

FISH and WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: April 19, 2018

Agenda Item: Fishing Access Site Acquisition on the Beaverhead River at Selway Bridge (R3)

Division: Fisheries

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 5 Minutes

Background:

In the fall of 2017 Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) contacted Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (FWP) to inquire about a cooperative project to develop an Fishing Access Site (FAS) on the Beaverhead River within the Dillon city limits. The proposed FAS is located on a small parcel of undeveloped MDT land at the Selway Bridge. The site has long been used by local anglers to access the river. The site currently has a very rough pioneered boat ramp and undeveloped two-track roads throughout the site. In a cooperative effort with MDT and the Beaverhead Trails Coalition, FWP completed the environmental assessment, topo survey and engineering design. Funding to develop the site, except the gravel boat ramp, will be provided by the Beaverhead Trails Coalition (BTC). FWP will be responsible for the gravel boat ramp construction. BTC will use their grant to hire a contractor and oversee construction of the project that will include roads, parking areas for trucks with trailers and single vehicles. Additionally, a trail loop will be developed on the north end of the property. MDT is granting FWP a Recreation Use Permit to manage the property as an FAS at no cost. BTC will have the primary day to day maintenance responsibility and FWP will provide assistance as needed.

Public Involvement Process & Results:

The environmental assessment was released for public comment on March 5 through April 4. A total of 4 public comments were received, and all were supportive of the preferred alternative and felt that FWP should move forward with acquiring the Recreational Use Permit from MDT.

Alternatives and Analysis:

Alternative A. Take no action meaning no Recreational Use Permit would be obtained, and likely the site would remain unmanaged and resource damage would continue to occur from vehicle use.

Alternative B. Development of the site as an FAS, with operational assistance from the BTC, will restore vegetative damage, organize parking and provide an area for people to launch boats, wade fish, picnic and enjoy the outdoors.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale:

FWP recommends the Commission to approve Alternative B with the Department obtaining a Recreational Use Permit from MDT for development of an FAS and to work with the BTC on a maintenance agreement for day to day management of the site.

Proposed Motion:

I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission approve FWP's request to obtain an Recreational Use Permit from Montana Department of Transportation for development of a Fishing Access Site.