



## Environmental Assessment Decision Notice

### Lake Mary Ronan, Non-Motorized Trail Construction

### August 10, 2022

#### Description of Proposed Project

This proposal is for the construction of a new .3-mile non-motorized walking trail at Lake Mary Ronan State Park. This trail would connect to existing park trails, thus creating a loop around the entire park. FWP staff intend for this project to enhance the park experience by providing an opportunity for exercise and wildlife viewing.

The project area is relatively flat typified by second growth Douglas fir stands and associated understory plant communities. Tread work would entail clearing downfall and debris along the proposed route and removal of vegetation to mineral soil within the specified trail width of 18" to 24". Sections of the trail would utilize existing skid trails associated with a past thinning project, and water bars would be added where necessary to prevent erosion. The project would be accomplished by a Montana Conservation Corps crew (MCC) in approximately one week. The anticipated cost is \$3,500.

#### Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Process and Public Involvement

FWP released a draft environmental assessment (EA) for 10-day public review period on July 26, 2022, with comment closing August 4, 2022. Public notices were posted at the Lake Mary State Park Kiosk and at the boat ramp. The notice was sent to the Friends of Lake Mary Ronan Lake Association President. The EA was advertised through legal notices in the Daily Inter Lake, Helena Independent Record, Flathead Beacon, Lake County Leader and on the FWP website and social media (Facebook).

- [https://fwp.mt.gov/public-notices/news/2022/jul/0726\\_lmr-trail-construction-ea](https://fwp.mt.gov/public-notices/news/2022/jul/0726_lmr-trail-construction-ea)

The EA evaluated the potential impacts of the following alternatives:

1. **Alternative A: No Action** – The no-action alternative will maintain the status quo and hiking opportunities will remain on the current trail system. Although the area would remain in its current natural state, this section of the park does not welcome less adventurous, off trail visitors.



2. Alternative B: Proposed Action - Build .3 miles of new trail in the northwest region of Lake Mary Ronan State Park, thus creating a non-motorized trail that would allow visitors the opportunity to hike the circumference of the park. This would give hikers more opportunity to exercise, observe flora and fauna or even experience solitude within the park. A designated trail would welcome park users to an underutilized area of the park.

**Summary of Public Comment:**

No public comments were received for this project.

**FWP Recommended Alternative and Final Decision**

I have evaluated the EA and applicable laws, regulations, and policies and have determined that the proposed action will not have any significant negative impacts on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement (EIS) will not be prepared.

Based on the analysis in the EA, I find Alternative B (the Proposed Action) to be the preferred alternative and support the construction of a non-motorized connection trail.

The EA and public participation process indicate that the proposed action to construct a connecting non-motorized trail would improve the parks trail system and visitor experience. Potential negative impacts can be mitigated, and the result would complete a hiking loop around the perimeter of the park.

Noting there was no response to the public notification and no expected negative responses, the draft EA will become the final EA and together with this decision notice will serve as the final documents for this proposal.

The final EA may be viewed at or obtained from Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Region One, 490 N. Meridian Road, Kalispell, MT 59901. Please direct requests and questions to:

Brian Schwartz  
Recreation Manager, Lone Pine State Park  
300 Lone Pine Road  
Kalispell, MT 59901  
(406) 755-2706 ext. 3  
[Bschwartz2@mt.gov](mailto:Bschwartz2@mt.gov)



Dillon Tabish  
Region 1 Acting Supervisor

8-10-22

Date

