



DECISION NOTICE
on
Chief Plenty Coups State Park
Chief Plenty Coups House and Store Foundation Repair and Preservation
Environmental Assessment
March 13, 2023

Proposed Action

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) proposes to fully stabilize the foundations of the Chief's House and Store, stabilize the House porch and replace decking, survey and repair log rot, replace all chinking and daubing, and repair windows and trim on both structures. The roof on the House may be fully replaced if funds allow under the planned contract or in the next 5 years if additional funds are necessary and successfully secured. All work will follow government historic preservation protocols.

Alternative Considered

No action. The proposed project would not occur. The buildings would continue to deteriorate with the pressures of weather and time. The sill logs will rot causing structural instability. Caulking will crumble and fall out, allowing moisture seepage into the upper logs and into the interior of the buildings. Shingles will break off the roof and allow water to seep into the roof causing water damage to structure, interior of the house, and the historic wallpaper in the Chief's Honor Room.

Montana Environmental Policy Act

FWP is required by the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) to assess significant 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. The EA was available for public comment from February 3, 2023, thru March 6, 2023. No public comments for the proposed project were received. A solicitation for bid documents was received through the comment process. Legal notices were printed

in the Billings Gazette and the Bighorn County News; and the Draft EA was posted on the FWP webpage: <http://fwp.mt.gov/publicnotices/>. A news release was provided as part of the announcement.

Summary of Public Comment

No written comments were received during the public comment period.

Final Environmental Assessment for the Chief Plenty Coups Chief Plenty Coups House and Store Foundation Repair and Preservation

There are no modifications necessary to the Draft Environmental Assessment based on public comment. The Draft Environmental Assessment, together with this Decision Notice, will serve as the final document for this proposal. This is based on the lack of public comment and the positive benefits of this activity as outlined in the Environmental Assessment. It is my decision to proceed with the proposed action to maintain the historic structures, described in the EA. I find there are 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.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Ruggles".

Mike Ruggles, Region 5 Supervisor
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
2300 Lake Elmo Drive
Billings, MT 59105