



# Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

1400 South 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Bozeman, MT 59718

March 22, 2021

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (FWP) is granting approval to the City of Bozeman (City) to construct a new Manley Ditch stormwater outfall within the FWP Cherry River Fishing Access site. In addition, FWP has requested that the City install bank protection under a small wooden pedestrian bridge on a constructed drain ditch which flows from the wetland where the new Manley Ditch outfall would discharge. The bank protection is included to prevent erosion during storm events.

The Draft EA for this project was available for review in Helena at FWP's Headquarters, the State Library, and the Environmental Quality Council. It could also have been obtained from FWP at the address provided above, or viewed on FWP's Internet website: <http://www.fwp.mt.gov>. Public comments were taken from January 8 through February 8, 2021. The public was informed of the Draft EA through the Bozeman *Daily Chronicle* and Helena *Independent Record*. Two comments were received and summarized in the Draft EA.

It is my decision to proceed with the proposed project, with no changes to the Draft EA.

Questions regarding this Decision Notice should be mailed to:

Mike Duncan  
Madison-Gallatin Fisheries Biologist  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Region 3  
1400 South 19<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Bozeman, MT 59718

Or e-mailed to: [mike.duncan@mt.gov](mailto:mike.duncan@mt.gov)

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Marina Yoshioka", written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marina Yoshioka  
Region Three Supervisor

Attachment

# **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT DECISION NOTICE**

## **for the Manley Ditch Rehabilitation**

**Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Region 3, Bozeman  
March 22, 2021**

### **Preface**

The enclosed Decision Notice has been prepared to grant approval to the City of Bozeman (City) to construct a new Manley Ditch stormwater outfall within the FWP Cherry River Fishing Access site. In addition, FWP has requested that the City install bank protection under a small wooden pedestrian bridge on a constructed drain ditch which flows from the wetland where the new Manley Ditch outfall would discharge. The bank protection is included to prevent erosion during storm events.

The proposed project includes rehabilitating and realigning an abandoned (relic) irrigation ditch (Manley Ditch). The ditch historically crossed under the Montana Rail Link (MRL) railroad tracks and distributed flows to agricultural fields northeast of the railroad tracks. The ditch was abandoned and the culvert outlet plugged when the areas north and south of the MRL tracks were developed. Proposed improvements include constructing a new conveyance ditch from the MRL culvert outlet northwest through and adjacent to MDT owned and leased lands along the northeast side of the MRL tracks. The new structure will convey stormwater flows into a nearby wetland associated with the Montana FWP Cherry River Fishing Access Site. At the Manley Ditch Outfall, an approximately 30-foot long by 14-foot wide bio-retention basin would be excavated with 2:1 side-slopes to provide natural water quality treatment. A concrete weir and 4-foot wide trash grate would be installed at the outlet side of the basin to control the water level. The depth of the excavated basin would provide close contact with the water table. The bottom of the basin would be planted with wetland plant species while the side-slopes of the basin would be seeded with wetland species and upland grasses.

In addition, at the request of FWP, 6-inch, D50 cobbles for bank protection would be installed around and under a small wooden pedestrian bridge on the constructed unnamed drain ditch that flows from the wetland. The bank protection is included to prevent erosion during storm events.

The purpose of the project is to improve stormwater conveyance within the City of Bozeman's stormwater system for the area north of Interstate 90 and east of the Interstate 90 Frontage Road. Currently, stormwater that flows within Manley Ditch is blocked south of the MRL tracks, which has resulted in ponding and flooding in this area.

### **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 and physical environment. In compliance with MEPA, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed for the proposed project by FWP and released for public comment on January 8, 2021.

Public comments were taken for 30 days (through February 8, 2021). The public was informed of this EA via the following:

- Two legal notices each in *Bozeman Daily Chronicle* and *Helena Independent Record*.
- Copies of the EA mailed or notification of its availability emailed to neighboring landowners.
- Public notice posted on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks web page: <http://fwp.mt.gov>
- Copies of the EA available at FWP Region 3 Headquarters; by phoning 406-577-7871; or by emailing [mike.duncan@mt.gov](mailto:mike.duncan@mt.gov).

Two parties submitted comments on the proposal. One was in support and the second requested clarification on the project (Table 1).

Party	Location	Support/Oppose	Comments
Montana Rail Link	Missoula	Support	"Montana Rail Link supports approval of the Manley Ditch Rehabilitation project by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks."
Montana Department of Transportation (MDT)	Helena	NA	MDT personnel requested additional coordination with the City of Bozeman about portions of the project that included MDT owned and leased lands. The two parties have reached a written agreement on the project.

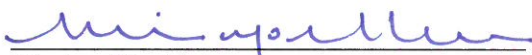
### **Final Environmental Assessment**

The Draft Environmental Assessment, together with this Decision Notice, will serve as the final document for this proposal.

### **Decision**

Based on the Environmental Assessment and public comment, it is my decision to approve the proposed action to grant approval to the City of Bozeman (City) to construct a new Manley Ditch stormwater outfall within the FWP Cherry River Fishing Access site and stabilize the streambanks surrounding the footbridge downstream of the constructed channel.

I find there to be no significant impacts on the human and physical environments associated with this project. Therefore, I conclude that the Environmental Assessment is the appropriate level of analysis, and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.



Marina Yoshioka  
Region 3 Supervisor  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

3/23/21

Date