



MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

**Draft
Environmental Assessment**

**Lone Pine State Park
Public Water Supply Well Project
Project Number 7176312**

7/23/2021

Draft Environmental Assessment CHECKLIST

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. **Type of proposed state action:** Replacement of failing well cistern and vault with well building
2. **Agency authority for the proposed action:** Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
3. **Name, address and phone number of project sponsor (if other than the agency):**
4. **Anticipated Schedule:**
 Estimated Construction Commencement Date: 9/2021
 Estimated Completion Date: 11/2021
 Current Status of Project Design (100% complete): Ready to advertise. Association formation, easements and water rights, 90% complete.
5. **Location affected by proposed action (county, range and township – included map):**
 (Flathead County , S24, T28 N, R22 W, - map last page)
6. **Project size -- estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:**

	<u>Acres</u>		<u>Acres</u>
(a) Developed:		(d) Floodplain	<u>0</u>
Residential	<u>.1</u>		
Industrial	<u>0</u>	(e) Productive:	
(existing shop area)		Irrigated cropland	<u>0</u>
(b) Open Space/	<u>0</u>	Dry cropland	<u>0</u>
Woodlands/Recreation		Forestry	<u>0</u>
(c) Wetlands/Riparian	<u>0</u>	Rangeland	<u>0</u>
Areas		Other	<u>0</u>

8. **Permits, Funding & Overlapping Jurisdiction.**

- (a) **Permits:** permits will be filed at least 2 weeks prior to project start.

Agency Name	Permits
MDEQ	PWS MT0043198 (existing permit)

- (b) **Funding:**

Agency Name Fish Wildlife & Parks	Funding Amount \$220,000.00
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- Part of the current well agreement states each of the 6 properties who use the water system have an equal share of responsibility for the funding. Due to previous commitments, FWP is covering the cost of design and construction management. The cost of the construction will be split amongst the 6 properties served by the system, with FWP contributing a greater percent than the landowners.

(c) **Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
Lone Pine Ranches AMD 1 HOA	Codes Covenants and Restrictions

9. **Narrative summary of the proposed action:** In 2019 DEQ inspected the holding tank and chlorination system and noted serious deficiencies. It is believed that the cistern may be compromised which would allow organic materials into the water supply, resulting in bacterial contamination. The well pump controls, and chlorination system are located underground and have suffered significant degradation over the many years they have been in service. This poses considerable health risks to those who perform the monthly testing due to the accumulation of chlorine gas in the underground chamber. After meeting on site with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) Design and Construction staff and a local engineering consultant, there is consensus that the cause for contamination problems is a failing cistern. This well and cistern were installed in 1977 and have far surpassed their expected service lives. To this end, FWP is initiating a project that will result in replacement of the shared cistern and move well controls and water monitoring equipment above ground to a small structure. This configuration should eliminate the need for chlorination however connections will be available if equipment needs to be added.

10. **Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives:**

Alternative A: No Action: The current system components are very corroded, and the layout of the system is hazardous to maintain for staff and the system regularly requires attention from staff to correct issues, so the water source is functioning. Continuing in the current state will result in numerous monthly failures or catastrophic failure leaving the state facility and the other community well partners without any source of water.

Alternative B: Proposed Action: Demolish the current well vault and cistern following the recommendations of DEQ. This would be replaced with a well house up to current DEQ standards for public water source systems and for staff safety. The proposed action would include the option for a chlorinated system, but the intent is to not use chlorine following guidance and inspections from DEQ.

Alternative C: There was discussion concerning placing a bladder inside the current cistern, but after examination it was determined this was not a viable option. The bladder was viewed as a temporary solution which still didn't resolve the staff safety or failing component issues.

11. **Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:**

None.

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CHECKLIST

Evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment.

A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Provided
1. Geology and soil quality, stability and moisture			x			
2. Air quality or objectionable odors				x		
3. Water quality, quantity and distribution (surface or groundwater)				x		
4. Existing water right or reservation			x			
5. Vegetation cover, quantity and quality			x			
6. Unique, endangered, or fragile vegetative species			x			
6. Terrestrial or aquatic life and/or habitats				x		
7. Unique, endangered, or fragile wildlife or fisheries species				x		
8. Introduction of new species into an area				x		
9. Changes to abundance or movement of species				x		

1. There will be some minor ground disturbance to fill in the old cistern and the for the construction of the new 24 X 24 well house.
3. The project will disturb less than one acre and is outside the City of Kalispell's stormwater construction jurisdiction. A stormwater construction permit will not be necessary. The project is not near a surface water body.
4. The water rights for each member of the community well will be updated to current property owners and changed to name the new water users association as the owner. FWP will file for separate rights for this source.
5. Any ground disturbance will be rehabilitated to its original condition prior to construction. There will be improvements to stabilize the access road to the well site adding more gravel. The current road has thistle and spotted knapweed which will be removed with the access road upgrade.
6. The construction area is on private property and not owned by the state. The property contains remnants of a Palouse Prairie including, bluebunch wheatgrass, Idaho Fescue and arrowleaf balsamroot. The area also contains several invasive species including spotted knapweed, smooth brome grass, and tumble mustard. Disturbed ground will be seeded with Palouse prairie seeds, but treatment for noxious weeds will be the responsibility of the landowner or the water well user association.

B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Provided
1. Noise and/or electrical effects				x		
2. Land use				x		
3. Risk and/or health hazards		X beneficial				
4. Community impact		X beneficial				
5. Public services/taxes/utilities				x		
6. Potential revenue and/or project maintenance costs		X beneficial				
7. Aesthetics and recreation			x			
8. Cultural and historic resources				x		
9. Evaluation of significance				x		
10. Generate public controversy				x		

3. The construction of a new well house will significantly reduce the risk of park staff or contracted well management staff in maintaining and servicing the well system. According to the 2019 DEQ report, the underground liquid chlorine system poses significant risk to park staff. The proposed plan would remove the chlorine system and move all the storage tanks above ground. This plan would reduce the risk to staff and bring the water system up to current DEQ standards.
4. The new system will provide a reliable water source which meets DEQ standards to both park users and private residents on the community well.
5. Improvements to the well system would not bring any new revenue sources, but it would drastically reduce maintenance costs from repairs and FWP staff time.
6. There would be some aesthetic change to one of the residents on the community well by having a new building visible from their back yard. This proposal has been reviewed and approved by the HOA the which oversees the location. This change would not affect members of the public. It would affect recreation by having a dependable water source for users who recreate in the park.

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

The well cistern and vault will be replaced by a new above ground building. This replacement will provide a reliable water source to the public at Lone Pine State Park and the neighboring community well members. There is no discernable negative impact to the general public or plant and animal species in the area. The aesthetics of a new building will only be visible by one landowner. The HOA through their architectural review committee, has approved the structure.

PART IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. Public involvement:

The public will be notified in the following manners to comment on this current EA, the proposed action and alternatives:

- One public notice in each of these papers: Flathead Beacon, Daily Interlake, Helena Independent Record
- One statewide press release (if applicable); Not applicable
- Public notice on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks web page: <https://fwp.mt.gov/public-notice>.

Notice regarding the availability of this environmental assessment will be distributed to the neighboring landowners and interested parties to ensure their knowledge of the proposed project.

This level of public notice and participation is appropriate for a project of this scope having limited impacts, many of which can be mitigated.

There will be no significant negative impacts to the public or natural resources of the area. There will be multiple positive impacts.

2. Duration of comment period:

The public comment period will extend for (23) twenty-three days. Written comments will be accepted until 5:00 p.m., August 20, 2021 and can be mailed to the address below:

Lone Pine S.P. Well Project
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Attn: Brian Schwartz
300 Lone Pine Road
Kalispell, MT 59901

Or

BSchwartz2@mt.gov

PART V. EA PREPARATION

1. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? (YES/NO)? If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action.

An EA is the proper level of evaluation required for this project. Any potential negative effects to the human or natural environment are minor. Public comment regarding this project would be unexpected considering the construction area is on private land with no public access. Any potentially significant effects of the project would positively impact the park, park users, and neighbors on the water system.

2. Person(s) responsible for preparing the EA: Brian Schwartz – Lone Pine State Park Manager

3. List of agencies or offices consulted during preparation of the EA:

- FWP - Montana State Parks -
- FWP – Design and Construction Bureau
- Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
- Montana DEQ

Project location

