Draft Environmental Assessment:
Sha-Ron River Access Overflow Parking Lot

June 2022

Prepared by

WGMGROUP

Draft Environmental Assessment
MEPA, NEPA, MCA 23-1-110 CHECKLIST

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. Type of proposed state action:
Montana FWP proposes to acquire a recreation permit from the Montana Department of Transportation that would allow for public parking and river access approximately 0.2 miles northeast of the Sha-Ron Fishing Access Site (FAS). The parking lot and access would be constructed by Missoula County on the south side of Old MT-200. The existing Sha-Ron FAS is a river access point used heavily in the summer by river recreationalists, including a boat launch.

2. Agency authority for the proposed action:
FWP has the authority to enter into agreements to manage lands for state parks and outdoor recreation per Montana State Statute 87-1-209 Montana Code Annotated (MCA). The Department also has the authority to develop outdoor recreational resources in the state per 23-2-101 MCA: "for the purpose of conserving the scenic, historic, archaeologic, scientific, and recreational resources of the state and providing their use and enjoyment, thereby contributing to the cultural, recreational, and economic life of the people and their health."

3. Name of project:
Sha-Ron River Access Overflow Parking Lot Recreation Permit

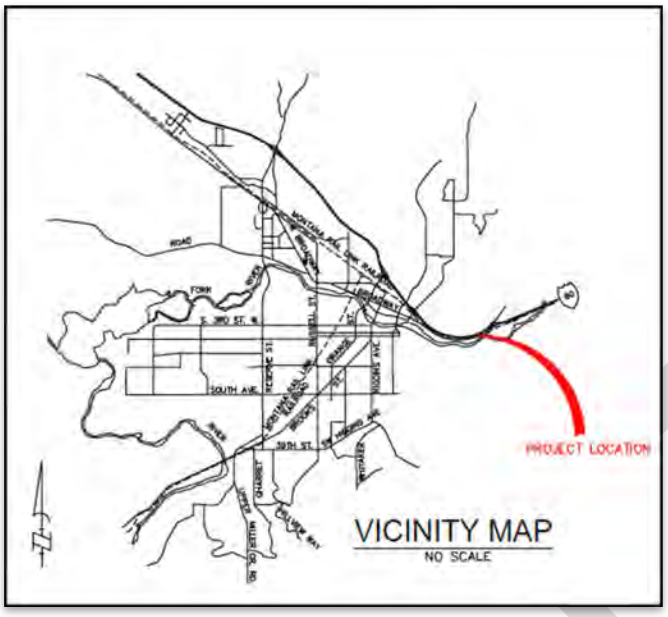
4. Name, address and phone number of project sponsor (if other than the agency):
Montana State Parks
FWP, Region 2
3201 Spurgin Road
Missoula MT 59804
(406) 542-5500

5. Anticipated Schedule:
Estimated Improvements Completion Date: Summer 2022

6. Location affected by proposed action (county, range and township):
The proposed project area is located in the census designated place of East Missoula in Missoula County. It is approximately 1.21 miles northeast from the intersection of Old MT- 200 and Interstate 90 and lies directly between Old MT-200 and the Clark Fork River. The parking lot is proposed to be located directly across the road from Edgewood Court and Sunnyside Court, and the trail is proposed to connect to the Sha-Ron River Access Point, approximately 0.15 miles south.

Existing Sha-Ron River Access Point Parking Lot

Figure 1: Location Maps of the Project Area



7. Project size -- estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:

	Acres		Acres
(a) Developed:		(d) Floodplain	0.007
Residential	0		
Industrial	0	(e) Productive:	
		Irrigated cropland	0
(b) Open Space/		Dry cropland	0
Woodlands/Recreation	.75	Forestry	0
(c) Wetlands/Riparian		Rangeland	0
Areas		Other	0

8. Listing of any other Local, State or Federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction.

(a) Permits:

Agency Name	Permits
Missoula County	paving/air quality permit
Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality	storm water pollution prevention plan (contractor will provide)
Missoula County	floodplain permitting
US Army Corps of Engineers	potential 404 permit (if wetland impacts)
Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality	potential 318 authorization (if wetland impacts)
FWP	FWP 124

(b) Funding:

Agency Name	Funding Amount
Missoula County to fund construction of facility.	

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:

Agency Name	Type of Responsibility
Missoula County	Construction administration and oversight
Montana Department of Transportation	Recreation Permit

9. Narrative summary of the proposed action or project including the benefits and purpose of the proposed action:

Missoula County proposes to build an overflow parking lot and connected pedestrian trail directly northeast (approximately 0.20 miles) of the Sha-Ron River Access, on the south side of Old MT-200, which is a river access point used heavily in the summer by river recreationalists, including a boat launch. Currently at the access point, there is a parking lot that can hold approximately 25 vehicles. However, over the past 10 years, there has been a very large increase in users. Parking is overflowing from the current parking lot, and recreationalists are parking along the shoulder off Old MT-200 and along Speedway Drive, creating an unsafe environment for pedestrians and vehicles alike. The proposed location is within the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) right of way.

Once the construction is complete, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) proposes to manage the site via a recreation permit issued from MDT. The scope of this EA is FWP's proposal to assume long-term management of the project through a recreation permit from MDT. However, FWP will collect comments related to the design and implementation of the parking area and share those comments with Missoula County prior to construction plans being finalized.

The benefits of the project include adding overflow parking for the existing Sha-Ron river access that will reduce the number of parked cars on the shoulder of Old MT 200. At 55 mph, parking along the shoulder of the state highway poses a safety risk to pedestrians and the traveling public. The addition of a separated shared use facility that connects the new parking lot to the existing river access will safely facilitate travel between the two locations.

Figure 2: Preliminary Schematic Design

Figure 3. Aerial of Current Conditions at Sha-Ron River Access Point

10. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:

Alternative A: No Action

If no action is taken, parking would continue to overflow onto Old MT-200 from an excess of users at the Sha-Ron River Access Point and it will continue to be a safety issue. If no action is taken, the open space currently north of the Sha-Ron River Access Point, which is in in part existing MDT public transportation right-of-way (ROW) and in part private property, will be undisturbed and remain as status quo.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Construct overflow parking lot and connected pedestrian trail.

If the proposed action is taken, an overflow parking lot will be constructed approximately 0.15 miles northeast of the Sha-Ron River Access Point, on the southeast side of Old MT-200, as well as a pedestrian path connecting the two locations.

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

1. LAND RESOURCES Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. **Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		X				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil, which would reduce productivity or fertility?		X				
c. **Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?			X		Yes	1d.
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Physical Environment (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

1d. Minor impacts to the nearby river could potentially occur with construction activities from a slight increase in sediment runoff. Soil will be stabilized post-construction until grass seed can establish. After construction, recreationalist pose the biggest threat to erosion along the riverbank. Landscaping and fencing would be utilized as mitigation measures to ensure recreationalists stay within designated walking paths between the new parking lot and that river access to reduce erosion.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

2. AIR Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. **Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (Also see 13 (c).)			X		Yes	2a
b. Creation of objectionable odors?			X		Yes	2b
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. ***For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge, which will conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a.)		X				
f. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

2a&b. Temporary activities associated with construction will likely require the use of equipment and materials that could have minor impacts to ambient air quality and potentially create odors. These impacts would be localized and short-term in nature. Construction should include Best Management Practices (BMPs) to minimize effects, such as dewatering techniques to reduce dust particles.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

3. WATER Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. *Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?			X		Yes	3a
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?			X		Yes	3b
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of floodwater or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
l. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c.)		X				
m. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a.)		X				
n. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

3a. Parking lot and trail design would incorporate BMPs to minimize impacts of the proposed development. A drainage swale is proposed to be built parallel to the south end of the parking lot to prevent storm water and sediment discharge to the river. Landscaping and fencing would be utilized to ensure recreationalists stay within designated walking paths between the new parking lot and that river access to reduce erosion. Plantings along the river's edge can confine the river access point and will also benefit water temperatures. Erosion control measures shall be installed and maintained during construction to prevent discharge and sediment transport to the river.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

3b. Minor changes in drainage patterns following major precipitation events could occur as a result of construction activities. The proposed drainage swale sited between the new parking lot and the river would mitigate storm water discharge and sediment transport.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

4. VEGETATION Will the proposed action result in?	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?		X				
b. Alteration of a plant community?		X				
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?			X		Yes	4e
f. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?			X		Yes	4f
g. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Vegetation (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

4e. Soils disturbed during construction activities would be re-seeded with native grasses to reduce the establishment of weeds.

4f. According to the Montana Natural Heritage Program, the proposed walking path from the parking lot to the bank of the Clark Fork River would intersect riverine wetlands. This habitat contained within the river channel is described as upper perennial, unconsolidated bottom, and permanently flooded. There may also be riparian, scrub-shrub wetlands within or adjacent to the proposed project area. A wetland delineation will be conducted as part of design, to minimize wetland impacts and avoid where possible. River access should be designed to minimize impacts to vegetation along the river's edge by corralling recreationalists to one entry point. There are no potential impacts to prime or unique farmland.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

** 5. FISH/WILDLIFE Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?			X		Yes	5a.
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		X				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?			X		Yes	5f.
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?		X				
h. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f.)		X				
i. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d.)		X				
j. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Fish and Wildlife:

5a & 5 f. Bull trout, which are classified as a threatened/endangered species under the US Environmental Protection Act, use the Clark Fork as a migratory channel. There will be minor effects to wetlands associated with the river (see 4f.), which could potentially affect habitat in the river. However, these are minor impacts that can be mitigated with careful design and construction BMPs, and would not add more stress than the already existing impact of all river recreationalists. Mitigation measures can include: work area isolation (silt fencing), reseeding of disturbed areas, and stockpiling of materials away from the riverbank. No incidental take of bull trout is anticipated due to the mitigation and minimization measures incorporated by the proposed project and the unlikely instance of present bull trout.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Increases in existing noise levels?			X		Yes	6a
b. Exposure of people to severe or nuisance noise levels?			X		Yes	6b
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Noise/Electrical Effects (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

6a&b. Due to the existing proximity to Old MT-200, no long-term noise impacts are anticipated in relation to the proposed action. Minor adverse impacts may occur during construction, when there may be temporary nuisances such as construction and equipment noise. These impacts will be mitigated by limitations to construction hours, designated staging areas, and weekday-only work.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

7. LAND USE Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		X				
b. Conflicted with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		X				
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Use (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

8. RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?			X			8a
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan, or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				
d. ***For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)		X				
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Risk/Health Hazards (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

8a. The use of heavy equipment for typical construction activities may result in a slight risk of contamination from petroleum. BMPs would be followed during all phases of construction to minimize these risks. The application of herbicides to manage noxious weeds would be done in accordance with required guidelines.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		X				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?			X Net benefit			9e.
f. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Community Impact (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

9e. There will be a minor increase in traffic movement during construction activities including an increase in vehicles and potential traffic delays. Mitigation will include traffic control and construction work happening between 7 and 6 on weekdays only. Removing overflow parking off Old MT-200 and into a designated area will positively affect transportation facilities and movement of people. There will be a decrease in traffic hazards, and therefore will be a net positive benefit.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

10. PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Will the proposed action have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify:			X		Yes	10a
b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				
c. Will the proposed action result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Will the proposed action result in increased use of any energy source?		X				
e. **Define projected revenue sources		X				
f. **Define projected maintenance costs.			X			10f
g. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Public Services/Taxes/Utilities (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

10a. Development of the proposed parking lot and pedestrian pathway would require maintenance and management associated with public access once it is opened. Maintenance and management needs associated with the proposed project would be addressed through existing staff and budget needs anticipated for the overall recreation management. Additionally, FWP would continue to coordinate with other partners such as MDT, the Missoula County Commissioners, Missoula Sheriff's Office, and Rural Fire to address other concerns that may emerge relative to this project. Positive impact in reduction of parking on shoulder of MT-200 for improved emergency response along the roadway.

10f. Future costs for road maintenance, weed management and other associated maintenance in the project area would be incorporated in park budgets.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

** 11. AESTHETICS/RECREATION Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?		X				
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?			X Net benefit			11b
c. **Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report.)			X Positive		Yes	11c
d. ***For P-R/D-J, will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c.)		X				
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Aesthetics/Recreation (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

11b. The construction of a parking lot and pedestrian trail that did not previously exist will be an alteration of the current aesthetic of open land, particularly during the winter months, and will be a minor negative impact to the aesthetic character of the community. However, building the overflow parking lot will direct all vehicles that were once parked along Old MT-200 to one contained spot. Pedestrian traffic will be contained to the pathway and will not be scattered across Old MT-200. This will be a positive improvement to the current summer conditions, and therefore this will result in a net-benefit.

11c. The overflow parking lot and associated pedestrian trail development would enhance the quality of recreational opportunities (See Tourism Report; Appendix B).

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

12. CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. **Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance?	X					12a.
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a.)		X				
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Cultural/Historical Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

12a. SHPO was contacted regarding this proposed project and conducted a cultural resource file search for the above-cited project. They reported a historical site previously identified that exists on the FWP property (the current Sha-Ron River Access Point). The site is identified as site number 24M00150 and is 'lithic material concentration.' SHPO also recommended that a cultural resource inventory be conducted in order to determine whether or not sites exist and if they will be impacted, as there is a lack of inventory in the proposed project and surrounding area and there will be ground disturbance to complete this project. FWP has contracted with a private contractor to conduct the survey and provide a report to FWP and Missoula County, The partners are committed to following all laws and regulations related to compliance in this field. If cultural resources are identified during the inventory, the partners will work together with SHPO to address any changes to the project to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts to the identified resources.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources that create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)		X				
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects, which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?		X				
f. ***For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e.)		X				
g. ****For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.			X			13g.

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Significance Criteria (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

13g.

AGENCY	PERMIT
Missoula County	paving/air quality permit
Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality	storm water pollution prevention plan (contractor will provide)
Missoula County	floodplain permitting
US Army Corps of Engineers	potential 404 permit (if wetland impacts)
Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality	potential 318 authorization (if wetland impacts)
FWP	FWP 124

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

The proposed action is not expected to have negative cumulative impacts on the physical and/or human environments. The minor impacts identified in the previous section are most likely to occur in relation to the improvement phases of the project. There are no lasting negative effects anticipated in relation to this project.

PART IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. Describe the level of public involvement for this project if any, and, given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?

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

- Two legal notices in each of these newspapers: *Missoulian*, and *Independent Record*
- One statewide press release
- Posting of the EA on the Montana State Parks webpage - *www.stateparks.mt.gov* (under "Public Notices")
- A copy of the EA will be placed at Region 2 FWP Headquarters for review during the comment period.

Copies of this environmental assessment will be distributed to 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 or are beneficial in nature.

2. Duration of comment period, if any.

3. The public comment period will extend for twenty-one (21) days following the June 14, 2022 publication of the second legal notice in the *Missoulian*. Comments must be received by FWP no later than July 6, 2022.

FWP Region 2 Office
ATTN: Sha-Ron Overflow Parking Lot EA
3201 Spurgin Road
Missoula, MT 59804

Or emailed to lfynn2@mt.gov.

PART V. EA PREPARATION

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

Based on an evaluation of impacts to the physical and human environment under the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), this environmental review revealed no significant negative impacts from the proposed action; therefore an EIS is not necessary and an environmental assessment is the appropriate level of analysis in determining the significance of impacts.

2. Name, title, address and phone number of the person(s) responsible for preparing the EA:

Michael J Smith, PE
Senior Environmental Engineer
WGM Group, Inc.
1111 East Broadway
Missoula, MT 59801
406-728-4611

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

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
- Parks Division
- Fisheries Division
- Wildlife Division
- Design & Construction Bureau
- Legal Unit

Montana Natural Resource Damage Program (NRDP)
Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
Montana Department of Commerce – Tourism

APPENDICES

A. Project Qualification Checklist
B. Tourism Report
C. Threatened and Endangered Species List

APPENDIX A
23-1-110 MCA
PROJECT QUALIFICATION CHECKLIST

Date: March 2, 2022 **Person Reviewing:** Michael Smith, PE

Project Location: Sha-Ron River Access Point, East Missoula, Missoula County

Description of Proposed Work: Construction of Sha-Ron River Access Point Overflow Parking Lot and Associated Pedestrian Trail

The following checklist is intended to be a guide for determining whether a proposed development or improvement is of enough significance to fall under 23-1-110 rules. (Please check all that apply and comment as necessary.)

[**X**] A. New roadway or trail built over undisturbed land?
Comments: *Trail construction will be along an existing roadway. The parking lot will be built in an existing MDT ROW.*

[ ] B. New building construction (buildings <100 sf and vault latrines exempt)?
Comments: N/A

[**X**] C. Any excavation of 20 c.y. or greater?
Comments: *Road improvements may require movement of 20 cubic yards or more of material.*

[**X**] D. New parking lots built over undisturbed land or expansion of existing lot that increases parking capacity by 25% or more?
Comments: *The parking lot will be built in an existing MDT ROW.*

[ ] E. Any new shoreline alteration that exceeds a doublewide boat ramp or handicapped fishing station?
Comments: N/A

[ ] F. Any new construction into lakes, reservoirs, or streams?
Comments: N/A

[ ] G. Any new construction in an area with National Registry quality cultural artifacts (as determined by State Historical Preservation Office)?
Comments: N/A

[ ] H. Any new above ground utility lines?
Comments: N/A

[ ] I. Any increase or decrease in campsites of 25% or more of an existing number of

campsites?
Comments: N/A

[] J. Proposed project significantly changes the existing features or use pattern; including effects of a series of individual projects?
Comments: N/A

If any of the above are checked, 23-1-110 MCA rules apply to this proposed work and should be documented on the MEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST. Refer to MEPA/HB495 Cross Reference Summary for further assistance.

APPENDIX B
TOURISM REPORT

MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA) & MCA 23-1-110

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks has initiated the review process as mandated by MCA 23-1-110 and the Montana Environmental Policy Act in its consideration of the project described below. As part of the review process, input and comments are being solicited. Please complete the project name and project description portions and submit this form to:

Jeri Duran, Bureau Chief
Montana Office of Tourism-Department of Commerce
301 S. Park Ave.
Helena, MT 59601

Project Name: Sha-Ron River Access Overflow Parking Lot

Project Description:

Missoula County proposes build an overflow parking lot and connected pedestrian trail directly northeast (approximately 0.20 miles) of the Sha-Ron River Access Point, on the south side of Old HWY 200, which is river access point used heavily in the summer by river recreationalists.

1. Would this site development project have an impact on the tourism economy?
   NO X YES If YES, briefly describe:

2. Does this impending improvement alter the quality or quantity of recreation/tourism opportunities and settings?
   NO **YES X** If YES, briefly describe:

Yes, the project has the potential to improve quality of recreational opportunities if properly maintained.

Signature _____

2/93
7/98sed

APPENDIX C
Threatened and Endangered Species List

Common name ***Species***	**Status***	**Habitat**	**Status in Vicinity of Parcels**
Species of Concern			
Bull Trout *Salvelinus confluentus*	Threatened, SOC, Tier 1, Federally listed threatened species	Mountain streams, rivers, and lakes	Uses the Clark Fork River as a migratory corridor.
Westslope Cutthroat Trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki lewisi*)	Sensitive, SOC, Tier 1	Coldwater streams	Uses the Clark Fork River as a migratory corridor.
Canada Lynx *(Lynx Canadensis)*	Threatened, SOC Tier 1	Subalpine conifer forests	The area has low quality lynx habitat; highly unlikely to frequent the project vicinity.
Fisher (*Martes pennant*)	SOC, Tier 2	Mixed conifer forest	The area has low quality fisher habitat.
Alpine Collomia (*Collomia debilis var. camporum*)	SOC, Tier 2	Low elevation, scree, talus, and rocky slopes from valley bottoms to montane zone.	The area has low quality habitat.
Hoary Bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*)	SOC, Tier 2	Conifer and riparian forests; only summers in Montana.	Moderate to low suitable habitat.
Evening Grosbeak (*Coccothraustes vespertinus)*	SCO, Tier 3	Breeds in mixed coniferous and spruce-fir forests of western Montana; varied winter habitat	Moderate suitability and are occasionally common. Highly unlikely to nest in the area.
Fringed Myotis (*Myotis thysanondes*)	SOC, Tier 3	Ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir forest while foraging over willow/cottonwood areas along creeks and over pools, and caves	Moderate suitability and are occasionally common in the area. Highly unlikely to occur in the immediate project vicinity.
Long-eared Myotis (*Myotis evotis*)	SOC, Tier 3	Occupy a wide range of rocky and forested habitats over a broad elevation gradient; roosts include manmade structures and natural habitats	Moderate suitability and are occasionally common in the area. Highly unlikely to occur in the immediate project vicinity.
Long-legged Myotis (*Myotis volans*)	SOC, Tier 3	Forested mountain regions and river bottoms, also at high elevations	Moderate suitability and are occasionally common. Highly unlikely to occur in the immediate project vicinity.
Wolverine (*Gulo gulo*)	SOC, Tier 2	Conifer forests	The area has low quality wolverine habitat; highly unlikely to occur in the project vicinity or surrounding area.
Bald Eagle *(Haliaeetus leucocephalus)*	Delisted, no longer SOC, Tier 1. Special management requirements under Bald and Golden	Riparian and conifer forests along rivers and lakes	Current nest sites located over 0.5 mile from project area, no impacts expected from proposed action

Common name ***Species***	**Status***	**Habitat**	**Status in Vicinity of Parcels**
	Eagle Protection Act		
Clark's Nutcracker *(Nucifraga Columbiana)*	SOC, Tier 3	Conifer forests	Birds occasionally move through the area.
Cassins' Finch (*Haemorhous cassinii*)	SOC, Tier 3	Occur in every major forest type and timber-harvest regime in Montana, including riparian cottonwood, but are especially common in ponderosa pine and postfire forests	Moderate to low suitability. Highly unlikely to nest in the immediate project vicinity.
Flammulated Owl *(Otus flammeolus)*	SOC, Tier 1	Low-mid elevation conifer forests with large trees	No suitable habitat in the project area.
Great Blue Heron *(Ardea Herodias)*	SOC, Tier 3	Riparian woodlands	Low to moderate suitability. Unlikely to occur or nest in the direct project vicinity. .
Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)	SOC, Tier 3	Nest on cliffs and in large trees and hunt over prairie and open woodlands	Low suitability in the project vicinity. Highly unlikely to occupy the project area. Current nest sites located over 1 mile from project area, no impacts expected from proposed action
Grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos*)	SOC, Tier 2/3, Federally listed threatened species	Meadows, seeps, riparian zones, mixed shrub fields, closed timber, open timber, sidehill parks, snow chutes, and alpine slabrock habitats	Low suitability in the project vicinity. Highly unlikely to occupy the project area.
Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*)	SOC, Tier 2	Moist conifer forests	No nesting habitat in the project area, no impacts expected.
Varier Thrush (*Lxoreus naevius*)	SOC Tier 3 breeding	Mixed-coniferous forests, and more abundant in mature and old-growth forest stands than in younger forests In winter, uses a wider variety of habitats, including suburban areas such as bird feeders and areas where fruits and berries are present	No nesting habitat in the project area, no impacts expected.
Peregrine Falcon (*Falco pereginus*)	Delisted, SOC, Tier 2	Cliffs, forages over riparian, wetland habitats	Low suitable habitat, not expected to nest in the project vicinity.
Pacific Wren (*Troglodytes pacificus*)	SOC, Tier 2	Moist conifer forests	Low suitable habitat, not expected to nest in the project vicinity.
Western Skink (*Eumeces skiltonianus*)	SOC, Tier 2	Rock outcrops	Suitable habitat, little information is known.
Stalk-leaved Monkeyflower	SOC, Tier 3	Open seeps and vernally moist soil along slopes, cliffs and streams from the valleys to the subalpine zones	Very low suitability, highly unlikely to occur in the project vicinity.
Western Toad (*Bufo boreas*)	SOC, Tier 2	Wetlands, lakes, floodplain pools	Low suitability habitat, unlikely to occur.
A. Millipede	SOC	Mixed conifer forests	Unknown status, little habitat in the

Common name ***Species***	**Status***	**Habitat**	**Status in Vicinity of Parcels**
(*Austrotyla montani*)			project area.
Coville Indian Paintbrush	SOC, Tier 3	Stony soil of slopes and summits in the montane and subalpine zones	Very low suitability, highly unlikely to occur in the project vicinity.
Subcentric Ring Lichen *Arctoparmelia subcentrifuga*	SOC, Tier 1	Siliceous rock in montane to subalpine sites.	Very low suitability, highly unlikely to occur in the project vicinity.

APPENDIX D
Cultural Resources Inventory
Pending