

Draft
Environmental Assessment
Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park
Campground Improvement Project
Phase 2



January 22, 2016



Draft Environmental Assessment MEPA, NEPA, MCA 23-1-110 CHECKLIST

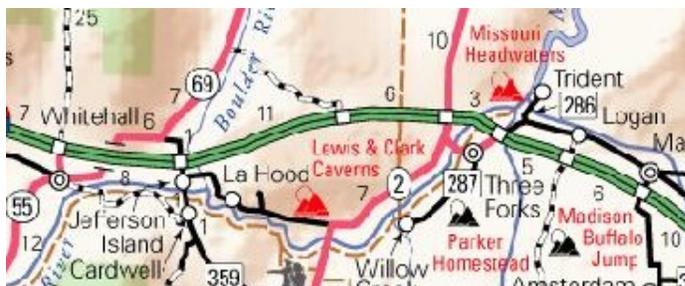
PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

- 1. Proposed state action:** Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP), State Parks Division proposes to install nine campsite electrical pedestals within the campground at Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park. This project will improve 9 of the 40 existing campsites making a total of 18 (45%) electrical sites in the campground.

A Phase I project which provided electrical pedestals for 9 campsites in the campground was completed in 2010. Since 2011 these campsites have been included on the campsite reservation program and have been the most popular and 'first reserved' campsites by the public each year. Electricity is considered a standard amenity by many campers now and a major consideration in selecting a site.

Sufficient electric service, circuit panels and electric meter were installed in the Phase I project for all 18 sites. The proposed project is designed to complete the original intent and extend the service to 9 additional sites.

- 2. Agency authority for the proposed action:**
FWP has the authority to develop outdoor recreational resources in the state per 23-2-101 MCA. Furthermore, state statute 23-1-110 MCA and Administrative Rules 21.8.601-608 guide public involvement and opportunity for comment on improvements at state parks.
- 3. Project sponsor:**
Montana State Parks
1400 South 19th Ave.
Bozeman, MT 59718
406-994-3552
- 4. Anticipated Schedule:**
Estimated Construction Commencement Date: Spring 2016
Estimated Completion Date: Spring 2016
Current Status of Project Design (% complete): 20%
- 5. Location affected by proposed action:**
Jefferson County, Section 21, T1N, R2W. The park is 22 miles west of Three Forks on Montana Hwy 2 or 18 miles east of Whitehall on Montana Hwy 2 and is comprised of 2,920 acres.



Need and Proposed Action

Currently, the park has nine electrical pedestals available in the campground. These electrical pedestals are in high demand and have been insufficient in number to meet demand. In recent years, there is a recognized trend away from tent camping and toward recreational vehicle (RV) and other hard side camping units, with electric service the most requested amenity. Park staff has stated that the highest number of telephone inquiries about the campground is from potential campers who call regarding electric availability at campsites. If the existing electric sites are already reserved, many then chose to not camp at the park because of the insufficient number of hookups. An additional 9 electric sites will provide greater ability to meet the demonstrated customer demand and improve visitor satisfaction.

Currently, campers who operate generators for conveniences or medical equipment are required to turn off the generators at 10 PM in observance of the park's quiet hours regulation. This requirement has come under question when a camper needs power for supplementary oxygen or other medical equipment through the night. Additionally, park staff receive complaints from other campers because of the noise created by operating gas-powered generators and this noise creates user conflicts. With the installation of additional electrical service through the proposed project, campers would be less reliant on using generators in the campground, decreasing noise levels in the campground and improving overall camper satisfaction.

By providing an opportunity for campers to utilize on-site electrical service, it has been demonstrated throughout the State Park system that campground utilization improves. Campers needing electricity for medical equipment will benefit from these additional sites in that there will be greater opportunity for the availability of an electric site. Visitor satisfaction also increases with the availability of electric service.

Montana State Parks currently offers electric at campsites in 12 state parks throughout the state. Visitor satisfaction has improved at these sites as well as campsite occupancy rates.

10. Alternatives:

Alternative A: No Action – Montana State Parks does not install electrical service at the nine additional campsites.

Under this alternative the number of campsites with electric service would remain at nine sites. The park will continue to turn away campers desiring electric service at an undesirable rate. By not reacting to demonstrated visitor demands, campground utilization may decline with more camping visitors requesting electrified campsites but the Park only having a limited number. Generator use and associated complaints would remain common. Visitor satisfaction will not be improved and recreational opportunities will not be enhanced.

Alternative B: Proposed Action - Install nine additional electrical pedestals within Lewis and Clark Caverns State Parks Campground.

The proposed enhancement to the campground at Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park with the electrification of 9 additional campsites would provide an additional service that has been requested for visitor comforts and medical needs.

The design of the proposed electrification project includes all utility connections underground with only the pedestals and required infrastructure components visible at the campsites. This design

will limit the intrusion of man-made objects with the natural environment of the park.

The electrical panel, meter and transformer have already been installed in the first phase completed in 2010 to provide sufficient electrical infrastructure needed to support the additional proposed pedestals. This project involves trenching from the existing electrical panel located southeast of the comfort station.

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CHECKLIST

The analysis of the physical and human environments discussed on the following pages is limited to the preferred alternative, Alternative B.

A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. <u>LAND RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	
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		Yes	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				1d
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				

1a. The proposed project does require a limited amount of disturbances to localized soils but the project does not require any changes to geologic substructures.

1b/d. Due to the nature of the improvements, specifically for the underground electrical conduits, groundbreaking activities will be required for the trenching. The trenches are expected to be 24" in depth and approximately 10" in width to accommodate a 3" conduit and necessary fill material. The construction and displacement of soil will cause some temporary soil instability, but best management practices (erosion control and compaction techniques) will be implemented to ensure limited runoff and erosion. Soil disturbed by the construction will be compacted and reseeded with native grasses after the infrastructure upgrades and conduits are in place.

The three soil types present in the project area are: Floweree silt loam, Bronec very gravelly loam, and Sixbeacon-Vendome complex.

2. <u>AIR</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. **Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (Also see 13 (c).)			X			2a
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		X				2b
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 regulations? (Also see 2a.)		N/A				

2a/b. Minor and temporary dust and vehicle emissions would be created locally by trenching equipment during the installation of the conduit system and minor infrastructure improvements. After the completion of the conduit and pedestal installation air quality levels should return to normal conditions.

A benefit of the proposed electrification effort will be the decrease of campers' reliance on individual generators to power camping conveniences. Accordingly, nuisance odors from the generators will decline.

3. <u>WATER</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
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				
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.)		N/A				
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.)		N/A				

The proposed electrification of a portion of the campground at Lewis & Clark Caverns will not impact any water resources.

4. <u>VEGETATION</u> Will the proposed action result in?	IMPACT *					
	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		Yes	4a
b. Alteration of a plant community?			X		Yes	4b
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				4c
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?			X		Yes	4e
f. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		N/A				

- 4a/b. The proposed construction and improvements at Lewis & Clark State Park will disturb small areas of vegetation as below ground conduits and infrastructure systems are established and connected. Areas that are disturbed by construction efforts will be reseeded with a native dryland seed mix. The effects of these changes will constitute negligible changes to the diversity or abundance of the plant species in the area.
- 4c. A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program's (MNHP) species of concern database did not identify any vascular or non-vascular plants of significance in the area where the project is expected to take place.
- 4e. Construction at the site may increase the possibility of noxious weeds becoming established. Reseeding disrupted soils after construction will mitigate additional weeds by providing competition from a mix of native and local grasses. Currently, park staff works closely with the Jefferson County Weed Supervisor to manage established noxious weeds within and near the park. Control efforts will follow the guidelines presented in the FWP Integrated Noxious Weed Management Plan.

** 5. FISH/WILDLIFE Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				5b
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		X				5c
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.)		N/A				
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.)		N/A				

The proposed project will not take place in an area that is designated of critical habitat to a sensitive species and it will not cause changes to wildlife diversity or abundance.

5b/c/f/g. Dean Waltee, FWP Region 3 Wildlife Biologist, has been contacted for his review of this project. He advises that because of the existing development at the site and the underground nature of the project, he does not anticipate any impacts to wildlife beyond those that already exist. Some resident wildlife species may be affected by the noise generated by the implementation of the proposed project for a limited time. These species largely avoid the campground area because of the human presence but may return to the site when the proposed project is completed and noise levels return to normal.

Claire Gower, FWP Region 3 Wildlife Biologist reviewed the proposed project with an emphasis on non-game wildlife species and determined "The effects to fish and wildlife, resulting from the proposed campground improvement project (phase 2) would be minimal. The area is already part of an existing developed area and close to an existing road network, so therefore we believe the proposed changes will not contribute to additional disturbance of the area. Additionally because the area proposed for improvements is already heavily used, we do not anticipate that there will be any changes or detrimental effect to critical seasonal wildlife habitat. At the species level, we do not anticipate any negative impacts to occur to listed threatened or endangered species, or that the proposed development will have any detrimental impact to Species of Concern. Please note that there is an active peregrine falcon eyrie to the North of the proposed site, but we do not envision the improvement project to have any impacts on these nesting birds."

B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Increases in existing noise levels?	X					6a
b. Exposure of people to serve or nuisance noise levels?	X					6b
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				

6a/b. There would be a temporary localized increase in noise levels due to the addition of the trenching equipment within the campground. The anticipated duration of the construction will be 2-3 weeks. After the completion of the project, noise levels are expected to improve to below pre-installation levels since it is expected some campers will use the pedestals for electricity instead of their own gas-powered generators.

The project is intended to occur in the spring/early summer of 2016, which will limit the inconveniences the proposed project might have on visitors in the campground because the traditional tourist season will not have begun.

7. <u>LAND USE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		X				
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				

8. RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	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		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				
d. ***For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)		N/A				

8a. Chemical spraying may be used to deter the establishment and growth of noxious weeds in the proposed construction areas. Weed treatment would be conducted only by a trained professional licensed in the State of Montana under the guidelines of FWP's Integrated Noxious Weed Management Plan.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
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				9d
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?		X				

9d. Adding electrical service at Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park is seen as a positive impact to the overall tourism and economic vitality of the region. The region continues to experience good tourism and demand for camping is strong, indicating that commercial activity will continue to be spread amongst the regional camping locations.

The closest private campgrounds are located approximately 7 miles west of the project area near Cardwell, MT and 19 miles east near Three Forks, MT. Each of these private campgrounds offer additional services that are not available at the Lewis & Clark Caverns campground, such as sewer, individual water hook-ups, and laundry facilities. Camper stays at Lewis & Clark Caverns campground are limited to 14 days within a 30 day period whereas at the private campgrounds patrons can stay as long as they desire during the summer season, attracting different types of users. Average length of stay statewide in Montana State Parks in 2012 was 1.90 days which slightly decreased in 2013 to 1.74 days, indicating a more transient type of camper than at private campgrounds.

Park staff will continue to promote private campgrounds for visitors seeking higher levels of services or amenities, closer proximity to major travel corridors or when the electric sites at Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park are occupied or reserved.

10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment 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				
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			10c
d. Will the proposed action result in increased use of any energy source?			X			10d
e. Define projected revenue sources						10e
f. Define projected maintenance costs.						10f

- 10c. The proposed action will require the establishment of new underground electrical conduit lines between an existing electrical panel near the comfort station and the camp site pedestals.
- 10d. The proposed electrification of a portion of the campsites at Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park will increase the park's consumption of electricity since most camping visitors at the electrified campsite are expected to be primarily using self-contained camping units. The convenience of the electric pedestals will also provide visitors the opportunity to recharge cell phones and other electronic equipment, and operate medical devices. Adequate power supply is already available to the campsites through the 2010 project so no additional supply infrastructure is needed to be installed other than cables to the campsites and a pedestal at each site.
- 10e. This project is being funded from Parks Earned Revenue which is derived from visitor user fees, including the \$6 electric fee charged per night for electric sites. Camping fees and electric fees are paid by campers and these revenues are deposited in the Earned Revenue account for use in operations and maintenance in State Parks. The 9 campsites with electricity in Loop E generated \$9,996.00 in revenue (\$1,112.00/site) in Fiscal Year 2015 while the 31 non-electric sites generated \$25,894.95 (\$835.00/site). Proportionally, the electric sites generate greater revenue per site than non-electric due to higher utilization (90% peak season vs 70% peak season for non electric) which helps achieve fiscal sustainability for the park system.
- With the proposed project the park could expect an increase in revenue to offset the cost of electricity and maintenance through a \$6 electricity fee as authorized by the October 15, 2014 Biennial Fee Rule.
- 10f. Only very minor increases to current maintenance costs are expected by the proposed improvements, which would be covered by the park's existing operating budget.

** 11. <u>AESTHETICS/RECREATION</u>	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
Will the proposed action result in:						
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				11b
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.)		N/A				

11b. The design of the electrification project will have all electrical conduits underground with only the outlet pedestals and electrical panel visible. This design will ensure the natural beauty of the state park is maintained.

11c. There will be no adverse impact on tourism opportunities at the site, this project is seen as positive for the overall tourism program in the region. See Appendix for the Tourism Report.

There is the possibility the campground loop may need to be closed to campers for a limited amount time if the campground is open when trenching is required. This inconvenience is unlikely to occur since the implementation of the proposed project will be before the campground's peak season.

12. <u>CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES</u>	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
Will the proposed action result in:						
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				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a.)		N/A				

12a. In accordance with the Montana Antiquities Act (22-3-421 to 22-3-442) and with FWPs ARM rules (12.8.501 to 12.8.10), the Montana State Parks Heritage Resources Program Manager was consulted in regards to cultural resource needs related to the proposed project. Because the planned work will occur in an area that is already heavily disturbed and has been paved or graveled over or covered in dense grass, the heritage resources manager believes a heritage resource survey is not needed.

However, if previously undetected archaeological sites are uncovered during project construction, in accordance with MCA 22-3-435, the State Historic Preservation Office will be contacted and steps will be taken to ensure the preservation of the archaeological site until it can be evaluated by a professional archaeologist.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

13. <u>SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE</u> Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources that 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.)		N/A				
g. ****For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.		N/A				

2. Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:

Final plans and specifications for the project will be developed by FWP engineering staff. All state and federal permits will be obtained by FWP. A private contractor selected through the State's competitive bid process will complete construction. Final inspection will be the responsibility of the FWP Design and Construction Bureau.

State pesticide use laws and regulations will be followed. Application records will be submitted to the Montana Department of Agriculture as required and these records will be available upon request.

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

This proposed project is designed to add nine electrified campsites within Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park's campground will meet the increasing needs and desires of campers wanting to utilize electricity to charge batteries and power camping comforts. The electrified campsites will decrease nuisance noise produced by individual generators in use by campers and the complaints from other campers related to the bothersome sounds.

Because of the limited scope of the proposed improvements, negligible impact to the human and physical environment is expected. The majority of those influences, which were previously noted, are expected to be only for the duration of the short construction period with no lasting negative effects on the local environment. For those actions that cause impacts requiring mitigation, such as trenching for the electrical conduits, reseeding disturbed areas will be completed. The reseeding at those disturbed sites will minimize the chance of noxious weeds being established and will limit new erosion problems.

Finally, the proposed action will work towards meeting one of the goals of the Lewis & Clark State Park Management Plan and MT State Parks Strategic Plan, positively addressing user demands and enhancements to the campground through the installation of a limited number of electrical service pedestals. The campground improvement is expected to increase camper satisfaction, which may ensure returning visitors.

PART IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public involvement:

The public will be notified of the public comment period for this EA by the following methods

- Two public notices in each of these papers: *Helena Independent Record*, *The Butte Standard*, and *Bozeman Chronicle*;
- One statewide press release;
- Public notice on the Montana State Parks web page: stateparks.mt.gov/

The public comment period will extend for thirty (30) days and written comments will be accepted until 5:00 PM on Monday, March 7, 2016. The public can submit written comments to Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park Campground Improvement Project Phase 2, Montana State Parks, 1400 19th Ave So, Bozeman, MT 59718. Or comments can be emailed to mmarcinek@mt.gov.

This level of public notice and participation is appropriate for a project of this scope having limited impacts, many of which can be mitigated.

PART V. EA PREPARATION

Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? No

As a result of the proposed project being small in size and located in previously disturbed areas, the impacts to the physical and human environments would be minimal. MSP would mitigate these minimal adverse impacts by replacing soil and planting native vegetation on any disturbed areas. Construction would take place outside of the peak season to avoid negative impacts to park visitors. This project would positively impact local and statewide recreation and tourism. Based on this analysis, an Environmental Assessment is the appropriate level of analysis and an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

Persons responsible for preparing the EA:

Matt Marcinek
Region 3 Parks Manager
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
1400 South 19th Ave.
Bozeman, MT 59718
406-994-3552

Rhea Armstrong, Acting Park Manager
Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park
PO Box 489
Whitehall, MT 59759
406-287-3541

APPENDICES

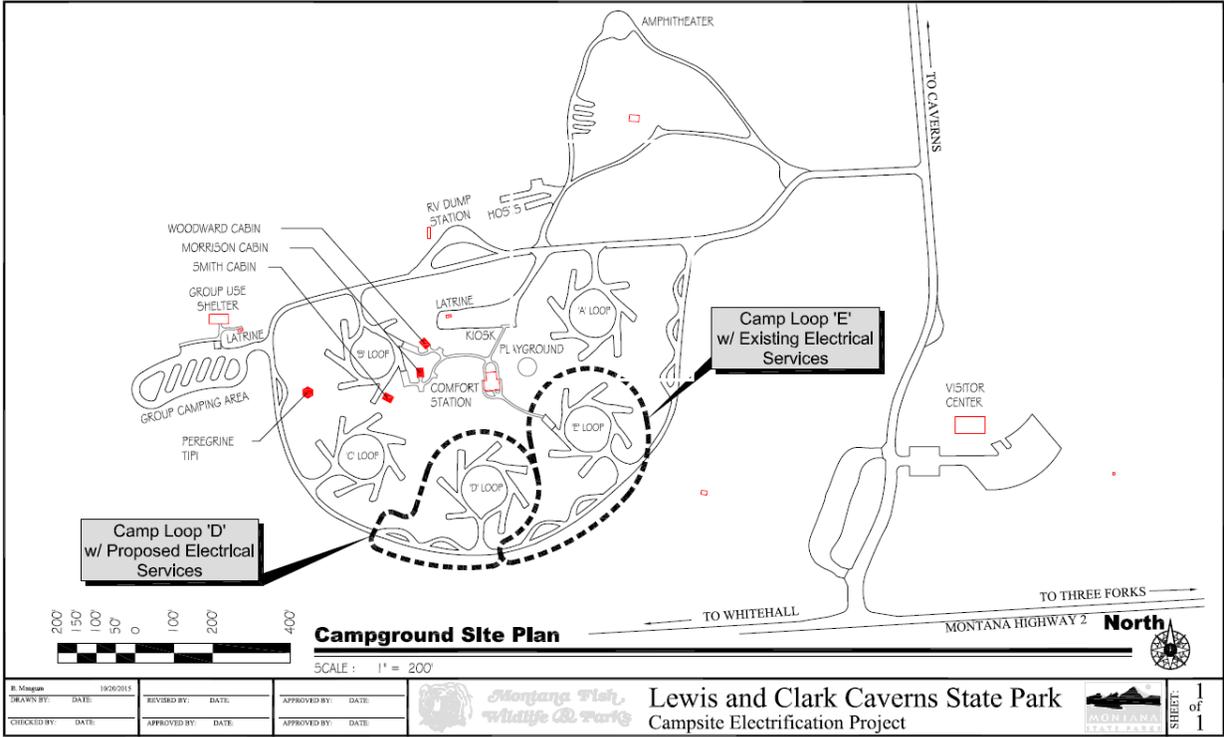
- A. Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park Map
- B. Concept Map of the Proposed Improvements
- C. Tourism Report – Department of Commerce
- D. MCA 23-1-110 Checklist

APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B

Preliminary Concept Plan for Electrification of Campground Loop D



APPENDIX C TOURISM REPORT

MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA) & MCA 23-1-110

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks has initiated the review process as mandated by MCA 23-1-110 and the Montana Environmental Policy Act in its consideration of the project described below. As part of the review process, input and comments are being solicited. Please complete the project name and project description portions and submit this form to:

Jeri Duran, Director of Sales & Constituent Services
Montana Office of Tourism-Department of Commerce
301 S. Park Ave.
Helena, MT 59601

Project Name: Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park Campground Improvement Project

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A Phase I project which provided electrical pedestals for 9 campsites in the campground was completed in 2010. Since 2011 these campsites have been included on the campsite reservation program and have been the most popular and 'first reserved' campsites by the public each year. Sufficient electric service, circuit panels and electric meter were installed in the Phase I project for all 18 sites. The proposed project is designed to complete the original intent and extend the service to 9 additional sites to improve visitor satisfaction at the campground.

Total estimated cost to complete trail construction is \$30,000.

1. Would this site development project have an impact on the tourism economy?
NO YES If YES, briefly describe:

Yes, as described, this project has the potential to positively impact the tourism and recreation industry economy if properly maintained. We are assuming the agency has determined it has necessary funding for the on-going operations and maintenance once this project is complete.

2. Does this impending improvement alter the quality or quantity of recreation/tourism opportunities and settings?
NO YES If YES, briefly describe:

Yes, as described, the project has the potential to improve quality and quantity of tourism and recreational opportunities if properly maintained. We are assuming the agency has determined it has necessary funding for the on-going operations and maintenance once this project is complete.

Signature Jeri Duran, Bureau Chief Date January 25, 2016

APPENDIX D
23-1-110 MCA
PROJECT QUALIFICATION CHECKLIST

Date January 22, 2016

Person Reviewing Matthew Marcinek

Project Location: Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park, Jefferson County, MT

Description of Proposed Work: Montana State Parks proposes to install 9 campsite electrical service pedestals at the campground at Lewis & Clark State Park.

The following checklist is intended to be a guide for determining whether a proposed development or improvement is of enough significance to fall under 23-1-110 rules.

- [] A. New roadway or trail built over undisturbed land?
Comments: *No new roads or trails are to be built.*
- [] B. New building construction (buildings <100 sf and vault latrines exempt)?
Comments: *No buildings will be constructed.*
- [] C. Any excavation of 20 c.y. or greater?
Comments: *No. The amount of soil that will be disturbed will be less than 20 cubic yards.*
- [] D. New parking lots built over undisturbed land or expansion of existing lot that increases parking capacity by 25% or more?
Comments: *No parking lots will be built.*
- [] E. Any new shoreline alteration that exceeds a double wide boat ramp or handicapped fishing station?
Comments: *No shoreline alternations will be made.*
- [] F. Any new construction into lakes, reservoirs, or streams?
Comments: *No construction will take place in lakes, reservoirs or streams.*
- [] G. Any new construction in an area with National Registry quality cultural artifacts (as determined by State Historical Preservation Office)?
Comments: *No, the proposed action is minor in scope and located in an already developed area of the state park. The Montana State Parks' Heritage Resource Program Manager would ensure that the electrical work does not affect any cultural or historical resources.*
- [] H. Any new above ground utility lines?
Comments: *No, all new electrical lines would be buried.*
- [] I. Any increase or decrease in campsites of 25% or more of an existing number of campsites?
Comments: *There will be no change in the number of campsites.*
- [] J. Proposed project significantly changes the existing features or use pattern; including effects of a series of individual projects?
Comments: *This project will not change existing features; use pattern is seen as positive in providing a desired visitor amenity.*