Region 6
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Glasgow, Montana 59230
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May 31, 2019

LAND ACQUISITION FOR REGION 6 HEADQUARTERS
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
DECISION NOTICE

Background

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) distributed a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) on a proposed action of purchasing an estimated 0.73-acre lot adjacent to its existing Region 6 Headquarters in Glasgow on April 24, 2019. The purpose of this property is to secure space for a visitors parking lot that can accommodate vehicles pulling trailers. Purchasing this property would also provide space for FWP to improve the existing Headquarters building on the lot it sits on.

Description of the Proposed Action

The purpose of this action is to secure space for building a pull through parking lot for visitor parking to accommodate vehicles towing boats, trailers or campers and would provide FWP staff a safe place to conduct boat inspections for aquatic invasive species (AIS). Currently there is no parking area at the Headquarters that allows for vehicles pulling a trailer to pull through without backing up. Since many of our customers are pulling boats, trailers or campers, this requires them to either back their trailer out of our small visitors parking lot, park on the shoulder of Highway 2 in front of the office or park across the street in a gas station parking lot, all of which can be a safety hazard.

Furthermore, state law now requires all out of state boats to be inspected for AIS by FWP staff prior to being launched. A pull through parking lot would provide a safe and convenient spot for visitors needing to have their boat inspected. Expanding the parking lot into this area would also open up more space on the existing Headquarters lot to construct a better functioning shop area, a conference room suitable for public meetings and improve office space. FWP's Land Unit has negotiated a price of $85,000, based on local market data, with the landowner for the purchase of this property.

Public Process and Comments

FWP is required by the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) to assess potential impacts of a proposed action to the human environment. In compliance with MEPA, an EA was completed for the proposed project by FWP and released for public comment on April 24, 2019.

Public comment on the proposed action were taken for 30 days (through May 24, 2019). The public was notified through the following actions:

- Two public notices in the Glasgow Courier and the Helena Independent.
- Public notice on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks web page: *http://fwp.mt.gov.*

- A cover letter for the EA with project and comment information was sent to the adjacent landowner, the Glasgow Mayor and City Council, Valley County Commissioners, the Valley County Planner, local legislators and other interested parties.

One comment was received in support of the proposed action from an individual. This letter stated "There is no doubt that the Region 6 office and yard location in Glasgow is crimped & cramped with its current space. I'm willing to support this purchase. Just let me know how I can help make this happen."

Final Environmental Assessment

Based on the analysis within the EA, along with public comments and internal review, the Draft EA will be adopted as the Final EA. The EA and this Decision Notice will serve as the final documents pertaining to this action.

Decision

In consideration of the above facts and the public support received, it is my decision to approve the proposed action to purchase the 0.73-acre lot adjacent to the Region 6 Headquarters, pending approval from the FWP Commission.

Mark Sullivan
Region Six Supervisor