WEST SHORE MOTORBOAT ACCESS PROJECT

MEPA/NEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST

DRAFT

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. **Type of Proposed State Action:** Improve motorboat access facilities at Flathead Lake State Park-West Shore including boat ramp repair, dock and toilet installation, shoreline stabilization, and a boat trailer parking lot.

2. **Agency Authority for the Proposed Action:**
Montana Codes Annotated 23-1-101
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Region 1,
490 North Meridian Road, Kalispell, MT 59901. Tel: (406) 752-5101

3. **Name of Project:** **West Shore Motorboat Access Project**

4. **Name, Address, and Phone Number of Project Sponsor (if other than the agency):** N/A

5. **If Applicable:**

Estimated Construction/Commencement Date: March 2004
Estimated Completion Date: June 2004
Current Status of Project Design (% complete): 70%

6. **Location Affected by Proposed Action (county, range, and township):**
Section 4, T25N, R20W, M.P.M., in Lake County.

7. **Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:**

	Acre		Acres
(a) Developed:		(d) Floodplain	_____
residential	_____		
industrial	_____	(e) Productive:	
		irrigated cropland ..	_____
(b) Open	_____	dry cropland	_____
		forestry	0.5
(c) Wetlands/Riparian Areas ...	_____	rangeland	_____
		Other (shoreline) ..	50ft

8. Map/Site Plan: Attach an original 8½" 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.

See Appendix A - area maps

9. Narrative Summary of the Proposed Action or Project, Including the Benefits and Purpose of the Proposed Action:

West Shore State Park is located on the west shore of Flathead Lake south of the community of Lakeside. It provides ready access to some of the better fishing opportunities on the lake and is therefore heavily used year-round for boating access. If the lake freezes, which it does on average once every ten years, ice fishing takes place at this location also.

During September 2002 (September 12, 2002, FWP News Release), FWP Region 1 conducted a scoping process to identify the public's attitude toward various types of opportunities and facilities at West Shore. This was done through an open house and the opportunity for the public to complete and mail in a questionnaire that was available at local sporting goods stores. Adjacent landowners were also contacted and mailed a copy of the survey. The results of the informal survey completed at that time showed public support for keeping the park relatively primitive as compared to other parks around Flathead Lake. In addition, the public wanted there to be a mix of camping opportunity at the park for various types of camping units. In general, the proposed changes and developments proposed in this action were favored, with support for improving the launch and relocating the campsites in Loop B to the road going to the overlook (October 15, 2002, FWP News Release). With completion of this project, Loop A could be limited to vehicles under 12' in length, which would provide tent and pickup-camper camping opportunity to maintain the mix of camping opportunity desired by the public.

Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) has received funding through Boat-In-Lieu taxes and federal funding to repair the boat ramp, install a dock and wavebreak, stabilize approximately 50 feet of shoreline with rock riprap, install three handicapped- accessible vault toilets, and increase the boat trailer parking at the West Shore unit of Flathead Lake State Park. Plans call for eliminating Camp Loop B with eight campsites to provide an additional twelve boat trailer and ten single-vehicle parking spaces. The conversion of campsites above the current day-use parking lot to boat trailer parking is necessary due to the steep topography limiting parking near the shoreline area. The campsites will be relocated to other locations in the park.

10. Listing of Any Other Local, State, or Federal Agency That Has Overlapping or Additional Jurisdiction:

(a) Permits:

Agency Name	Permit	Date Filed/#
US Army Corps of Engineers (COE)	Section 404 Permit	
Lake County Land Services	Lakeshore Construction Permit	

(b) Funding:

Agency Name	Funding Amount
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks	$571,322

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:

Agency Name	Type of Responsibility
N/A	

11. List of Agencies Consulted During Preparation of the EA:

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Nation
Flathead County Planning and Zoning Office (www.co.flathead.mt.us)
Lake County Land Services Office
Montana State Historic Preservation Office
Montana Natural Resource Information System (http://nhp.nris.state.mt.us)
Montana FWP Fisheries Biologist
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE)
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

1. Evaluation of the impacts of the proposed action, including secondary and cumulative impacts on the physical and human environment.

A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. LAND RESOURCES Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT☼				Can Impact Be Mitigated☼	Comment Index
	Unknown☼	None	Minor☼	Potentially Significant		
➢a. Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?			X		YES	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		YES	1d.
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other (list)						

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

1a & b. The removal of trees and dirt; leveling for parking; adding rock riprap, a wavebreak, and a boat dock; and boat ramp widening will initially result in some minor loss of topsoil materials. However, once in place, the riprap and wavebreak would stabilize the bank, and loss of material would be minimized. Without the project, wave action eating into the bank will continue to cause some minor erosion damage to the shoreline and boat ramp area with resultant loss of bank material and exposure of tree roots.

1d. There will be short-term soil disruption during construction activities and placement of the rocks and fabric along the bank. The proposed action will reduce siltation and deposition along the shoreline, and reduce erosion problems by creating a rock barrier “riprap” at the southern end of the park at high water levels and a wavebreak at the boat dock. The use of filter fabric will allow water to pass through the riprap, but will prevent the filtration of fines and sediments back into the lake.

☼ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
➢ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

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 13c.)			X		YES	2a.
b. Creation of objectionable odors?			X		YES	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 regs? (Also see 2a.)		X				
f. Other		N/A				

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

2a & b. There will be emissions of exhaust fumes from the construction equipment during the working period. The work will take place in the early spring when the lake water level is drawn down and the campground is closed. Homes to the south are primarily occupied during the summer or on weekends, and owners should not be affected.

☼ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

➢ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

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		YES	3a.
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?			X		YES	3b.
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.)			X		YES	3l.
♦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.)		X				
n. Other:		N/A				

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

3a. There may be minor short-term water turbidity when the water level rises to full pool and washes the excess fine materials, loosened from rock placement disturbance, back into the lake. Mitigation measures entail performing the work in the spring when the water level is down to minimize runoff. The construction equipment will be kept above and out of the water so as to minimize disturbance of the area below the high water mark.

3b. The rate and amount of surface runoff will not be altered; however, the drainage patterns will be changed and redirected to ensure that runoff from road and parking surfaces does not impact lake water quality. All road and parking surfaces will be

☼ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

➢ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

paved to reduce the potential for erosion and siltation into Flathead Lake.

3l. The proposed project would be located within an area designated a 100-year floodplain. However, the project will not alter the historic floodplain zone. Part of the project responds to maintaining the stability of the lakeshore that has been altered by unnaturally high water levels caused by the operation of Kerr Dam, which regulates the top ten feet of water level on Flathead Lake.

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				
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?		X				
g. Other:		N/A				

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

4a. Construction of the six vehicle parking spaces near the boat ramp will require removal of approximately 12 Douglas-fir trees (4”-12” dia.). Construction of the boat trailer parking lot and vault toilet to replace campsites in Camp Loop B will require removal of approximately 85 Douglas-fir trees (4”-14” dia.). Grass and some shrubs will be lost during boat dock, ramp, parking, and replacement campsite construction. It should be noted that vegetation loss would be minimized wherever possible. Additionally, there will be minor disturbance of soils and vegetation where bank sloping is necessary and as equipment moves along the bank to place riprap. Mitigation will involve raking and smoothing of tread tracks and reseeding the disturbed areas with native grass seed.

4e. Use of equipment for construction will result in some disturbance of soil, shrubs, and grasses. There are noxious weeds in the area, and nearby seeds or seeds brought in gravel sources or on vehicles and equipment will have little competition where the soil has been disturbed. Mitigating action will include reseeding of disturbed areas with native species and monitoring for growth of noxious weeds. Any noxious weeds discovered will be eradicated using Integrated Weed Management (IWM) methods identified in the 2002 Region1 Noxious Weed and Exotic Vegetation Management Plan.

☼ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
➢ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

5. FISH/WILDLIFE Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT☼				Can Impact Be Mitigated☼	Comment Index
	Unknown☼	None	Minor☼	Potentially Significant		
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		X				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest, or other human activity)?		X				
♦♦h. 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.)		X				
♦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.)		X				
j. Other:		X				

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

☼ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

➢ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT☼				Can Impact Be Mitigated☼	Comment Index
	Unknown☼	None	Minor☼	Potentially Significant		
a. Increases in existing noise levels?			X		YES	6a.
b. Exposure of people to severe or nuisance noise levels?			X		YES	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				
e. Other:		N/A				

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

6a,b. There will be a temporary increase in noise levels caused by construction equipment including backhoe, excavator, grader, paving machine, and dump trucks. The work will be performed in the early spring when the campground is closed and the adjacent homes to the south are less likely to be occupied.

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. Conflict 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				7c.
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		X				
e. Other: _____		N/A				

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

7c. All work will occur in the spring during which time the campground is closed; consequently, there will be minimal conflict with normal park operations and visitor use patterns. Spring boaters can use other boat ramps on the west side of Flathead Lake at Somers, Lakeside, and Dayton.

☼ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
➢ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

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. 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.)			X		YES	8d.
e. Other:		X				

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

8d. During parking lot construction, herbicides or soil sterilants may be used to ensure that noxious weeds are not present in the gravel source. All chemicals will be applied according to label directions; management zone goals; threatened, endangered, and sensitive species concerns; and other site-specific constraints required by the Region 1 Noxious Weed Management Plan. Restricted-use chemical applications will be supervised by an applicator licensed in the state of Montana. Procedures include reporting and response procedures to follow in the event of a pesticide spill. Included are emergency response telephone numbers, field personnel duties, and spill documentation procedures.

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:		N/A				

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

☼ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

➢ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

10. PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT☼				Can Impact Be Mitigated☼	Comment Index
	Unknown☼	None	Minor☼	Potentially Significant		
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: electrical power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Will the proposed action result in increased use of any energy source?		X				
➢e. Define projected revenue sources.						10e.
➢f. Define projected maintenance costs.		X				
g. Other:		N/A				

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

10e. $142,830 - 25% State – Boat-in-Lieu and Parks Road Funds
$428,492 - 75% Federal – Wallop-Breaux (WB)

Project includes:

Shoreline improvements

- $ 20,000 - Boat ramp extension
- $ 63,000 - Boat dock, breakwater, and boardwalk
- $ 24,750 - Wavebreak, rock riprap, and bank stabilization
- $ 41,500 - Parking (10), toilet, lighting, and signing

Boat trailer parking

- $171,500 - Boat trailer (12) and vehicle (10) parking spaces
- $ 20,000 - Concrete vault toilet, lighting, signing, stairway, and barriers

Upper RV campsites and water system

- $ 41,200 - RV-accessible camp pads (14)
- $ 18,500 - Concrete vault toilet, lighting, signing, and trail
- $ 47,700 - Well, pump, electrical, distribution, and hydrants

- $123,122 - Engineering and contingencies

☼ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
➢ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

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		YES	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				
♦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				
e. Other:		N/A				

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

11a. There will be minor alteration to the aesthetics of the area due to the expansion of boat trailer parking and the addition of a boat dock. However, this change will have little detrimental effect on the total visual character of the area since the boat trailer parking area is screened from the shoreline view by trees and the dock replaces one that was in the same location.

☼ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

➢ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

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 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 12a.)		X				12d.
e. Other:		N/A				

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

12d. Cultural/historical reviews for this area have revealed no previously recorded sites within the designated project area. However, a cultural resource inventory will be conducted to determine whether cultural properties exist before the project is undertaken. SHPO and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes will have additional opportunity to comment on this project.

☼ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

➢ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

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

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

13f. During September (September 12, 2002, FWP News Release), FWP conducted a scoping process to identify the public's attitude toward various types of opportunities and facilities at West Shore. The results of an informal survey completed at that time showed public support for the proposed changes and developments at the park (October 15, 2002, FWP News Release).

13g. Permits required include:

- Army Corps of Engineers (COE) 404 Permit
- Lake County Land Services Shoreline Construction Permit

☼ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

➢ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CONTINUED)

1. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no-action alternative) to the proposed action, whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider; and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:

Alternative 1. No Action.

The no-action alternative would result in the boat ramp remaining a public boating facility of limited use to the boating public. In addition, the state park at West Shore is one of only five state parks providing access to Flathead Lake, the largest freshwater lake west of the Mississippi River. The ten-foot-wide, substandard boat ramp has been extended and repaired over the years. A low-water extension has resulted in a "dog leg" that is not visible at high water, resulting in boat trailers becoming stuck when they drop off the edge. Also, the original wooden dock was removed in 1991 due to lack of funds to address safety concerns, further complicating boat launching here. The extremely limited boat trailer parking now provided along the access road and cul-de-sac would continue to be beyond capacity on weekends. Limited boater use also limits this park as a revenue source for the state park and nearby communities. The lack of a dock and wavebreak would continue to make launching and retrieving boats hazardous on the rocky shoreline, especially during high winds. Complaints about the substandard boat launching facilities would continue. Boat launching, toilets, and parking facilities would remain inaccessible to the handicapped. However, Camp Loop B, the most popular and only camping area with views of the lakeshore, would continue to have eight tent and small trailer sites and serve as a revenue source for the state park and nearby communities.

Alternative 2. Make boat access improvements to ramp and dock, pave existing day use parking, and add handicapped-accessible vault toilet only.

This alternative would bring boat-launching facilities, toilets, and parking up to current standards; improve boater safety; and make facilities accessible to the handicapped as well. However, this alternative does not expand the extremely limited boat trailer parking now provided along the access road and cul-de-sac. The practical effect would be to increase the desirability and demand for boat launching at West Shore without increasing the supply. This would exacerbate the current over-capacity and vehicle circulation problems on weekends to the detriment of all. Limited boater use would continue to limit this park as a revenue source for the state park and nearby communities resulting in the boat ramp remaining a public boating facility of limited use to the boating public. However Camp Loop B, the most popular and only camping area with views of the lakeshore, would continue to have eight tent and small trailer sites and serve as a revenue source for the state park and nearby communities.

Alternative 3. Make boat access improvements to include Alternative 2 above, plus new boat trailer parking lot by relocating Camp Loop B as tent sites.

This alternative would bring boat-launching facilities, toilets, and parking up to current standards, improve boater safety, and make facilities accessible to the handicapped as in Alternative 2. However this alternative would also provide a separate, dedicated boat trailer parking area as close to the boat ramp as the topography will allow without impacting the scenic shoreline of Flathead Lake. This would both increase the desirability and demand for boat launching at West Shore and solve the supply problem. This would eliminate the current over-capacity and vehicle circulation problems on weekends. Additional day and overnight boater use would support this park as a revenue source for the state park and nearby communities. In order to provide maximum boat trailer parking and eliminate day-use parking and overnight camping conflicts, Camp Loop B would be relocated. A tent-only area with 4-to-6 drive- in/walk-in campsites would be developed using the north beach access road. This would not only increase the desirability of tent camping in West Shore, but also preserve it as a revenue source for the state park and nearby communities, although at a reduced level.

Alternative 4. Make boat access improvements to include Alternative 2 above, plus new boat trailer parking lot, by relocating campsites along the overlook road. (preferred alternative).

This alternative would bring boat launching facilities, toilets, and parking up to current standards. It would improve boater safety by widening the boat ramp from 10 feet to 24 feet, filling in the “dog leg,” adding a dock protected by a wavebreak, protecting approximately 50 feet of shoreline with rock “riprap,” and making facilities accessible to the handicapped as well as providing a separate, dedicated boat trailer parking area as in Alternative 3. Additional day and overnight boater use would support this park as a revenue source for the state park and nearby communities. However, in order to retain the maximum number of campsites and camp trailer sites, 14 trailer-accessible camp spurs would be developed along the edge of the road to the Flathead Lake Overlook and trailhead. This would provide both the tent and trailer camping opportunities desired by the public while preserving the undeveloped campground atmosphere. This alternative would also increase camping as a revenue source for the state park and nearby communities.

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

All contracts will comply with FWP, FRDO, and COE specifications, time frames, and bidding procedures. Work will be scheduled to minimize impacts to park visitors, adjacent residents, and impacts to the environment.

State pesticide use law and regulations requires that applicators make and retain records of their use of pesticides. The application records must be submitted to the

state Department of Agriculture every five years. These records must be made available to state investigative officers at any time following a pesticide use complaint. All aspects of applicator licensing, recertification training, and record-keeping regulations administered by the state government are in turn supervised by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. FWP has responsibility for fulfilling these requirements when FWP personnel apply chemicals. Contractors are responsible for filing in respect to contracted services and to provide FWP with copies of all reporting documents.

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) has received funding through Boat-In-Lieu taxes and federal funding to repair the boat ramp, install a dock and wavebreak, stabilize approximately 50 feet of shoreline with rock riprap, install handicapped-accessible vault toilets, and increase the boat trailer parking at the West Shore unit of Flathead Lake State Park. Plans call for eliminating Camp Loop B, with 8 campsites, to provide an additional twelve boat trailer and ten single-vehicle parking spaces. The conversion of campsites above the current day-use parking lot to boat trailer parking is necessary due to the steep topography limiting parking near the shoreline area. The campsites will be relocated to other locations in the park.

1a & b. The removal of trees and dirt; leveling for parking; adding rock riprap, a wavebreak, and a boat dock; and boat ramp widening will initially result in some minor loss of topsoil materials. However, once in place, the riprap and wavebreak would stabilize the bank, and loss of material would be minimized. Without the project, wave action eating into the bank will continue to cause some minor erosion damage to the shoreline and boat ramp area with resultant loss of bank material and exposure of tree roots.

1d. There will be short-term soil disruption during construction activities and placement of the rocks and fabric along the bank. The proposed action will reduce siltation and deposition along the shoreline, and reduce erosion problems by creating a rock barrier “riprap” at the southern end of the park at high water levels and a wavebreak at the boat dock. The use of filter fabric will allow water to pass through the riprap, but will prevent the filtration of fines and sediments back into the lake.

2a & b. There will be emissions of exhaust fumes from the construction equipment during the working period. The work will take place in the early spring when the lake water level is drawn down and the campground is closed. Homes to the south are primarily occupied during the summer or on weekends, and owners should not be affected.

3a. There may be minor short-term water turbidity when the water level rises to full pool and washes the excess fine materials, loosened from rock placement disturbance, back into the lake. Mitigation measures entail performing the work in the spring when the water level is down to minimize runoff. The construction equipment will be kept above

and out of the water so as to minimize disturbance of the area below the high water mark.

3b. The rate and amount of surface runoff will not be altered; however, the drainage patterns will be changed and redirected to ensure that runoff from road and parking surfaces does not impact lake water quality. All road and parking surfaces will be paved to reduce the potential for erosion and siltation into Flathead Lake.

3l. The proposed project would be located within an area designated a 100-year floodplain. However, the project will not alter the historic floodplain zone. Part of the project responds to maintaining the stability of the lakeshore that has been altered by unnaturally high water levels caused by the operation of Kerr Dam, which regulates the top ten feet of water level on Flathead Lake.

4a. Construction of the six vehicle parking spaces near the boat ramp will require removal of approximately 12 Douglas-fir trees (4”-12” dia.). Construction of the boat trailer parking lot and vault toilet to replace campsites in Camp Loop B will require removal of approximately 85 Douglas-fir trees (4”-14” dia.). Grass and some shrubs will be lost during boat dock, ramp, parking, and replacement campsite construction. It should be noted that vegetation loss would be minimized wherever possible. Additionally, there will be minor disturbance of soils and vegetation where bank sloping is necessary and as equipment moves along the bank to place riprap. Mitigation will involve raking and smoothing of tread tracks and reseeding the disturbed areas with native grass seed.

4e. Use of equipment for construction will result in some disturbance of soil, shrubs, and grasses. There are noxious weeds in the area, and nearby seeds or seeds brought in gravel sources or on vehicles and equipment will have little competition where the soil has been disturbed. Mitigating action will include reseeding of disturbed areas with native species and monitoring for growth of noxious weeds. Any noxious weeds discovered will be eradicated using Integrated Weed Management (IWM) methods identified in the 2002 Region1 Noxious Weed and Exotic Vegetation Management Plan.
6a,b. There will be a temporary increase in noise levels caused by construction equipment including backhoe, excavator, grader, paving machine and dump trucks. The work will be performed in the early spring when the campground is closed and the adjacent homes to the south are less likely to be occupied.

7c. All work will occur in the spring during which time the campground is closed; consequently, there will be minimal conflict with normal park operations and visitor use patterns. Spring boaters can use other boat ramps on the west side of Flathead Lake at Somers, Lakeside, and Dayton.

8d. During parking lot construction, herbicides or soil sterilants may be used to ensure that noxious weeds are not present in the gravel source. All chemicals will be applied according to label directions; management zone goals; threatened, endangered, and sensitive species concerns; and other site-specific constraints required by the Region 1

Noxious Weed Management Plan. Restricted-use chemical applications will be supervised by an applicator licensed in the State of Montana. Procedures include reporting and response procedures to follow in the event of a pesticide spill. Included are emergency response telephone numbers, field personnel duties and spill documentation procedures.

10e. $142,830 - 25% State – Boat-in-Lieu and Parks Road Funds
$428,492 - 75% Federal – Wallop-Breaux (WB)

Project includes:

Shoreline improvements

- $ 20,000 - Boat ramp extension
- $ 63,000 - Boat dock, breakwater, and boardwalk
- $ 24,750 - Wavebreak, rock riprap, and bank stabilization
- $ 41,500 - Parking (10), toilet, lighting, and signing

Boat trailer parking

- $171,500 - Boat trailer (12) and vehicle (10) parking spaces
- $ 20,000 - Concrete vault toilet, lighting, signing, stairway, and barriers

Upper RV campsites and water system

- $ 41,200 - RV-accessible camp pads (14)
- $ 18,500 - Concrete vault toilet, lighting, signing, and trail
- $ 47,700 - Well, pump, electrical, distribution, and hydrants

- $123,122 - Engineering and contingencies

11a. There will be minor alteration to the aesthetics of the area due to the expansion of boat trailer parking and the addition of a boat dock. However, this change will have little detrimental effect on the total visual character of the area since the boat trailer parking area is screened from the shoreline view by trees and the dock replaces one that was in the same location.

12d. Cultural/historical reviews for this area have revealed no previously recorded sites within the designated project area. However a cultural resource inventory will be conducted to determine whether cultural properties exist before the project is undertaken. SHPO and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes will have additional opportunity to comment on this project.

13f. During September (September 12, 2002, FWP News Release), FWP conducted a scoping process to identify the public's attitude toward various types of opportunities and facilities at West Shore. The results of an informal survey completed at that time showed public support for the proposed changes and developments at the park (October 15, 2002, FWP News Release).

13g. Permits required include:

- Army Corps of Engineers (COE) 404 Permit.
- Lake County Land Services Shoreline Construction Permit

PART IV. EA CONCLUSION SECTION

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

An EIS is not required, as cumulative impacts are judged to be minor and can be mitigated by management control and decisions.

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

During September (September 12, 2002, FWP News Release) FWP Region 1 conducted a scoping process to identify the public's attitude toward various types of opportunities and facilities at West Shore. The results of an informal survey completed at that time showed public support for the proposed changes and developments at the park (October 15, 2002, FWP News Release).

The West Shore Boat Project draft environmental assessment may be reviewed at the Region 1 office in Kalispell or at FWP Headquarters in Helena. Notices of the impending decision to adopt the proposed project will be published in the legal notices of the local newspaper and on the FWP website, advising the availability of copies of the EA for public review. An open house will be held on Thursday, October 23, 2003, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Region One headquarters office, 490 North Meridian Road, Kalispell.

3. Duration of comment period, if any: Thirty days, from Friday, October 3 through Sunday, November 2, 2003.

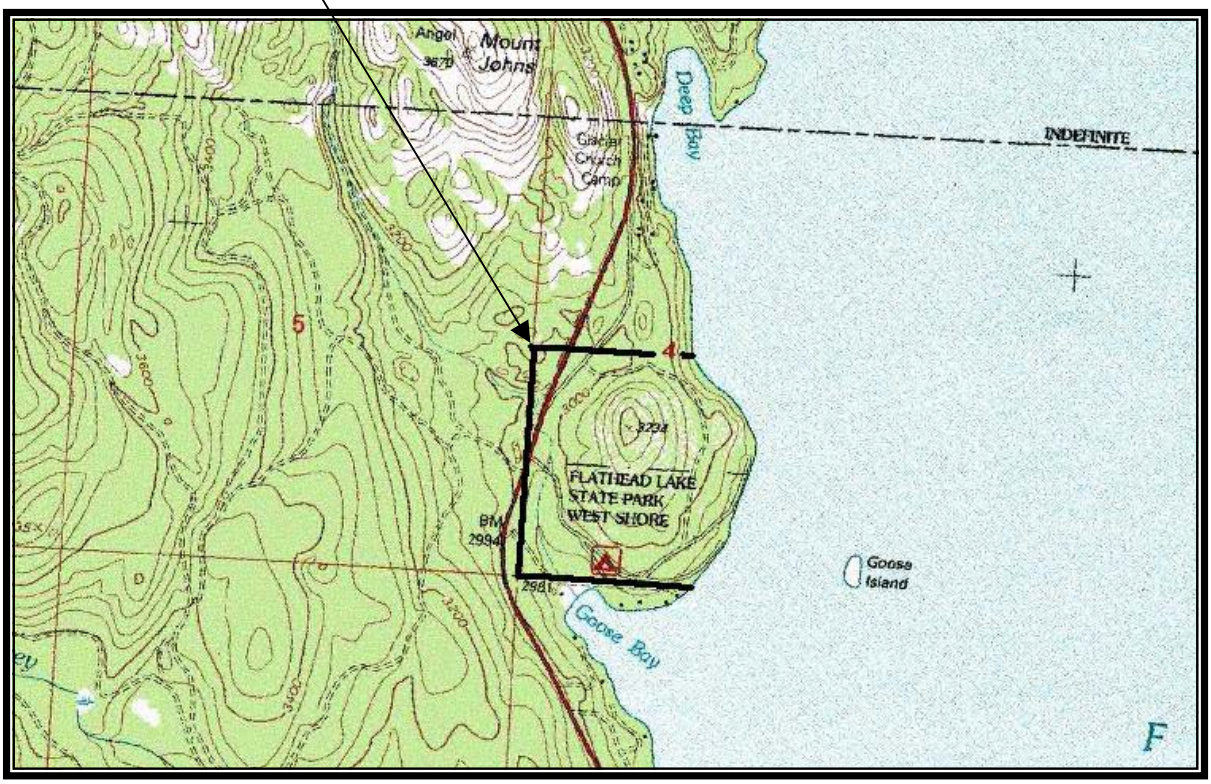
4. Name, title, address, and phone number of the person(s) responsible for preparing the EA:

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

APPENDIX A – Area Maps

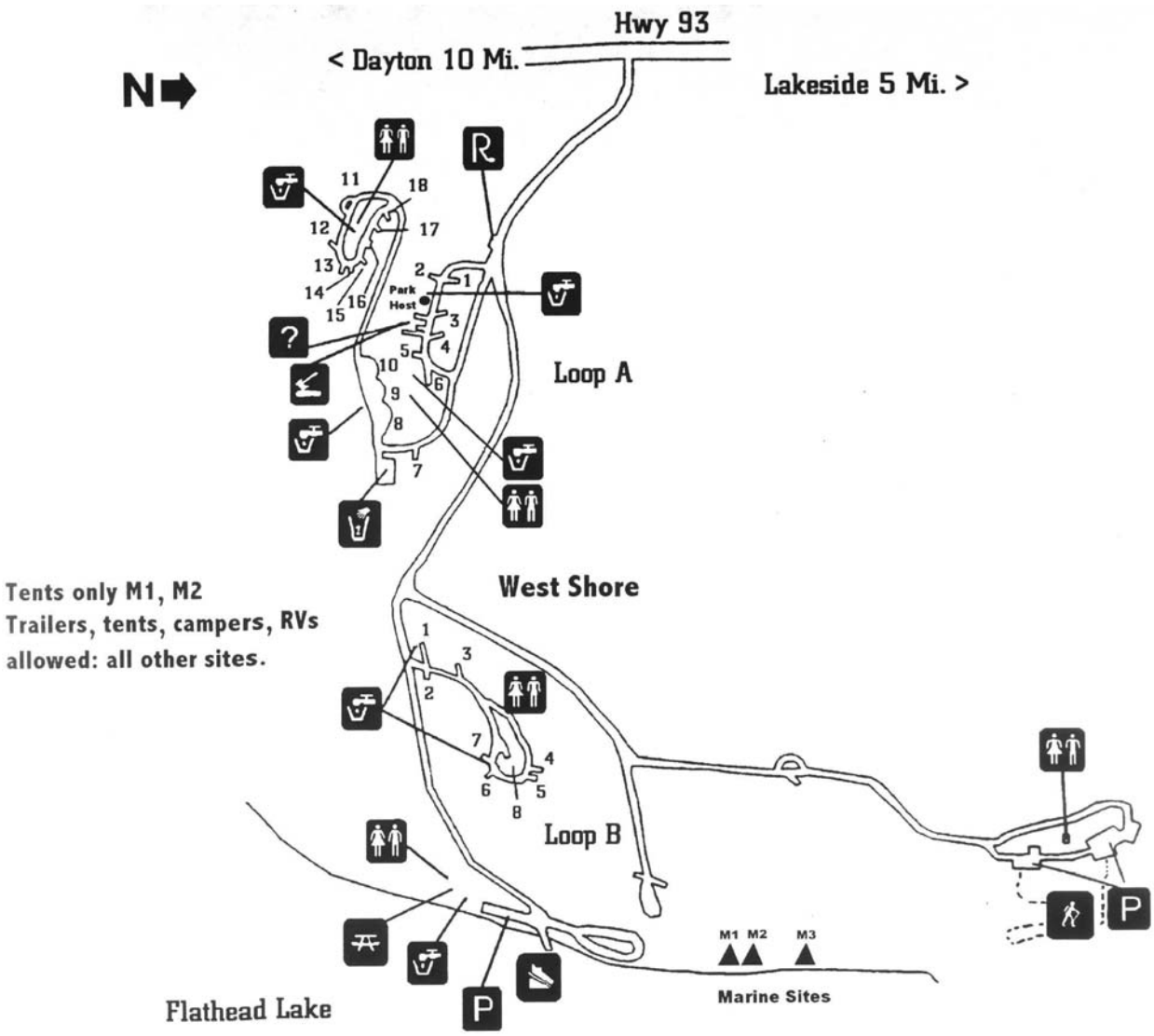
West Shore State Park

S4 T25N R20W



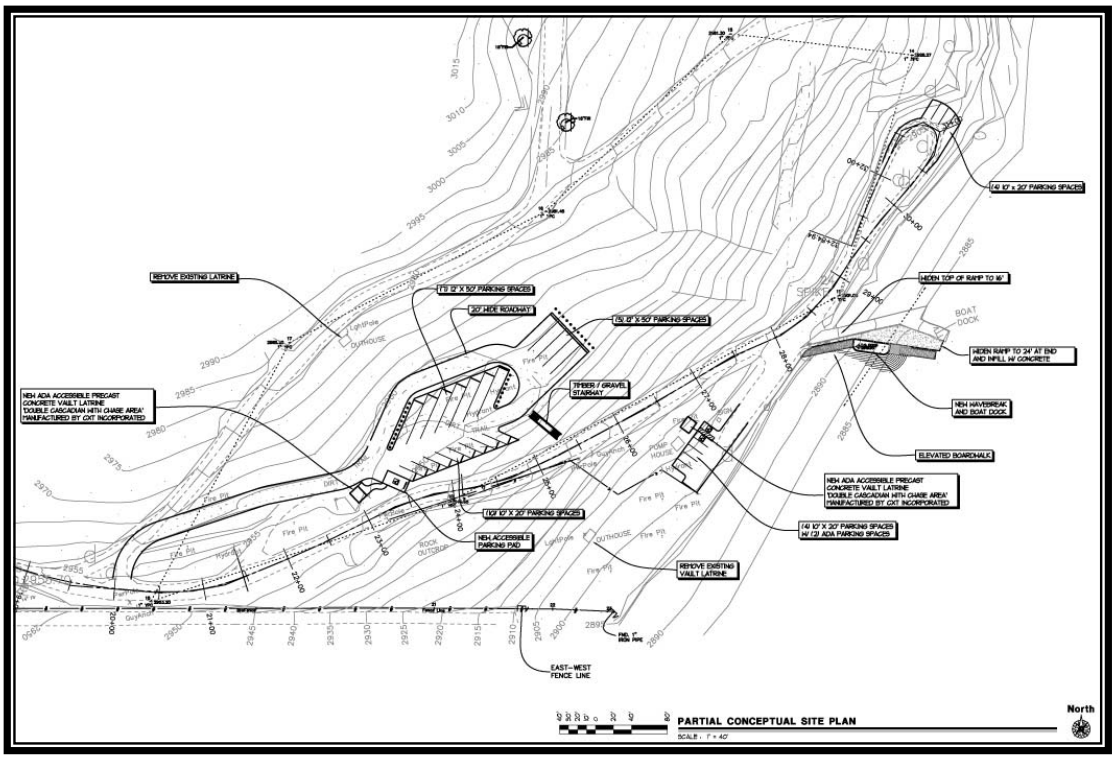
Flathead Lake, Lake County Montana

APPENDIX B – Existing Site Plan

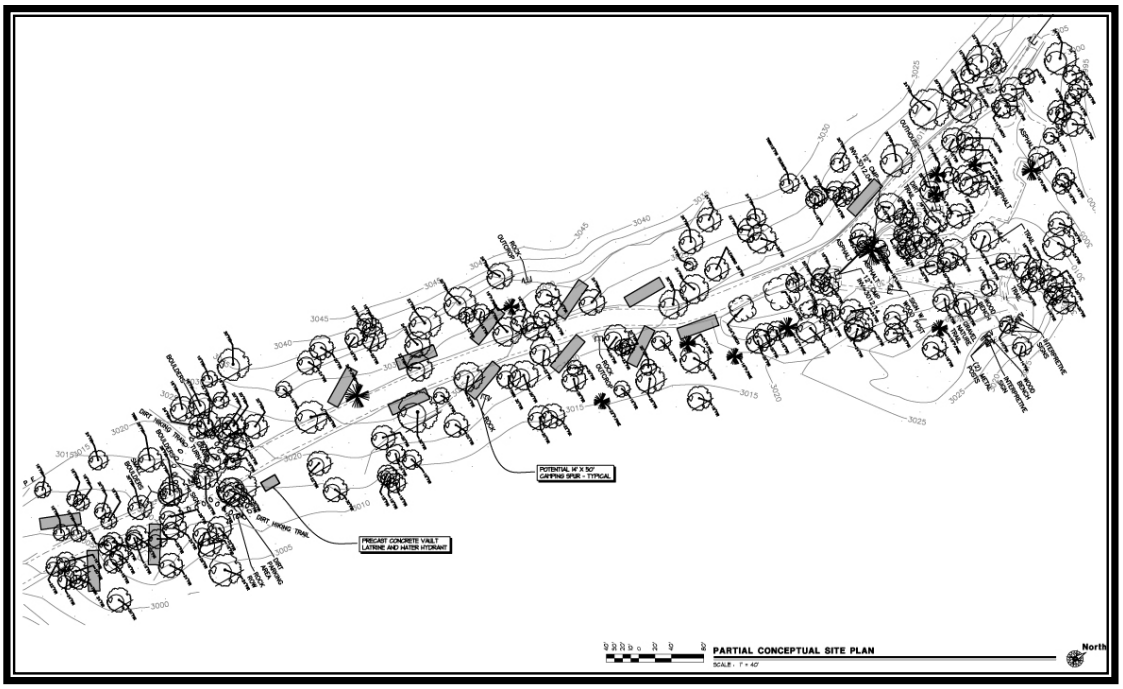


Flathead Lake State Park-West Shore Unit

APPENDIX C – Design



1. Boat Ramp Area Redesign



2. Loop B Campsite Replacement Design

APPENDIX D – Photos

1. Existing Boat Ramp

2. Proposed Parking Area South of Boat Ramp

APPENDIX D – Photos (continued)

3. Proposed Boat Trailer Parking Lot / Camp Loop B – Looking Southwest

4. Proposed Campsite Replacement Area – Looking North

APPENDIX E – Letter from the State Historic Preservation Office

From: "Murdo, Damon" <dmurdo@state.mt.us>
To: "'Dave Conklin'" <dave@csitours.com>
Subject: RE: West Shore State Park Cultural Resource Search
Date: Friday, August 08, 2003 11:19 AM

August 8, 2003

Dave Conklin
FWP
490 N Meridian
Kalispell MT 59901

RE: FWP: WEST SHORE MOTORBOAT ACCESS. SHPO Project #: 2003080817

Dear Mr. Conklin:

I have conducted a cultural resource file search for the above-cited project. According to our records there have been no previously recorded sites within the designated search locales. The absence of cultural properties in the area does not mean that they do not exist but rather may reflect the absence of any previous cultural resource inventory in the area, as our records indicated none.

Based on the lack of previous inventory and the ground disturbance required by this undertaking we feel that this project has the potential to impact cultural properties. We, therefore, recommend that a cultural resource inventory be conducted in order to determine whether or not sites exist and if they will be impacted.

If you have any further questions or comments you may contact me at (406) 444-7767 or by e-mail at dmurdo@state.mt.us.

Sincerely,

Damon Murdo
Cultural Records Manager

File: FWP/PARK/2003