NEWS Release

Montana State Parks • 1420 E. 6th Avenue • Helena, MT 59620
Phone: (406) 444-3750 • stateparks.mt.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 26, 2016
Contact: Pat Doyle, (406) 444-3818
Betsy Kirkeby, (406) 444-3343

Public Comment Sought for Proposed Public Dock at Wild Horse Island State Park

-Comments accepted through Monday, May 30 at 5pm-

(Polson, MT) – Montana State Parks (stateparks.mt.gov) announced today that it is seeking public comment on a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for a proposed Public Dock Installation at Wild Horse Island State Park on Flathead Lake near Polson, MT. **Public comments will be accepted through Monday, May 30, 2016 at 5pm.**

The proposed project would place a floating 8'x60' dock at Wild Horse Island in Skeeko Bay. The dock would provide public access for loading and unloading passengers, and would also provide administrative access for work crews engaged in natural resource management and general park maintenance. During the shoulder season, the dock would be available for visitor boat mooring.

Currently, there are no public docks located on the island. To access the park, visitors typically beach their boats and disembark by climbing over the bow and leaping to shore. This kind of access can be hazardous, particularly for visitors that are physically challenged. Additionally, Montana State Parks staff frequently conducts work at the park that entails off-loading of equipment and supplies which is also hazardous without a dock. Installation of the dock would provide better public service and safety for visitors and park staff to access the island.

To view a full copy of the environmental assessment visit stateparks.mt.gov and click "Public Notices". Or by **direct link** here:
http://stateparks.mt.gov/news/publicNotices/environmental-assessments/pn_0058.html

A public comment period will be open for 30 days. Comments must be received by Monday, May 30, 2016 at 5pm. The public is invited to comment **online** at stateparks.mt.gov and click "submit comments" or by direct link here:
http://stateparks.mt.gov/news/publicNotices/environmental-assessments/pn_0058.html

The public may also submit comments by **email** to agrout@mt.gov or by regular **mail** to: Flathead Lake State Park Ranger Station, 8600 MT Hwy 35, Big Fork, MT 59911.

For question about the draft EA and/or the public comment process, contact Amy Grout at (406) 837-3041 ext. 3 or email agrout@mt.gov.

Visit Montana State Parks (stateparks.mt.gov) and enjoy camping, hiking, fishing, swimming, boating and more and discover some of the greatest natural and cultural treasures on earth.

-###-

A division of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

stateparks.mt.gov

Contact:
Pat Doyle
Marketing & Communications Manager,
Montana State Parks
(406) 444-3818
pdoyle@mt.gov

Betsy Kirkeby
Public Relations Specialist,
Montana State Parks
(406) 444-3343
bkirkeby@mt.gov

Draft Environmental Assessment

April 2016

Flathead Lake State Park -Wild Horse Island Unit Public Dock Installation

A Division of Montana Fish, Wildlife & 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	____X___
Renovation	_____
Maintenance	_____
Land Acquisition	_____
Equipment Acquisition	_____
Other (Describe)	_____

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

State Parks Division of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks

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

Montana State Parks
490 N Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901
(406) 751-4574
agrout@mt.gov

4. Name of project.

Flathead Lake State Park -Wild Horse Island Unit Public Dock Installation

5. If applicable:

Estimated construction/commencement date
Fall 2016

Estimated completion date
Spring 2017

Current status of project design (% complete)
10%

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

Lake County, Section 13, Township 24 N, Range 21 W

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

(a) Developed:
residential..... ___ acres
industrial ..... ___ acres

(b) Open Space/Woodlands/
Recreation ..... **0.1** acres

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

(d) Floodplain ..... ___ acres

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

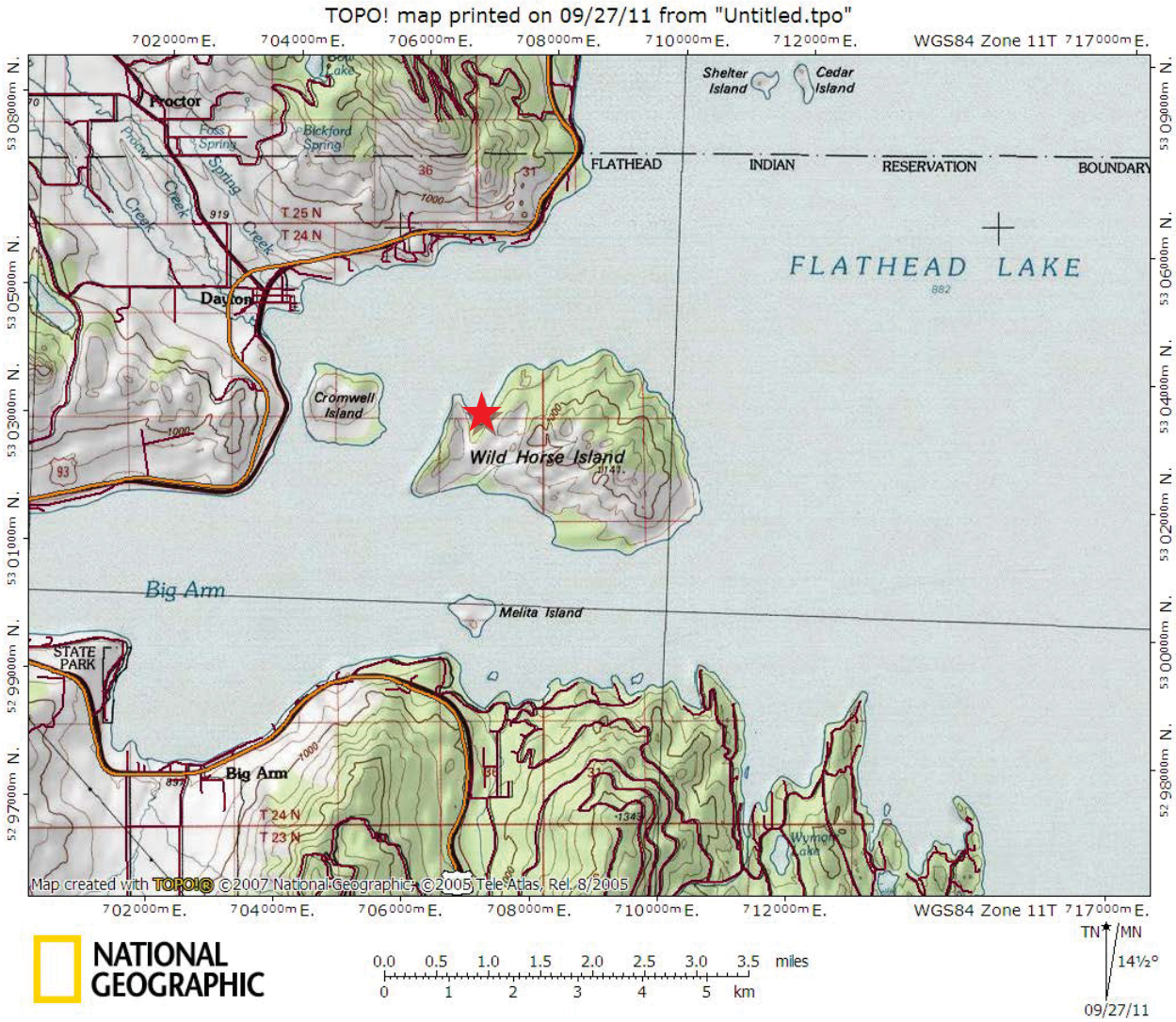

TOPO! map printed on 09/27/11 from "Untitled.tpo"
WGS84 Zone 11T
Shelter Island
Cedar Island
Proctor
Bickford Spring
FLATHEAD INDIAN RESERVATION BOUNDARY
FLATHEAD LAKE
Dayton
Cromwell Island
Wild Horse Island
Big Arm
Melita Island
STATE PARK
Big Arm
T 25 N
T 24 N
T 23 N
Map created with TOPO!© ©2007 National Geographic, ©2005 Tele Atlas, Rel. 8/2005
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
miles
km
TN MN
14½°
09/27/11

Figure 1. Aerial photograph of Skeeko Bay

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

Montana State Parks (MSP) proposes the placement of a floating, 8'x60' dock at Wild Horse Island in Skeeko Bay. This dock would provide public access for loading and unloading passengers, and would also provide administrative access for work crews engaged in natural resource management and general park maintenance. During shoulder seasons the dock would be available for visitor boat mooring. If shoreline degradation from the beaching of boats becomes too severe in the future, a public dock could be configured to provide better boat mooring opportunities as well. There are no public docks located on the island currently, and park visitors typically disembark by climbing over the bow of their boats and leaping to shore. This type of access can be hazardous, particularly for visitors who are physically challenged or unfamiliar with this procedure. MSP crews frequently conduct work on the park, which often entails the off-loading of equipment and supplies, and again, the lack of a dock can prove hazardous.

At 2,163 acres, Wild Horse Island is one of six units that comprise Flathead Lake State Park, and is located within the Flathead Indian Reservation. There are 54 private lots around the perimeter of the island that are one acre or less in size. Approximately 36 of these lots have been developed to include residential dwellings and private docks. The primary departure point for the island is the Big Arm unit of the park located approximately four water miles to the southwest. Flathead Lake State Park is one of Montana's premier state parks, and it provides some of the best water-based recreational opportunities in the United States. Wild Horse Island is designated as a primitive state park, and development there is limited to amenities that provide for safety, sanitation and natural resource management of the park. To provide for better public service and safety, the 2015 the Montana Legislature amended 77-1-405 MCA, which establishes development limits on state owned island parks, to allow for the construction of a dock on Wild Horse Island.

The island received an estimated 16,700 visits in 2015. The park is noted for its world-class wildlife viewing opportunities including bighorn sheep, mule deer, songbirds, waterfowl, bald eagles and wild horses. Wild Horse Island has a rich Native American history, and is of particular importance to the Kootenai people. The park also contains relics of early 20th century American homesteaders, including a primitive home, barn and horse-drawn farming implements.

Given fluctuations in Flathead Lake water levels, a fixed dock system would prohibit use when the lake is not at or near full pool, and therefore is not under consideration. A floating dock system designed to withstand moderate winds and wave action would be required given the protected nature of Skeeko Bay. There is one design option under consideration for this proposal, which requires minimal ground disturbance: A segmented floating dock that is permanently anchored to the shore could be placed so that sections of the dock would either lay on the lake bed as the water recedes in the winter months, or be disassembled and placed on shore (figure 3).

Figure 3. Typical floating dock construction

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 – MSP does not make any improvements.

Under this alternative, MSP would not place a public dock on Wild Horse Island. Visitors would continue to disembark from their watercraft by beaching or mooring in the bay. There would be no alteration to the aesthetics of Skeeko Bay.

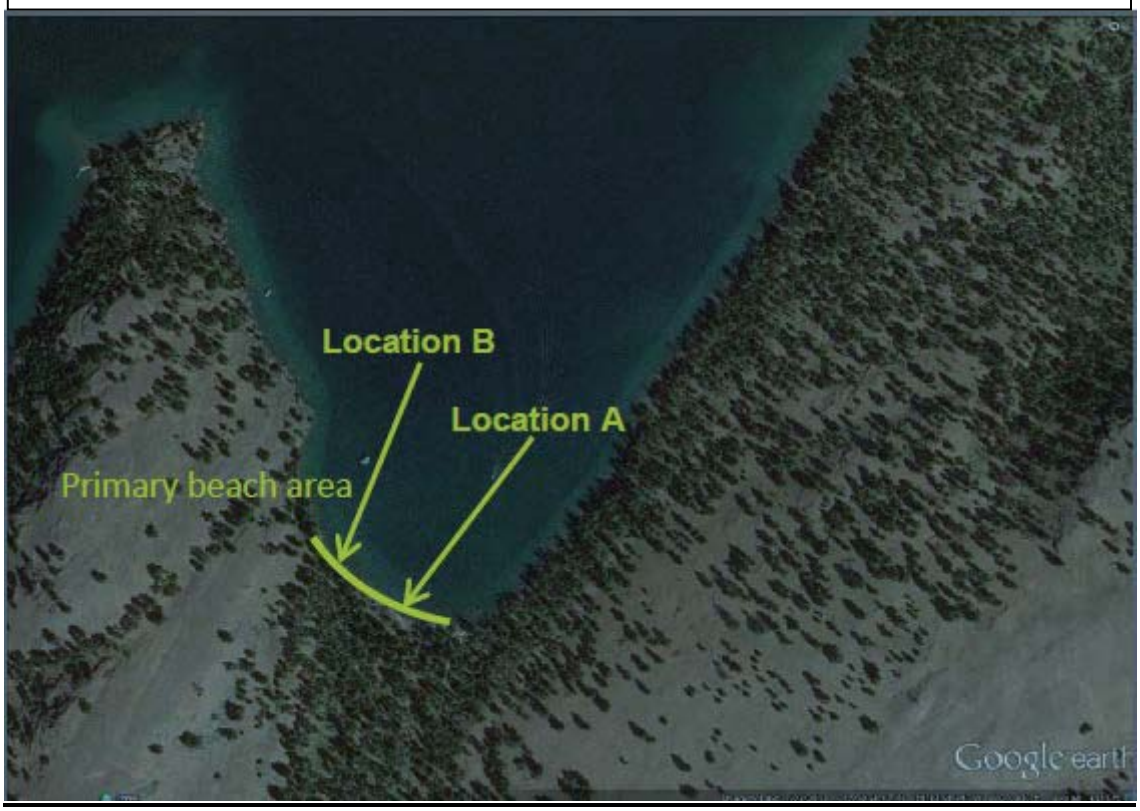
There would be no improvement in visitor or staff safety as a result of this alternative, and there would be no reduction in impacts to the shoreline by reducing the volume of boats who beach along the perimeter of the island.

Alternative B: Preferred Alternative – MSP proceeds with installation of a public boat dock at Skeeko Bay.

Under the preferred alternative, a dock would be placed at one of two locations in Skeeko Bay (figure 4). Skeeko Bay is the most heavily utilized public landing on the park. Over 60% of visitors arrive at this location to explore the island. Signage at this landing provides information about the park's wildlife and cultural significance, as well as user regulations and instructions on Leave No Trace principles. Skeeko Bay forms a natural lagoon and

provides the best protection from wind and wave action that the island has to offer. Skeeko Bay is one of the island's deepest landing sites during full pool, providing for year-round landing and overnight mooring. The Skeeko Bay landing provides the most direct access to the park's only restroom and primary trailhead. Finally, there are no private residences located immediately adjacent to either proposed location.

Figure 4. Area of consideration for dock placement in Skeeko Bay



1.

<u>Alternatives Considered and Dismissed – Alternate Landing Sites</u>

Wild Horse Island has six developed public boat landing sites: Skeeko Bay, Eagle Cove, Osprey Cove, East Shore, Driftwood Point and Rocky Bar. Each landing site was examined for boat dock feasibility.

<u>Driftwood Point, Osprey Cove, East Shore</u>

These three sites were eliminated from consideration for the location of a public dock due to remoteness and lack of direct connection to the park's developed trail system, restroom facilities and historic structures. Driftwood Point does not have optimal water depth for a boat dock and it is situated near several private lots. Osprey Cove and East Shore landings both take frequent, heavy wind and wave action from the east and offer very little protection for a floating dock.

Rocky Bar
Rocky Bar was eliminated from consideration due the unprotected nature of this landing site from prevailing southwest winds. In addition heavy boat traffic between Cromwell Island and Wild Horse Island cause routine, significant wave action. This site is divided from the public restroom and developed trail system by a steep and rocky ridge approximately 375 vertical feet above the shoreline, making access very strenuous.

Eagle Cove
Eagle Cove was eliminated due to its lack of protection from heavy wind and wave action from the north. This landing does have a trailhead that connects to the park's primary trail system, but it is located approximately 1.25 miles from the only public restroom on the island. This site is the second most visited landing on Wild Horse Island, but still accounts for only a small percentage of overall visitation to the park.

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

(a) Permits		
Agency Name: CSKT Shoreline Protection Lake County Planning Dept.	Permit: 64A Lakeshore Construction	Date Filed: Permits filed upon proposal approval.

USACE DEQ FWP	Joint Application – 404 Joint Application – 318 Joint Application – SPA 124	

(b) Funding	
Agency Name: Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks	Funding Amount: Up to $250,000

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities	
Agency Name: CSKT Lake County DNRC	Type of Responsibility: Shoreline protection Planning oversight Lake bed oversight

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

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
- Parks Division
- Fisheries Division
- Wildlife Division
- Design & Construction Bureau
- Legal Unit

Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
Montana Department of Commerce – Tourism
Montana Natural Heritage Program – Natural Resources Information System (NRIS)
Professional Engineering Firm DJ&A, P.C.

13. Name of Preparer(s) of this Environmental Checklist:
Flathead Lake State Park Manager Amy Grout

14. Date submitted. April 20, 2016

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

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				
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 positive			1d
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

1b. There would be minor site disturbance with the installation of the shoreline anchor and potential dead man anchor (utilized for pulling dock sections on to the shore). Minimal equipment would be utilized to minimize the impacts. The surrounding disturbed or compacted area would be reclaimed and reseeded as necessary. If necessary a trail would be built to focus visitor use to hardened areas to reduce impacts to surrounding vegetation after the initial project was completed.

1d. The placement of a dock may reduce shoreline disturbance by providing watercraft an easy drop off and pick up location for those shuttling passengers to and from the island. It will not reduce shoreline impacts from visitors who are mooring to natural objects on the shore as the dock would not provide mooring opportunities for the majority of users, but mooring could be increased if future levels of shoreline impact from beaching were to significantly increase.

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						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

There are no impacts to air quality anticipated with this proposal.

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				
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:						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

There are no impacts to water resources anticipated as a result of this proposal.

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		Yes	4a
b. Alteration of a plant community?		X				
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. Effects to wetlands or prime and unique farmland?		X				
g. Other:						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

4a. There may be a small reduction in native plants in the immediate project area. All impacted areas will be reclaimed and reseeded with native seed.

4c. A search of the Montana Natural Heritage database revealed that 2 species of concern: Artiplex Truncata (Wedge-leaf Saltbush) and Oxtropis camestris var. comunbiana (Columbia Locoweed), and one potential species of concern: Cypripedium parviflorum (Small Yellow Lady's-slipper), exist within the township and range of the proposed project area. *See Appendix B.* None of these species have been observed in the proposed project area. Since the proposed project area has little impact to vegetative areas, disruption of these species habitats is unlikely.

4e. Any ground disturbance provides the opportunity for noxious weeds to establish. In this instance, ground disturbance should be minimal and all impacted areas will be reclaimed and reseeded with native seed. Any noxious weeds discovered prior to and following the project will be eradicated using Integrated Weed Management (IWM) methods identified in the Region One Noxious Weed and Exotic Vegetation Management Plan. This typically involves chemical and mechanical control methods.

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				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				
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:						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

5b/c. Since this project is very limited in scope and is occurring in areas that are primarily void of vegetation and habitat, the impact to game and nongame species is not considered significant. During installation, some species may be temporarily affected. All species movement should resume to normal after the project is completed.

5f. A search of the Montana Natural Heritage database revealed the following species of concern occurring within the township and range of the proposed project area. *See Appendix C*.

- Hoary Bat (Lasiurus cinereus)
- Fisher (Pekania pennant)
- Cassin's Finch (Haemorhous cassinii
- Clark's Nutcracker (Nucifraga columbiana)
- Brewer's Sparrow (Spizella breweri)
- Westslope Cutttroat Trout (Oncorhynchus clarkia lewisi)
- Pygmy Whitefish (Prosopium coulteri)
- Bull Trout (Salvelinus confluentus)
- Sheathed Slug (Zacoleus idahoensis)

The following are a list of the species status species that occur within the township and range of the proposed project area.

- Bald Eagle (Haliaeetus Ieucocephalus)

Due to the limited size and location of the proposed project area, it is not expected that there will be any disturbance or impact to any of the species listed above. There may be temporary displacement of species from

the immediate proposed project area during the installation period. The surrounding area to the proposed project area provides much better habitat and will not be impacted by this project. Following the project, all species behaviors are expected to return to normal.

There is a designated special resource zone located east of the Skeeko Bay landing. This zone was created to protect a historic Bald Eagle nesting site and is closed to the public. This area will not be affected by the proposed project.

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		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:						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

6a. There would be minor and temporary increases in noise during the installation period as a result of equipment use and personnel at the site. Closures of the landing site will not occur during the installation period and visitors will be able to easily avoid the impacted site and conduct recreational activities without interruption.

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 whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on, or relocation of, residences?			X positive			7d
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			7f
g. Other:						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

7d. This proposal may result in fewer incidences of trespass by park visitors on private docks.

7f. This proposal is not expected to significantly increase visitation beyond the steady increase which has been occurring for the past several years. Access to the island is primarily restricted by the need for a boat of adequate size to navigate Flathead Lake.

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				
b. Effects on existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create need for a new plan?			X positive			8b
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:						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

8b. The proposed dock would provide increased ease of access for emergency services including first aid and fire response.

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:						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

There are no anticipated community impacts as a result of this proposal. Although visitation has steadily increased at this park for several years, the presence of a dock is not likely to affect the rate of increase. Because Skeeko Bay is such a well protected and natural harbor, it is likely that over 60% if the island's public visitation will continue to originate there.

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 used of any energy source?		X				
e. Other.		X				
Additional information requested:						
f. Define projected revenue sources.	Montana motorboat registration funds, Montana motorboat fuel tax, Federal DJMB funds.					
g. Define projected maintenance costs.	It is assumed that annual, routine maintenance will be less than $400.00. During the lifespan of this dock, more significant maintenance may be required due to damage from weather, vandalism, or misuse.					

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

There are no anticipated impacts to public services, utilities or taxes. The funding from this project would be derived from local and federal revenues that are managed by MSP for the development and maintenance of motor boating facilities. Annual, routine maintenance would be incorporated into the existing maintenance routines conducted my MSP staff.

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			11a
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. Adverse effects to any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas?		X				
e. Other:						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

11a. The proposed dock would add a manmade feature to the shoreline of the island. There are currently 33 private, permanent docks situated around the perimeter of the island, so this feature would not be out of place with the existing nature of the park. Design emphasis would be on a low profile design with natural appearing materials to fit the current aesthetic of the park.

11c. According to the Montana Office of Tourism, the project has the potential to have minor positive impacts on the tourism economy and the quality and quantity of recreation/tourism opportunities and settings as described in *Appendix D.*

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:						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

There are 13 scarred Ponderosa pine trees located near Skeeko Bay. The cambium on the trees was peeled back by native people and used as a food source in the spring. This proposed project would not harm, detract, or otherwise alter these resources. Signage currently exists informing visitors that the area is a heritage site and to exercise caution and help MSP in preserving this valuable resource. A floating dock would require very little land disturbance. If stabilization pilings are deemed necessary, a thorough survey of the lake bed would occur prior in accordance with the Montana Antiquities Act (22-3-421 to 22-3-442) and with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks ARM rules (12.8.501 to 12.8.10), to identify possible historic and archaeological sites. Impacts to these sites, if identified, will be taken into consideration as part of project planning and will be avoided, if possible. If sites are identified and cannot be avoided, in accordance with MCA 22-3-430, mitigation measures will be devised in consultation with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and the Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). In consultation with the Kootenai Culture Committee of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, a cultural compliance officer would be present for any work requiring disturbance of land or lake bed to monitor for cultural artifacts.

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		yes	13e
f. Have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy?		X				
Additional information requested:						
g. List any federal or state permits required.	One or more of the following permits may be required: 64A Joint Application – 404 Joint Application – 318 Joint Application – SPA 124					

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:
This proposal is not anticipated to have cumulatively considerable impacts to the physical or human environment. This proposal would result in improved safety for public and administrative access to Wild Horse Island. A positive secondary benefit would be improved access for people with mobility challenges.

13e. It is possible that this proposal will generate public controversy. There is a strong public sentiment that the setting at this popular state park unit should remain rustic and natural. MSP shares this desire, and park management is conducted in compliance with all applicable laws and management directives governing Wild Horse Island. MSP believes that controversy can be mitigated through a well designed and aesthetically pleasing public dock. As numerous private docks are already in place, a public dock would not be aesthetically unique or out of place on the island. In the long term, a public dock has the potential to limit or reduce shoreline damage caused by repeated beaching and tying off of boats to vegetation.

PART III. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST CONCLUSION SECTION

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

   The proposed dock installation at the Skeeko Bay landing of Wild Horse Island will meet the goals of accessibility set forth by Montana State Parks. People with mobility constraints are generally unable to disembark off the bow of watercraft as is the current practice and necessity. The proposed dock would remove this barrier for these individuals and allow them to access this remote, unique state park island.

   There are some potential negative impacts of this proposal as described in the sections above. Most of these impacts are temporary and minor and can be mitigated. There is a possibility that the proposed dock may increase visitation to the park; however limiting factors such as watercraft transportation still exist as a constraint to visitors. Additionally, there are some potential impacts of cultural artifact disturbance which is unknown at this time. For this reason a floating style dock, with minimal soil disturbance, is proposed. Extensive communication, specifically with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, has and will continue to occur in regards to this and other projects on the island. Taken as a whole, these impacts are not considered to be significant and do not outweigh the benefits of the proposed dock.

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.

   Based on the criteria provided by MEPA Model Rule III to assess if an EIS is required, this environmental review revealed no significant negative impacts will be created from the proposed action. Therefore, an EIS is not necessary and an EA is the appropriate level of analysis.

3. Describe the public involvement for this project.

   The public will be notified in the following manners to comment on this current EA, the proposed action, and alternatives:
   - Two public notices in each of these papers: *The Lake County Leader, Helena Independent Record, The Flathead Beacon, The Kalispell Daily Inter Lake, and the Missoulian.*
   - One statewide press release.
   - Public notice on the Montana State Parks web page: *http://stateparks.mt.gov/*.

   Copies of this environmental assessment will be distributed to the neighboring

landowners and interested parties to ensure their knowledge of the proposed project.

If requested within the comment period, the department may arrange a public meeting.

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

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

The public comment period will extend for thirty (30) days and written comments will be accepted until 5:00 PM, May 30, 2016. The public can submit written comments to:

Flathead Lake State Park Ranger Station
8600 MT Hwy 35
Bigfork, MT 59911

Or comments can be emailed to: agrout@mt.gov

APPENDICES

A. Project Qualification Checklist
B. Threatened and Endangered Species List-Plants
C. Threatened and Endangered Species List-Animals
D. Tourism Report

APPENDIX A

23-1-110 MCA

PROJECT QUALIFICATION CHECKLIST

Date: January 8, 2016 **Person Reviewing:** Amy Grout

Project Location: Flathead Lake State Park – Wild Horse Island unit

Description of Proposed Work:

> Montana State Parks (MSP) proposes the placement of a floating, 8'x60' dock at Wild Horse Island in Skeeko Bay. This dock would provide public access for loading and unloading passengers, and would also provide administrative access for work crews engaged in natural resource management and general park maintenance. During shoulder seasons the dock would be available for visitor boat mooring.

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. (Please check ☐all that apply and comment as necessary.)

[ ] A. New roadway or trail built over undisturbed land?
Comments*:*

[ ] B. New building construction (buildings <100 sf and vault latrines exempt)?
Comments*:*

[ ] C. Any excavation of 20 c.y. or greater?
Comments*:*

[ ] D. New parking lots built over undisturbed land or expansion of existing lot that increases parking capacity by 25% or more?
Comments*:*

[X] E. Any new shoreline alteration that exceeds a doublewide boat ramp or handicapped fishing station?
Comments*:* The proposal is to install a floating dock system that may be anchored to the shore and may include stabilization pilling in the lake bottom.

[**X**] F. Any new construction into lakes, reservoirs, or streams?
Comments: The proposal is to install a floating dock system that may be anchored to the shore and may include stabilization pilling in the lake bottom.

[ ] G. Any new construction in an area with National Registry quality cultural artifacts (as determined by State Historical Preservation Office)?
Comments*:*

[ ] H. Any new above ground utility lines?
Comments*:*

[ ] I. Any increase or decrease in campsites of 25% or more of an existing number of campsites?
Comments*:*

[ ] J. Proposed project significantly changes the existing features or use pattern; including effects of a series of individual projects?
Comments: This proposal is not expected to significantly increase visitation beyond the steady increase which has been occurring for the past several years. Access to the island is primarily restricted by the need for a boat of adequate size to navigate Flathead Lake.

If any of the above are checked, 23-1-110 MCA rules apply to this proposed work and should be documented on the MEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST. Refer to MEPA/HB495 Cross Reference Summary for further assistance.

Appendix B
Threatened and Endangered Species List - Plants

Plant Species of Concern

Species List Last Updated **06/18/2014**

MONTANA Natural Heritage Program

A program of the Montana State Library's Natural Resource Information System operated by the University of Montana.

2 Species of Concern
1 Potential Species of Concern
Filtered by the following criteria:
County = LAKE (based on mapped Species Occurrences)
Township = 24 N Range = 21 W (based on mapped Species Occurrences)
FWP Region = 1 (based on mapped Species Occurrences)

Species of Concern

2 Species
Filtered by the following criteria:
County = LAKE (based on mapped Species Occurrences)
Township = 24 N Range = 21 W (based on mapped Species Occurrences)
FWP Region = 1 (based on mapped Species Occurrences)

FLOWERING PLANTS - DICOTS (MAGNOLIOPSIDA)

2 SPECIES

FILTERED BY THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:
COUNTY = LAKE (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)
TOWNSHIP = 24 N RANGE = 21 W (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)
FWP REGION = 1 (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)

SCIENTIFIC NAME COMMON NAME TAXA SORT	OTHER NAMES	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC) FAMILY (COMMON)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	USFWS	USFS	BLM	MNPS THREAT CATEGORY	HABITAT
Atriplex truncata Wedge-leaf Saltbush		**Amaranthaceae** Amaranth (Pigweed) Family	G5	S3				3	Wetland/Riparian
			Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Beaverhead, Deer Lodge, Jefferson, Lake, Lewis and Clark, Park **State Rank Reason:** Known from two extent occurrences; one in the Centennial Valley and the other near Warm Springs. Also, known historically from four collections in the western half of the state. Additional population and trend data are needed to better evaluate the species' vulnerability.						
Oxytropis campestris var. columbiana Columbia Locoweed	**Oxytropis columbiana**	**Fabaceae** Pea Family	G5T1	S1				1	Wetland/Riparian (Gravelly shorelines)
			Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Lake **State Rank Reason:** Originally known in Montana from six occurrences all around Flathead Lake. However, two of the occurrences are now extirpated. Private lands, which are subject to development in the area, play a vital role in maintaining viable populations of this plant in Montana.						

Potential Species of Concern
1 Species
Filtered by the following criteria:
County = LAKE (based on mapped Species Occurrences)
Township = 24 N Range = 21 W (based on mapped Species Occurrences)
FWP Region = 1 (based on mapped Species Occurrences)

FLOWERING PLANTS - MONOCOTS (LILIOPSIDA) **1 SPECIES**

FILTERED BY THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:
COUNTY = LAKE (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)
TOWNSHIP = 24 N RANGE = 21 W (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)
FWP REGION = 1 (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)

SCIENTIFIC NAME COMMON NAME TAXA SORT	OTHER NAMES	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC) FAMILY (COMMON)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	USFWS	USFS	BLM	MNPS THREAT CATEGORY	HABITAT
Cypripedium parviflorum Small Yellow Lady's-slipper	**Cypripedium calceolus**	**Orchidaceae** Orchids	G5	S3S4		SENSITIVE		2	
			Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Flathead, Gallatin, Granite, Jefferson, Judith Basin, Lake, Lewis and Clark, Lincoln, Missoula, Pondera, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton **State Rank Reason:** Many occurrences known from the western half of the state, including a dozen or so historical or poorly documented sites. Many occurrences have small population numbers, though approximately two dozen occurrences are moderate to large populations. Populations occur on variety of federal, state and private ownerships with varied land uses and management. A variety of land uses and activities, including development, livestock grazing and timber harvesting may have detrimental impacts to populations. However, yellow lady's-slipper appears to be tolerant to some disturbances at low levels and the number of populations scattered over a wide area reduces the risk to the species. A loss of populations or a significant decline in numbers may warrant a re-listing as a Species of Concern in Montana, and populations should continue to be monitored on a semi-regular basis. Moderate to large occurrences should be managed to maintain habitat and viable population numbers.					

Special Status Species
0 Species
Filtered by the following criteria:
County = LAKE (based on mapped Species Occurrences)
Township = 24 N Range = 21 W (based on mapped Species Occurrences)
FWP Region = 1 (based on mapped Species Occurrences)

Citation for data on this website:
Montana Plant Species of Concern Report. Montana Natural Heritage Program. Retrieved on 1/8/2016, from http://mtnhp.org/SpeciesOfConcern/?AorP=p

Appendix C
Threatened and Endangered Species List – Animals

Animal Species of Concern

Species List Last Updated **06/23/2015**

9 Species of Concern
1 Special Status Species
Filtered by the following criteria:
County = LAKE (based on mapped Species Occurrences)
Township = 24 N Range = 21 W (based on mapped Species Occurrences)
FWP Region = 1 (based on mapped Species Occurrences)

MONTANA Natural Heritage Program

A program of the Montana State Library's Natural Resource Information System operated by the University of Montana.

Species of Concern

9 Species
Filtered by the following criteria:
County = LAKE (based on mapped Species Occurrences)
Township = 24 N Range = 21 W (based on mapped Species Occurrences)
FWP Region = 1 (based on mapped Species Occurrences)

MAMMALS (MAMMALIA) — 2 SPECIES

FILTERED BY THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:
COUNTY = LAKE (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)
TOWNSHIP = 24 N RANGE = 21 W (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)
FWP REGION = 1 (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)

SCIENTIFIC NAME COMMON NAME TAXA SORT	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC) FAMILY (COMMON)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	USFWS	USFS	BLM	FWP SWAP	% OF GLOBAL BREEDING RANGE IN MT	% OF MT THAT IS BREEDING RANGE	HABITAT
Lasiurus cinereus Hoary Bat	**Vespertilionidae** Bats	G5	S3				SGCN3	2%	100%	Riparian and forest
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Beaverhead, Big Horn, Blaine, Broadwater, Carbon, Carter, Cascade, Chouteau, Custer, Daniels, Dawson, Deer Lodge, Fallon, Fergus, Flathead, Gallatin, Garfield, Glacier, Golden Valley, Granite, Hill, Jefferson, Judith Basin, Lake, Lewis and Clark, Liberty, Lincoln, Madison, Mccone, Meagher, Mineral, Missoula, Musselshell, Park, Petroleum, Phillips, Pondera, Powder River, Powell, Prairie, Ravalli, Richland, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Sanders, Sheridan, Silver Bow, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton, Toole, Treasure, Valley, Wheatland, Wibaux, Yellowstone								
Pekania pennanti Fisher	**Mustelidae** Weasels	G5	S3		SENSITIVE	SENSITIVE	SGCN3	1%	31%	Mixed conifer forests
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Beaverhead, Deer Lodge, Flathead, Glacier, Granite, Lake, Lewis and Clark, Lincoln, Mineral, Missoula, Pondera, Powell, Ravalli, Sanders, Teton								

BIRDS (AVES) — 3 SPECIES

FILTERED BY THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:
COUNTY = LAKE (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)
TOWNSHIP = 24 N RANGE = 21 W (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)
FWP REGION = 1 (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)

SCIENTIFIC NAME COMMON NAME TAXA SORT	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC) FAMILY (COMMON)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	USFWS	USFS	BLM	FWP SWAP	% OF GLOBAL BREEDING RANGE IN MT	% OF MT THAT IS BREEDING RANGE	HABITAT
Haemorhous cassinii Cassin's Finch	**Fringillidae** Finches	G5	S3				SGCN3	11%	62%	Drier conifer forest
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Beaverhead, Big Horn, Broadwater, Carbon, Cascade, Chouteau, Custer, Deer Lodge, Fergus, Flathead, Gallatin, Glacier, Golden Valley, Granite, Jefferson, Judith Basin, Lake, Lewis and Clark, Lincoln, Madison, Meagher, Mineral, Missoula, Musselshell, Park, Petroleum, Phillips, Powder River, Powell, Ravalli, Rosebud, Sanders, Silver Bow, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton, Wheatland, Yellowstone								
Nucifraga columbiana Clark's Nutcracker	**Corvidae** Jays / Crows / Magpies	G5	S3				SGCN3	9%	84%	Conifer forest
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Beaverhead, Big Horn, Blaine, Broadwater, Carbon, Carter, Cascade, Chouteau, Deer Lodge, Fergus, Flathead, Gallatin, Glacier, Golden Valley, Granite, Jefferson, Judith Basin, Lake, Lewis and Clark, Liberty, Lincoln, Madison, Meagher, Mineral, Missoula, Musselshell, Park, Petroleum, Phillips, Pondera, Powder River, Powell, Ravalli, Sanders, Silver Bow, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton, Toole, Wheatland								
Spizella breweri	**Emberizidae**	G5	S3B			SENSITIVE	SGCN3	12%	100%	Sagebrush

Brewer's Sparrow	Sparrows	**Species Occurrences verified in these Counties:** Beaverhead, Big Horn, Blaine, Broadwater, Carbon, Carter, Chouteau, Custer, Dawson, Deer Lodge, Fallon, Fergus, Flathead, Gallatin, Garfield, Glacier, Golden Valley, Granite, Hill, Jefferson, Lake, Lewis and Clark, Liberty, Lincoln, Madison, Mccone, Meagher, Missoula, Musselshell, Park, Petroleum, Phillips, Pondera, Powder River, Powell, Prairie, Ravalli, Richland, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Sanders, Silver Bow, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton, Toole, Treasure, Valley, Wheatland, Wibaux, Yellowstone **State Rank Reason:** Species faces threats from loss of sagebrush habitats it is dependent on as a result of habitat conversion for agriculture and increased frequency of fire as a result of weed encroachment and drought.

FISH (ACTINOPTERYGII) — **3 SPECIES**

FILTERED BY THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:
COUNTY = LAKE (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)
TOWNSHIP = 24 N RANGE = 21 W (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)
FWP REGION = 1 (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)

SCIENTIFIC NAME COMMON NAME TAXA SORT	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC) FAMILY (COMMON)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	USFWS	USFS	BLM	FWP SWAP	% OF GLOBAL BREEDING RANGE IN MT	% OF MT THAT IS BREEDING RANGE	HABITAT
Oncorhynchus clarkii lewisi Westslope Cutthroat Trout	**Salmonidae** Trout	G4T3	S2		SENSITIVE	SENSITIVE	SGCN2		34%	Mountain streams, rivers, lakes
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Beaverhead, Broadwater, Cascade, Chouteau, Deer Lodge, Fergus, Flathead, Gallatin, Glacier, Granite, Jefferson, Judith Basin, Lake, Lewis and Clark, Lincoln, Madison, Meagher, Mineral, Missoula, Park, Pondera, Powell, Ravalli, Sanders, Silver Bow, Teton, Wheatland								
Prosopium coulteri Pygmy Whitefish	**Salmonidae** Trout	G5	S3				SGCN3, SGIN	1%	1%	Deep cold lakes
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Flathead, Lake, Lincoln, Missoula								
Salvelinus confluentus Bull Trout	**Salmonidae** Trout	G4	S2	LT	THREATENED	SPECIAL STATUS	SGCN2	5%	18%	Mountain streams, rivers, lakes
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Deer Lodge, Flathead, Glacier, Granite, Lake, Lewis and Clark, Lincoln, Mineral, Missoula, Powell, Ravalli, Sanders								

INVERTEBRATES - MOLLUSKS — **1 SPECIES**

FILTERED BY THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:
COUNTY = LAKE (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)
TOWNSHIP = 24 N RANGE = 21 W (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)
FWP REGION = 1 (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)

SCIENTIFIC NAME COMMON NAME TAXA SORT	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC) FAMILY (COMMON)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	USFWS	USFS	BLM	FWP SWAP	% OF GLOBAL BREEDING RANGE IN MT	% OF MT THAT IS BREEDING RANGE	HABITAT
Zacoleus idahoensis Sheathed Slug	**Arionidae** Arionid Slugs	G3G4	S2S3					50%	11%	Mesic / moist conifer forests
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Flathead, Lake, Lincoln, Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli, Sanders								

Potential Species of Concern
0 Species
Species Occurrences are not maintained for Animal PSOC, therefore we cannot filter these species geographically

Special Status Species
1 Species
Filtered by the following criteria:
County = LAKE (based on mapped Species Occurrences)
Township = 24 N Range = 21 W (based on mapped Species Occurrences)
FWP Region = 1 (based on mapped Species Occurrences)

BIRDS (AVES) — **1 SPECIES**

FILTERED BY THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:
COUNTY = LAKE (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)
TOWNSHIP = 24 N RANGE = 21 W (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)
FWP REGION = 1 (BASED ON MAPPED SPECIES OCCURRENCES)

SCIENTIFIC NAME COMMON NAME TAXA SORT	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC) FAMILY (COMMON)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	USFWS	USFS	BLM	FWP SWAP	% OF GLOBAL BREEDING RANGE IN MT	% OF MT THAT IS BREEDING RANGE	HABITAT
Haliaeetus leucocephalus Bald Eagle	**Accipitridae** Hawks / Kites / Eagles	G5	S4	DM; BGEPA; MBTA; BCC	SENSITIVE	SENSITIVE		2%	100%	Riparian forest
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: Beaverhead, Big Horn, Blaine, Broadwater, Carbon, Carter, Cascade, Chouteau, Custer, Dawson, Deer Lodge, Fallon, Fergus, Flathead, Gallatin, Glacier, Golden Valley, Granite, Hill, Jefferson, Judith Basin, Lake, Lewis and Clark, Liberty, Lincoln, Madison, Mccone, Meagher, Mineral, Missoula, Musselshell, Park, Petroleum, Phillips, Pondera, Powder River, Powell, Prairie, Ravalli, Richland, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Sanders, Silver Bow, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton, Toole, Treasure, Valley, Wheatland, Wibaux, Yellowstone **State Rank Reason:** Populations numbers have steadily increased since the 1980s and breeding pairs now occupy a high percentage of suitable habitat across the state. However the species is still protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940.								

Citation for data on this website:
Montana Animal Species of Concern Report. Montana Natural Heritage Program and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. Retrieved on 1/8/2016, from http://mtnhp.org/SpeciesOfConcern/?AorP=a

Appendix D
Tourism Report

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 and Constituent Services
Montana Office of Tourism
301 S. Park Ave.
Helena, MT 59601

Project Name: Wild Horse Island State Park Dock Installation

Project Description:
Montana State Parks (MTSP) proposes the placement of a floating, 60'x 8' dock at the Skeeko Bay landing site of Wild Horse Island State Park. Wild Horse Island State Park is an island park located on the southwest side of Flathead Lake. The primary purpose and benefit of this dock is to provide access to Wild Horse Island State Park for people with mobility constraints. Additionally it will provide ease of access for watercraft loading and unloading all passengers. There are currently no public docks around Wild Horse Island State Park.

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 19, 2016

2/93
7/98sed

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 do 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 does 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 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.