



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Region 2 Headquarters
3201 Spurgin Road
Missoula, MT 59804
(406) 542-5500

January 16, 2018

Dear Interested Party:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) seeks public review and comment on its proposal to enter into a land exchange between FWP and Cross Canyon Ranch (CCR), a privately held property. FWP proposes to exchange approximately 460 acres of land currently within its Spotted Dog Wildlife Management Area (WMA, located NE of Deer Lodge), for approximately 438 acres held by CCR. The exchange would consolidate each entity's holdings and facilitate management of both the ranch and the WMA. Of special importance to FWP is the opportunity to create passage and enhance public access between the eastern and western portions of the WMA (between the headwaters of O'Neill Creek to Spotted Dog Creek), which currently is hindered by checkerboard boundaries. All exchange parcels are located in T9N, R8W, in Powell County. While the number of acres is not equal, the overall value of the lands being exchanged is comparable.

FWP will hold a public hearing in Deer Lodge on Wednesday, February 7 at 7:00 p.m. at the Deer Lodge Community Center (Cottonwood Street, north of the County Courthouse) to discuss the proposal, answer questions and take public comment.

A draft environmental assessment (EA) has been prepared describing this proposal. The Draft EA may be obtained by mail from Region 2 FWP, 3201 Spurgin Rd., Missoula 59804; by phoning 406-542-5540; or by emailing shrose@mt.gov. The EA will also be available for review and comment on FWP's Internet website <http://fwp.mt.gov> ("Public Notices," beginning January 16, 2018).

Comments should be directed to Sharon Rose at the address or email above. Comments must be received by FWP no later than February 14, 2018.

If you have any questions regarding this project, please call Rick Northrup, Habitat Bureau Chief at (406) 444-5633 in Helena.

Thank you for your consideration of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Randy Arnold". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Randy" being more prominent than the last name "Arnold".

Randy Arnold
Regional Supervisor

RA/sr