



# MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION FWP PROPOSAL & INFORMATION SHEET

THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL.

**Meeting Date:** August 19, 2026

**Agenda Item:** Temporary Full Closure of Kohrs Bend Fishing Access Site

**Action Needed:** Final

**Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation:** 5 minutes

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**Background:** The approximately 8-acre Kohrs Bend Fishing Access Site (FAS) has provided public fishing and boating access on the upper Clark Fork River in Powell County since its acquisition by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks in 1975. To enhance recreational opportunities, improve boat access, and improve soil stability and fish habitat, FWP is implementing phased improvements at Kohrs Bend FAS. This will include improved gravel roads and parking spaces, additional truck and trailer parking spaces, a new gravel boat ramp, fencing, a cattleguard, and streambank stabilization.

In addition to the FAS improvements, the Montana Natural Resource Damage Program (NRDP) is proposing to remove contaminated, potentially hazardous soils within the project footprint. The Kohrs Bend FAS lies within the Clark Fork River Superfund Site, where historic mining, milling, and smelting released heavy metals (cadmium, copper, zinc, lead) and arsenic into the river and adjacent floodplain. Under a Memorandum of Understanding between FWP and the NRDP, NRDP would excavate, operate heavy equipment, and complete in-water work. During NRDP's soil remediation and FWP's construction of improvements, it would not be safe for the public to access the site.

**Public Involvement Process & Results:** The Kohrs Bend FAS improvements project was put out for public comment as an environmental assessment in 2017, and a decision notice was issued in February 2021 approving the project. Public comments included support from sportsmen's groups and input from Powell County. There was no opposition, and the decision notice found no significant impact. The department will solicit public comment for a four-week period prior to the August commission meeting. Public comments will be posted online and provided to commissioners at least two weeks prior to the August commission meeting.

## **Alternatives & Analysis:**

- A. No action. The Kohrs Bend FAS would not be temporarily closed for construction, and NRDP's soil removal and FWP improvements would occur around continued public use or be delayed. This would increase safety risks for the recreating public and contractors, complicate construction logistics, and could extend the duration or reduce the effectiveness of soil remediation and streambank stabilization.
- B. Adopt a temporary full closure of the Kohrs Bend FAS beginning sometime between September and November of 2026. FWP would work with NRDP and contractors to open the site as soon as possible while ensuring safety of the public and contractors. It is possible the closure could be as short as one to two weeks if conditions allow.

**Agency Recommendation & Rationale:** FWP recommends the commission adopt a temporary full closure of the Kohrs Bend FAS beginning sometime between September and November of 2026, with the site reopening as soon as construction is completed and the site is safe for the public to use (Alternative B).

**Proposed Motion:** I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission adopt a temporary closure of the Kohrs Bend Fishing Access Site beginning sometime between September and November of 2026, with the site reopening as soon as construction is completed and the site is safe for public use.