significant negative impacts from the proposed action: therefore, an EIS is not necessary and an environmental assessment is the appropriate level of analysis.

2. **Name, title, address and phone number of the person(s) responsible for preparing the EA:**

   Clint Smith & Anne Tews
   Fisheries Biologists
   PO Box 938
   Lewistown, MT 59457
   (406) 538-4658

3. **List of agencies consulted during preparation of the EA:**

   Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
   - Wildlife Division
   - Fisheries Division
   - Lands Section

   Montana Natural Heritage Program – Natural Resources Information System (NRIS)
   Montana Fish Information System

PART VI: MEPA CHECKLIST

Evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment.

A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

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				1a.
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil which would reduce productivity or fertility?		X				
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 of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

1a. The proposed action involves a transfer of ownership of property and demolition of existing buildings. It does not include development of the property.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

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				2a.
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. For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge which will conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a)		NA				
f. Other		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

2a. The proposed action involves a transfer of ownership of property and demolition of existing buildings. It does not include development of the property.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

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				3a.
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?		X				
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of flood water 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				
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. For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c)		NA				
m. For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a)		NA				
n. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

3a. The proposed action involves a transfer of ownership of property and demolition of existing buildings. It does not include development of the property.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

4. VEGETATION Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
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				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		X	4e.
f. For P-R/D- J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		NA				
g. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

4b. A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program's species of concern database found no plants of significance within the boundaries of the property (August 8, 2013).

4e. If acquired, FWP would work with the Fergus County Weed District to complete a weed inspection of the property and address any noxious weeds found on the property. In conjunction with the Fergus County Weed District, FWP would implement an integrated approach to control noxious weeds, as outlined in the FWP Statewide Integrated Noxious Weed Management Plan. The integrated plan uses a combination of biological, mechanical, and herbicidal treatments to control noxious weeds. The use of herbicides would be in compliance with application guidelines to minimize the risk of chemical spills or water contamination and applied by people trained in safe handling techniques.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

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				5a.
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				5f
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?		X				5g.
h. For P-R/D-J, will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f)		NA				
i. For P-R/D-J, will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d)		NA				
j. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

5a. The proposed acquisition would have no bearing on the game and non-game species that frequent the property. The area is not considered critical habitat for any species, according to FWP Region 4 wildlife biologist and fisheries biologist.

5f. A search of the Natural Resources Information System provided by the Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP) showed that no threatened or endangered species are in the vicinity of the property (August 8, 2013). Neither the FWP wildlife biologist nor the fisheries biologist for the area identified concerns with the proposed acquisition. The site is not within the range of the grizzly bear, Canada lynx, Eskimo curlew, interior least tern, piping plover, pallid sturgeon, Kootenai River white sturgeon or bull trout.

5g. If the property were purchased by FWP, anglers would likely handle fish and fish harvest may increase however, the proposed acquisition is not expected to negatively impact fish or wildlife populations.

B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Increases in existing noise levels?			X			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 of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

6a. The proposed action involves a transfer of ownership of property and demolition of existing buildings. It does not include development of the property. Future developments of the site would be evaluated in separate analyses. Construction equipment could cause a temporary, minor increase in noise levels at the project site during demolition. Any increase in noise level at the construction site would be short term and minor. Visitor use could increase noise levels.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

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				7a.
b. Conflicted with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		X				
e. Other: _____		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

7a. The proposed action involves a transfer of ownership of property and demolition of existing buildings. It does not include development of the property.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

8. RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
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		Yes	8a.
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				8c
d. For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)		NA				
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

8a and 8c. If the property were acquired by FWP, the department would manage weeds in adherence with the Statewide Integrated Noxious Weed Management Plan, using an integrated approach including chemical, biological, and mechanical methods. The use of herbicides would be in compliance with application guidelines and conducted by people trained in safe handling techniques. Weeds would also be controlled using mechanical or biological means in certain areas to reduce the risk of chemical spills or water contamination. Specific tenants of the weed management plan would be disclosed in a separate analysis that dealt with the development of site for public use. The existing buildings on the property will be removed following state and federal standards.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

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				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		X				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?		X				
f. Other:		X				9f.

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

9f. The proposed action is expected to have a positive impact to the Lewistown community and central Montana residents by acquiring a public recreation site.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

10. PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES	IMPACT	Can Impact	Comment

Will the proposed action result in:	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Be Mitigated	Index
a. Will the proposed action have 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 any, specify: _____		X				
b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				10b.
c. Will the proposed action result in 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. Will the proposed action result in increased used of any energy source?		X				
e. Define projected revenue sources						10e.
f. Define projected maintenance costs.						10f
g. Other:_____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

10b. Fish, Wildlife and Parks pays taxes "in a sum equal to the amount of taxes which would be payable on county assessment were it taxable to a private citizen" (MCA 87-1-603). Therefore, there will be no negative impact of this action on the local tax base.

10e. The funding source for this acquisition shall be the 2010 Monsanto Settlement Account ($128,000) and the Montana Fish and Wildlife Conservation Trust ($60,000). The Fair Market Value of the real property was determined to be $250,000 and the Seller is providing a Bargain Sale of the property to the Department for $188,000

10f. Maintenance costs are expected to be approximately $1,000 per year for weed control on the property. Other maintenance would be integrated into the existing FWP maintenance program in this area. Specific maintenance costs would be identified and disclosed is subsequent analyses based on the level of future development. FWP would expect maintenance costs to be limited to signing, fencing and minor user trail maintenance.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

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			11c.
d. For P-R/D-J, will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c)		NA				
e. Other:		NA				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

11c. The proposed acquisition would increase the quality and quantity of access to recreation on lower Big Spring Creek. Given there is adjacent access to Big spring Creek, FWP does not anticipate a significant increase in public use to central Montana at the level that would require a tourism report to quantify.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

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				12a.
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		X				12b.
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				12c.
d. For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? **Attach SHPO letter of clearance.** (Also see 12.a)		NA				
e. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

12 abc. Cultural/historic resources would not be impacted by this acquisition. A cultural resource inventory will be completed and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) will be consulted before the existing structures are demolished. Impacts to cultural resources would be analyzed and disclosed in subsequent analyses of ground breaking activities.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

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. For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e)		NA				
g. For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.		NA				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed)

There were no impacts identified in this analysis that would be individually or cumulatively significant. The acquisition of the Bank of the Rockies property by FWP would not have a significant impact on the social, economic, environmental, cultural, or community resources in the Lewistown area.