Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Region 2 Headquarters
3201 Spurgin Road
Missoula, MT 59804-3101
406-542-5500
August 2, 2010

Dear Interested Citizen:

Enclosed you will find the Decision Notice (DN) for a Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) concerning its proposal to purchase via fee title a 27,616-acre Wildlife Management Area (WMA) northeast of Deer Lodge, to be called Spotted Dog WMA. The purpose of this proposal is to secure critical fish and wildlife habitat and to enhance compatible recreational opportunities and access for the public. The project area is centered in the Spotted Dog Creek watershed in Powell County, within FWP administrative Region Two.

FWP would fund the project with a grant of $16,574,009 from the Natural Resource Damage Program (NRDP). FWP would pay the fair market value of approximately $15.2 million (~$550/acre). Funding for a 10-year grazing lease on 10,200 acres of intermingled lands owned by the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (valued at $148,869) and a 5-year maintenance fund (totaling $1,225,140) is included in the total grant request.

This DN is available for review in Helena at FWP's Headquarters, the State Library and the Environmental Quality Council. It also may be obtained from the Region 2 FWP Headquarters or viewed on FWP's Internet website at http://fwp.mt.gov ("Recent Public Notices").

In consideration of the Draft EA and the DN, we will recommend that the Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission approve the proposed purchase of the Spotted Dog property at its August 5th meeting in Helena. Approval will also be necessary from the Montana Board of Land Commissioners, contingent on the award of funding from the NRDP. Both the Commission and Land Board meetings are open to the public.

Sincerely,

Mack Long
Regional Supervisor

ML/sr