



**MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS**

**Draft  
Environmental Assessment**

**Black Sandy Bank Stabilization**



**1/20/2022**



# Draft Environmental Assessment CHECKLIST

## PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. **Type of proposed state action:** Contracting a bank stabilization project involving slope grading mediation, willow plantings/fascine, erosion matting, and defined public water access points.
2. **Agency authority for the proposed action:** Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
3. **Anticipated Schedule:**  
Estimated Construction Commencement Date: March 15, 2022, OR March 15, 2023  
Estimated Completion Date: April 15, 2022, OR April 15, 2023  
Current Status of Project Design (100% complete):
5. **Location affected by proposed action (county, range and township – included map):**  
Lewis and Clark County, Black Sandy State Park, T11N, R2W, S5. North of the existing RV campsites, along the shoreline of the tent sites.
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>0</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>.5</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.

- Army Corp of Engineers Section 10 permit (navigable water)
- MT FWP SPA 124 permit


(b) **Funding:**

Riverfund grant and agency contribution

Total project cost: \$39,000



Applicant Contributions – cash	\$3000	
Applicant Contributions – value of in-kind:	\$5000	
Other Contributions – Please list by source: Consulting, Lewis & Clark Conservation district	\$300(in kind)	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	Percentage of Total Project Cost:
Total Applicant and Other Contributions:	\$8300	%
NorthWestern Energy Match Request:	\$8300	%
River Fund Grant Request:	\$22700	%
Proposed Project Implementation Period:	Off season 2022 (Sept-April)	

C. Overlapping Jurisdiction. 

9. **Narrative summary of the proposed action:** Project is necessary to mitigate the harmful effects of shoreline erosion at Black Sandy State Park. Currently the erosion is eroding land where tent sites are located, making them smaller and creating safety issues at the shoreline as the bank becomes steeper and less stable in areas where people frequent. The erosion is also causing siltation of the waterbody (Hauser Lake) which degrades water quality.

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

**Alternative A:** No Action will result in a loss of public usable space, make the tent sites smaller, and possibly un-useable. If the banks continue to erode and get steeper, safety issue may lead to closing of the tent sites. Erosion will continue and siltation to the lake will increase.

**Alternative B:** The proposed Action will reduce erosion, make the steep unstable grade to the lake manageable and resilient thru designed access points, and reduce siltation into the lake. In an added benefit, the willow plantings will increase wildlife habitat, especially songbird habitat and forage

Alternative B is the preferred alternative.

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

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 positive			#3
4. Existing water right or reservation				X		
5. Vegetation cover, quantity and quality			X positive			#5
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		

#3 There will be minor water quality impact during construction, but overall water quality will be improved by the reduction in erosion and the resulting siltation. The contractor will employ Best Management Practices to reduce impacts to water quality during construction.

#5 Vegetation cover will be improved.



## 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		
4. Community impact				X		
5. Public services/taxes/utilities				X		
6. Potential revenue and/or project maintenance costs				X		
7. Aesthetics and recreation			X			#7
8. Cultural and historic resources				X		
9. Evaluation of significance				X		
10. Generate public controversy				X		

#2 Recreational use would be affected during construction and until grass grows back. Three of the six tent sites will necessarily be closed during construction, and lawn areas roped off and irrigated to replace grass post construction. Long-term impacts to recreationists will be beneficial however, as those tent sites in project area will be more aesthetic and safer. Efforts will be made to conduct work during off-season to lessen impacts to recreationists



### **PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT**

The proposed project is a bank stabilization and erosion control project to mitigate shoreline problems at Black Sandy State Park. After reviewing several options to mitigate this ongoing problem, the most cost efficient, and effective method has been determined to be willow fascine with engineered lake access points interspersed. The proposed fascine project will involve slope grading with erosion fabric and native grasses, and willow and fascine installation at water level. Access points will involve timber step construction filled with stone for human access to the lake.

Erosion has been gnawing away at the usable space in the tent site area for many years. In the summer of 2020 a large slide removed about 4' of usable land from the area. After discussing remediation options with FWP Design and Construction, Bureau of Land Management, and Lewis and Clark County Conservation District staff, the fascine idea was chosen. The only problem with this method is that a complete application would effectively eliminate water access in this area. To account for this, timber step access points have been engineered in at already used areas of the bank to accommodate the public.









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**WILLow BANK STABILIZATION DETAIL (SINGLE LIFT)**  
Approx. Scale: 1"=2'

Notes:  
1. This detail to be used for areas that are 5 ft. or less in height.  
2. Willow shoots must be angled down towards water line and allowed to come into contact with water source.

NOTES:  
1. Willow cuttings shall be placed between the soil bundles so that no more than one-third of the length of the cuttings extends beyond the face of the subsequent bundle face. Willow cuttings shall be placed at a spacing of twelve (12) to fifteen (15) cuttings per foot.

**WILLow BANK STABILIZATION DETAIL (DOUBLE LIFT)**  
Approx. Scale: 1"=2'

Notes:  
1. This detail to be used for areas that are 6 ft. or more in height.  
2. Willow shoots must be angled down towards water line and allowed to come into contact with water source.

P. Javala  
DRAWN BY: DATE: 7/6/23  
CHECKED BY: DATE: 7/6/23

REVIEWED BY: DATE:  
APPROVED BY: DATE:

APPROVED BY: DATE:

### Detail Sheet I

Black Sandy State Park - Bank Stabilization Project

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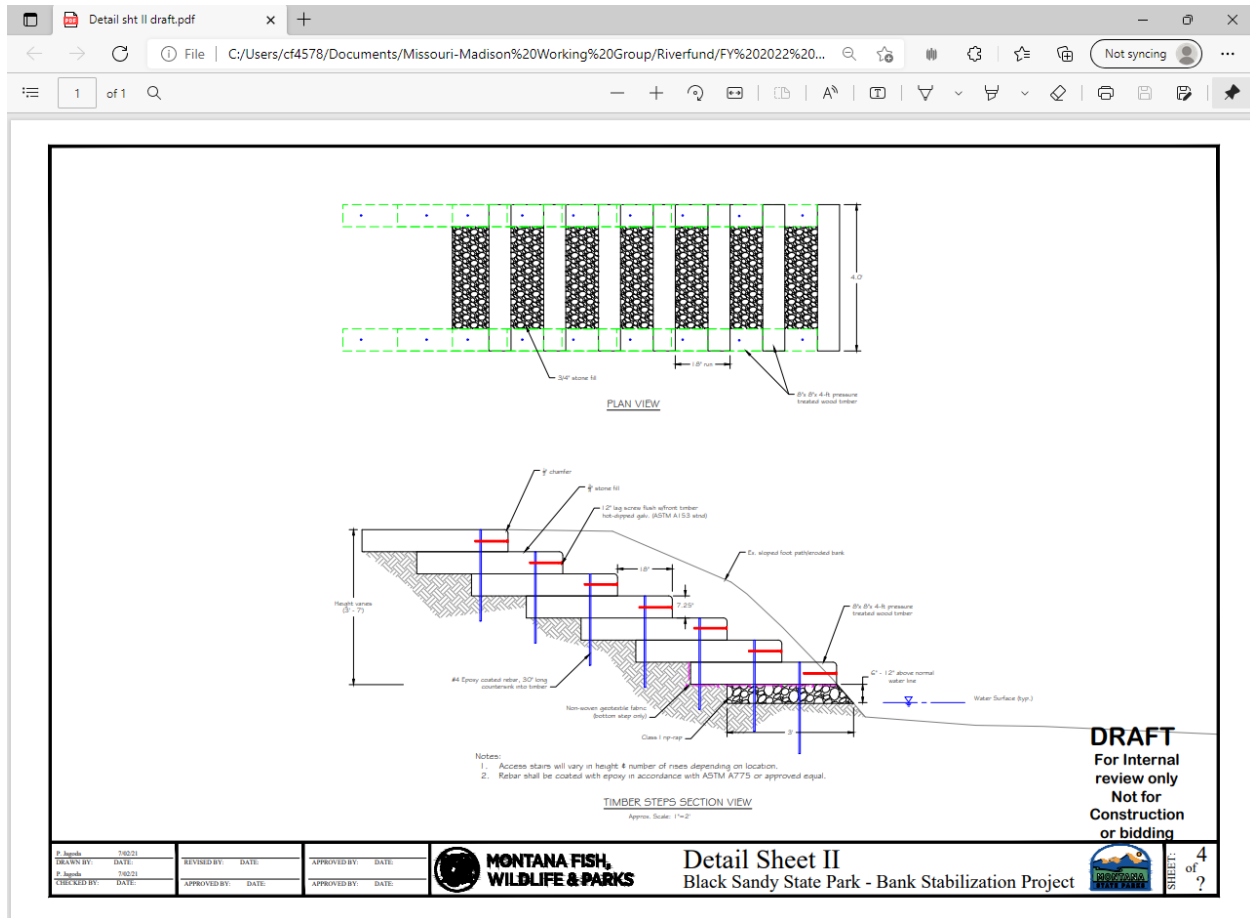
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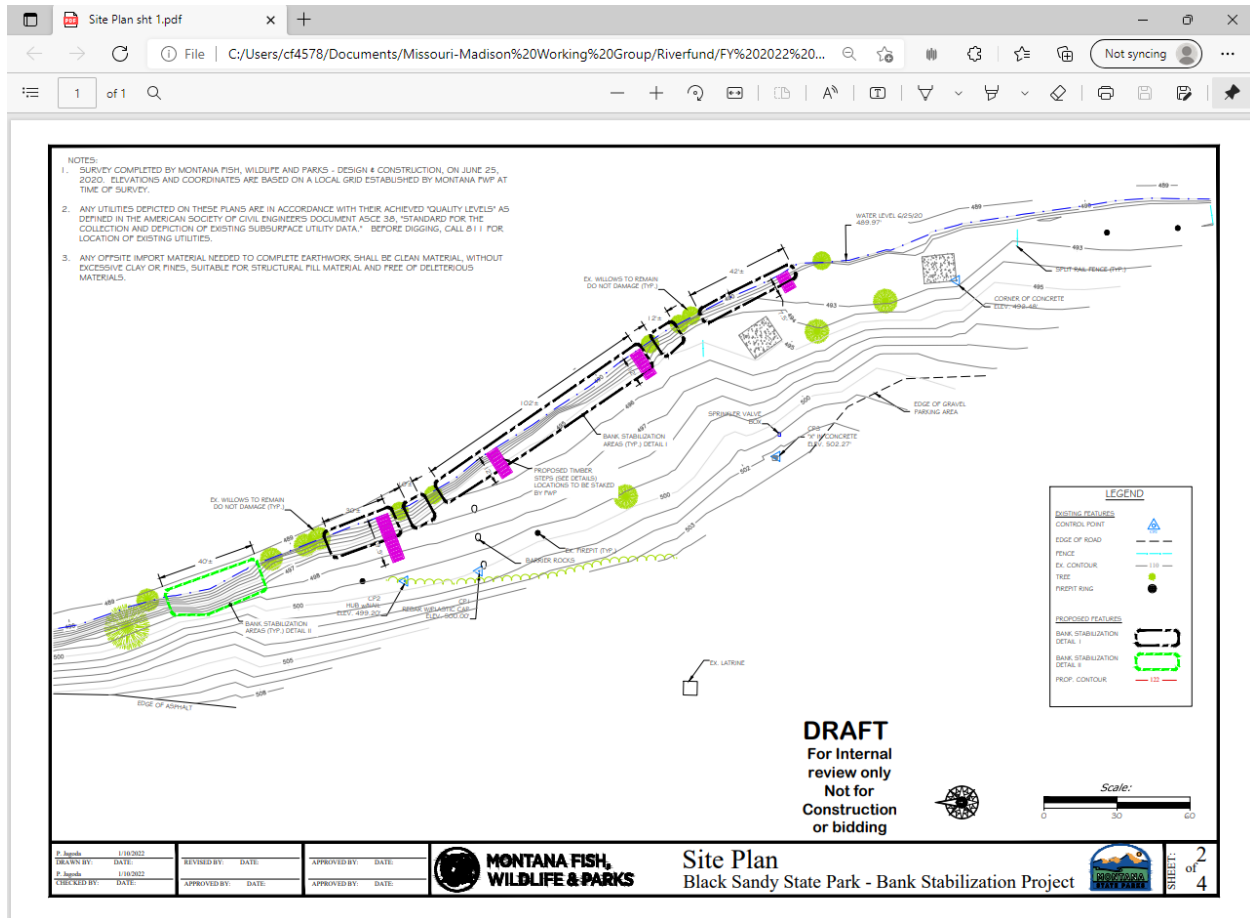
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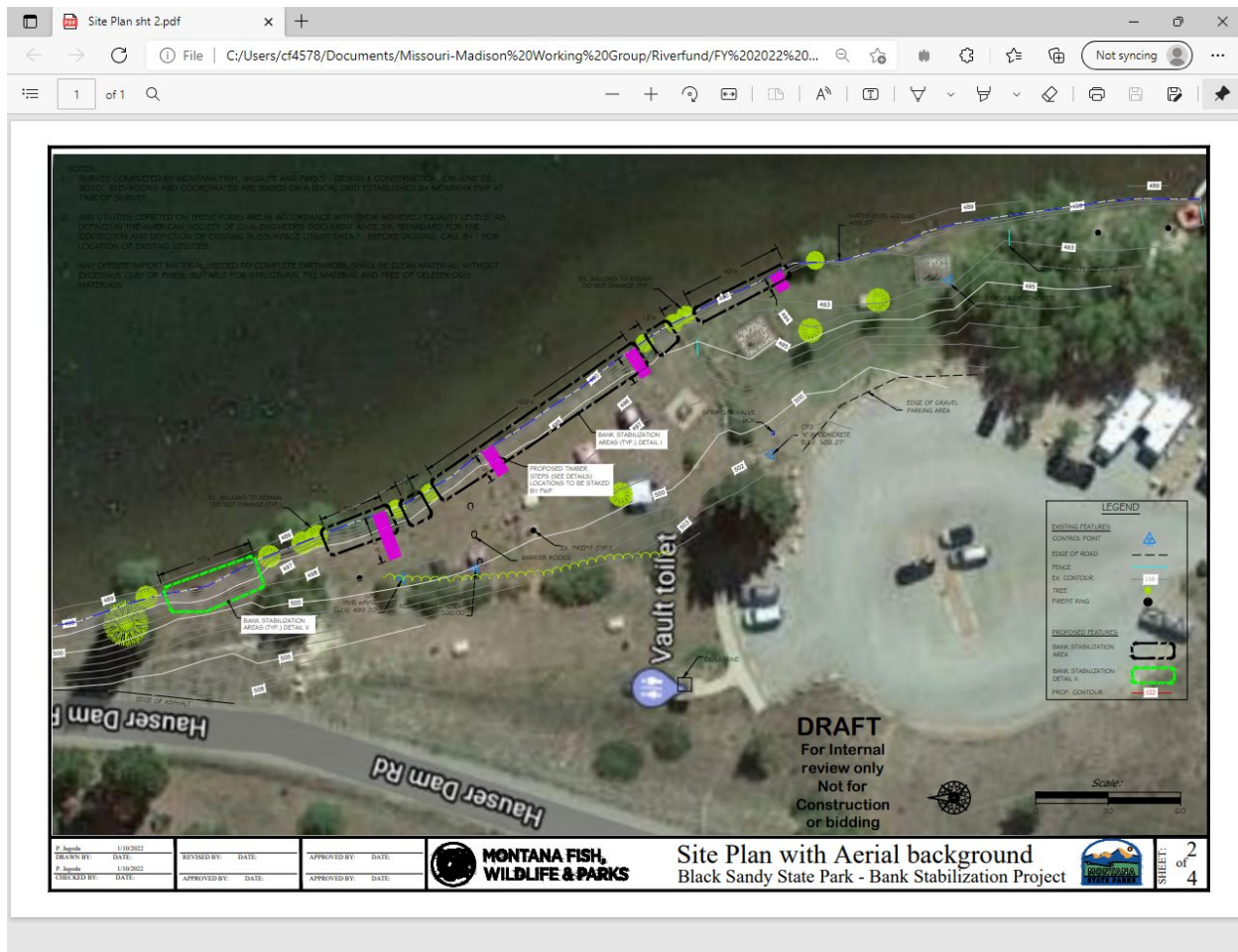












## PART IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### 1. Public involvement:

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

- Two public notices in each of these papers: Independent Record
- One statewide press release
- Public notice on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks web page: <http://fwp.mt.gov>.

Notices 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.

### 2. Duration of comment period:

The public comment period will extend for (30) thirty days following the posting on the FWP website and media press release. Written comments will be accepted until **5:00 p.m., April 1, 2022**



and can be mailed to the address below: Comments may be also be submitted via e mail to [cputchat@mt.gov](mailto:cputchat@mt.gov).

Craig Putchat,  
930 Custer Ave. W  
Helena, Mt. 59602

## **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.**

EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this project as it is the standard for projects of this scope.

2. **Person(s) responsible for preparing the EA:** Craig Putchat, Helena Area Parks Manager

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

3. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. PO Box 200701 Helena, Mt. 59620-0701
4. Lewis and Clark County Conservation District. 790 Colleen St, Helena, MT 59601
5. Northwest Energy. 1315 N Last Chance Gulch, Helena, MT 59601
6. Pinnacle Research. 30 Wagon Wheel Ln, Plains, MT 59859