

Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP)
Developing Recommendations for Managing Madison River Recreation
Madison River Citizen Advisory Committee (MCAC) – Meeting #Three

August 2, 2012

Session Summary

PROCESS OBJECTIVES

Within the Advisory Committee's Charter, develop consensus recommendations around the following 4 tasks:

1. Review and assess river recreation information and existing conditions on the Madison River.
2. Identify and describe desirable or acceptable recreation conditions for the Madison River.
3. Identify and describe conditions that would warrant implementation of various management actions.
4. Develop a list of less to most restrictive management actions.

AUGUST 2ND SESSION OBJECTIVES

1. Continue to review information and data related to existing River conditions.
2. Hear public comment related to desirable and acceptable conditions.
3. Finalize "interests" and affirm mutual guiding principles in support of interests.
4. Explore/discuss draft descriptions of desirable and acceptable recreation conditions for the Madison River per interests.
5. Prep for the August 21 MCAC meeting and affirm the calendar.

MCAC MEMBERS PRESENT

- Robin Cunningham (PO Box 34, Gallatin Gateway, Montana 59730; 406-763-4761; rcunningham@montana.net)
- Joe Fontaine (170 Elk Meadows Ranch Road, Cameron, Montana 59720; 406-682-5702; joefontaine@3rivers.net)
- Bob Gibson (311 Fieldstone Drive, Bozeman, Montana 59715; 406-587-4327; bobgib3@bresnan.net)
- John Juracek; (West Yellowstone, Montana; jjuracek@gmail.com)
- Lee McKenna (PO Box 86, Helena, Montana 59624; 406-570-1589; leemckenna2525@yahoo.com)
- Philip Naro (21 Crescent Point, Bozeman, Montana 59715; 406-595-6663; p.naro@wispwest.net)
- John Way (PO Box 625, Ennis, Montana 59729; 406-370-5206; john@montanaway.com)
- Virginia Tribe – Facilitator: vtribe@bresnan.net

AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT

Pat Flowers (FWP)

Chris McGrath (BLM)

COMPLETED AGENDA ITEMS

Review of Committee's Governance Structure and Collaborative Process (See at the end of this document)

Response to Additional Data Requests

FWP is collecting data/information about how river recreation management is/has been done in other places. It will be sent to MCAC members for review before their August 21 meeting.

Warming Up...

Sample Comments from Traplines regarding "Desired River Conditions"

- Some report that they like having other anglers around them – people from all over the Country... the world fish the Madison and that makes it a cultural experience.
- Some wish for the past in terms of the River – 1940's.
- People want a cold water fishery where there are a reasonable number of people and it fishes well for the "masses".
- People report that the fish production/fishing success ratio seems good.
- Some people would like use spread out.
- Some still wonder if there is a problem and why this process is being done.
- It was also suggested that this may not be a good time to be River conditions and potential management actions because of the impact of the Dam repair.
- Some ask for a River without glass bottles.
- Some would like an opportunity to float/camp.
- Some included good, safe parking – particularly on the lower River – with no litter, no drunk drivers, and educated users as a desirable condition.
- Some feel that lower Madison recreation activities are well-managed and hope distinctions are made in terms of zones of the River.
- Some report that they would choose "fish" over solitude.
- Some anglers report being displaced and consequently don't fish the Madison any more.
- Many like things the way they are now – people still fish the River.
- Some see the desired condition as demonstrated etiquette and safe practices at boat ramps.
- Some would prefer fewer people using the lower River.
- Some suggest wade wasters without boats a desirable.

“Hard Facts”/General Observations from the Assigned Data Reading

- Certain activities occur on certain parts of the River.
- There are regulations in place.
- When it’s hot in the summer, recreationists use the lower Madison because it’s relatively safe.
- Heat makes fishing difficult.
- “Fishing” is the dominant resource use on the upper Madison.
- The Dam is there and it affects fishing.
- Perceived social issues are occurring within a very narrow timeframe.
- There is a significant level of use on the Madison. At the same time, there is a relatively concentrated area of high use.
- Litter is a problem on the lower River.
- Some anglers report being displaced because of a variety of social issues.

Moving Forward in the Collaborative Process – Finalizing “Interests”; Affirming Guiding Principles; Draft Descriptions of Desirable and Acceptable Recreation Conditions on the River per Common Interest Set

Commercial/Economic/Local Community and the River

Final Interests in Rank Order

It is in our interest:

1. To maintain a healthy resource because no dollars or fun can be had on a degraded river.
2. To set measurable standards for recreational use impacts on water quality/fish populations because these resources are essential to com

Guiding Principles important to this Interest Set (from Statewide Guiding Principles)

- As a headwaters, state, the quality of the river resource should be protected as the first and foremost priority and unlimited recreational or economic growth must not compromise long-term conservation.
- Anglers and other river users bring economic benefits to communities; there are also potential costs of river recreation to local governments.
- Commercial river-service providers should have opportunities to compete for the business of paying customers and viable and diverse types of commercial services should be encouraged through management processes.
- Commercial providers have a responsibility to pay for their use of public access but they should not bear the entire financial burden.
- Because Montana’s rivers are a public responsibility, users should share the cost of access and statewide management.
- River management solutions must be technically and socially feasible, legal, affordable, measurable, enforceable, and reasonable to administer.

Additional Guiding Principle for this Interest Set

- We believe that use levels should be the consideration that drives decisions, not types of use/user (who it is).

Draft Description of Desirable Recreation Conditions on the River

Based on a “use zone” principle/concept, we want to preserve angling opportunity during summer use periods characterized by:

- A healthy and productive fishery
- A defined on-water frequency/range of encounter from boats
- Demonstration of angling etiquette

Questions Needing Discussion

- Do we agree on a “use zone” principle/concept?
- If so, what and where are those zones?
- Do any exist now – de-facto or established?

Anglers and the River

Final Interests in Rank Order

It is in our general interest:

- To have the mystique and lore of “the Madison” remain – even in these modern times. That includes a world class fishing experience – size of fish and quantity of fish; tranquility because of encountering fewer people; majestic scenery; and a clean, coldwater river.
- To not have garbage present that spoils the experience and health of the River.
- To have an educated public who values and demonstrates recreation etiquette on the River.
- To maximize the recreation experience by having congestion and pressure addressed through a variety of ways including having educated users who make helpful choices about locations – particularly during peak use times

It is in the interest of the wade angler:

- To have relative solitude, access, demonstrated etiquette by those encountered, and quality fishing experiences.

It is in the interest of the float angler:

- To have quality fishing experiences that may include quality and size of fish per trip; little congestion; boat ramp access where etiquette is demonstrated; and adequate parking.

Guiding Principles

The Angler interest set agreed that all the statewide Guiding Principles are useful in this process.

Draft Descriptions of “Desirable” Recreation Conditions on the River

- No garbage – 100% packed in and packed out
- World class fishing experience (e.g., a certain number of “respectable fish per day; a “good day” regardless of catch)
- Adequate space as defined by traditional western fishing etiquette
- Education campaign that results in fishing and boat ramp etiquette demonstrated by most users
- Seasonality issues are identified and addressed successfully
- Wade fishing – Solitude; opportunity to fish every 100 yards; demonstrated etiquette without encroachment; quality fishing – catching sufficient size and number; a “good day”
- Float fishing – Quality fishing experience (size and number of fish per trip; a “good day”); no wait to launch; more than one area with ramps in particular places; adequate parking

Draft Descriptions of “Acceptable” Recreation Conditions on the River

- 75% packed in and packed out
- Campaign is lower key
- Seasonality issues identified and addressed successfully
- Wade fishing – Adequate space; opportunity to fish every ¼ mile; etiquette demonstrated; fewer fish but still a good day
- Float fishing – quality fishing experience with fewer fish caught; still a good day; 10-15 minute wait to launch; adequate ramps indifferent places in an area; adequate parking

Questions Needing Discussion

- How do we define a quality fishing experience in a measurable way? Do we have to use quantitative measures?
- What’s affordable in terms of improving facilities that support recreation on the Madison?

General Recreation and the River

Final Interests in Rank Order

It is in our interest:

1. To develop management actions that are technically and socially feasible, legal, affordable, measurable and enforceable because they will then be effectively implemented.
2. To be good stewards of the Madison River (that is, protecting the resource) while still maintaining and accommodating a full spectrum of recreation activities.
3. That the Madison River continues to provide world-class fly fishing and floating experiences and enjoyment for all. By doing so, we will care for the River to ensure that it remains healthy and safe to fish and float for generations to come.
4. To preserve the beauty of the River and quality of the recreation experience.
5. To develop management actions that fairly address all Madison River interests because that is the only way to produce an enduring and effective solution.

Guiding Principles

The General Recreation interest set agreed that all the statewide Guiding Principles are useful in this process.

Draft Descriptions of Desirable and Acceptable Recreation Conditions on the River

- The least amount of regulations/restrictions that protect the resource and allow all interests to enjoy the River without substantially impacting the quality of other user groups' recreation experience (e.g., people can go/do what they want without impacting others).
- All user groups understand and are considerate of the needs and interests of other user groups and use appropriate ethics and etiquette (e.g., Picking up litter is the norm, not the exception; people observe appropriate distances for each activity).
- Continue to allow concentrated high recreation use in the lower Madison.
- Ensure that unacceptable ratings don't exceed an established percentage (e.g., Based on 2009 onsite survey for any criteria.) Gather data every few years with similar survey questions.

Questions Needing Discussion

- Based on the circumstance and portion of the River, what are the least restrictive regulations that will achieve the result?
- Based on the recreation activity, what are the least restrictive regulations that will achieve the result?
- What is an acceptable rating per criterion?

“Bullet Points” from this Meeting

The MCAC did not have time to develop “bullet points” at the end of an elongated meeting – so people with questions will be referred to the website to read the summary of this meeting.

Where do we go from here?

Affirming the Calendar – The Committee will meet:

- August 21 – 4:00 to 8:30 in Ennis (location to be announced)
- September 26, 27 – All day sessions in Bozeman (specific times and location to be announced)
- October – Meeting date and times to be decided at the MCAC August 21 meeting; potential location West Yellowstone

Homework

- Review the summary of this meeting and be prepared to have discussion toward finalizing River recreation desired/acceptable conditions at the August 21 meeting.
- Continue conversation with your traplines – focusing on what kinds of things would indicate a fairly serious decline in desired conditions and what people might accept in terms of management actions related to that decline.
- Review any data sent to you by FWP before the August 21 meeting.

Madison River Citizen Advisory Committee (MCAC) Governance Structure

Roles within the Process

- **Facilitator**: Plan, manage, and provide a summary of MCAC meetings; design/facilitate a collaborative process; be the process keeper.
- **Individual MCAC members**: Bring interests to the table and work to develop mutual understanding of interests; seek useful data; fairly represent the facts; honor the process and its governance structure; communicate with your constituents; run your trapline.
- **Committee of the whole**: Work collaboratively to achieve the hopes and expectations of the Charter; hear public comments; work hard to and use the process to reach consensus; recognize the role of the Committee in River Recreation planning and the process that follows the Committee's recommendations.
- **Involved Agencies**: Describe Agency interests; maintain familiarity with and participate in Committee discussion; where needed, explain managing Agency Administrative rules; offer comments related to what is feasible; remain objective and honor the collaborative process; facilitate presentation of recommendations to the Commission.
- **Technical Support**: Describe the current situation related to the Madison River; help clarify issues by providing the best data possible; respond to reasonable data requests from the Committee; be present at meetings to answer questions
- **The Public/Observers**: Honor the Committee governance structure; witness the process; serve as part of "traplines" if asked; comment related to Madison River management.

Discussion Ground Rules

- Be civil. Demonstrate respect for each other and the public in our communication and our behaviors.
- Recognize the validity of each other's interests and opinions.
- Raise hand to help manage the discussion – to comment... to ask questions. When necessary, the facilitator will manage the "hands".
- When speaking, try to be clear and concise.
- Allow the person speaking to finish – don't interrupt. Listen actively and honorably – before preparing to respond. (People are often so focused on what they are going to say in response, they miss part of the speaker's comments.)
- Avoid labeling or personal attacks.
- Avoid side conversations.
- Stay on point and remain positive. No profanity!
- Strive for consensus recommendations among the 8 citizen members. Recognize that there may be an issue/a time when it is necessary for the Committee to decide to use a "majority" rule approach because consensus is not possible. Those not in agreement can write a minority report for that issue. When interim or final agreement is reached, through either a consensus or majority approach, members won't sabotage the process away from the table.
- While a FWP and a BLM representative will be seated at the MCAC table, the 8 citizen members are recognized as those needing to come to agreement. At the same time, Committee members will seek the input of the Agency representative in order to understand Agency interests and determine the reasonableness of a particular proposed recommendation.
- Turn off electronic devices unless using your computer to access data, etc.

MCAC Governance Structure cont.

Process Agreements

- Be on time for each meeting – regardless of location.
- Notify Pat Flowers if you can't attend a meeting.
- At the end of each meeting, agree on 3 or 4 consistent bullet points/"talking points" related to the process and their progress. Use those points in discussion outside of MCAC meetings. If it appears useful, agree on a "point person" for that meeting.
- Post the meeting summaries and MCAC logistics on the Department's website.

Logistics

- Have 3 meetings in Bozeman; 3 in Ennis; and 1 in West Yellowstone.
- Strive for fairly frequent meetings – 4:00ish to 8:30ish PM.
- Try to find 1 or 2 times when the Committee could meet for a full day.

The MCAC will use an "interest-based", collaborative process as explained in their notebooks and basically outlined in the following steps:

- Affirm the "issue statement" and tasks represented in the Charter.
- Identify and come to mutual understanding of "interests".
- Recognize/clarify the questions that need to be addressed in the process.
- Review and connect the guiding principles to the Committee's tasks.
- Discuss the concept of "fair standards"/objective criteria.
- Develop options for "mutual gain".
- Work together toward agreement based on interests, guiding principles, and a search for fair standards.
- Come to agreement and develop final recommendations and recommendation language.