



DECISION NOTICE

Milltown State Park Overlook Relocation FWP-CEA-POR-R2-25-002

04/03/2025

ACTION

Decision Notice (DN). Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) shall prepare a DN for the proposed action. The DN must identify the agency decision, the reasons for the decision, and any special conditions surrounding the decision or its implementation.

With this action, FWP hereby adopts the Draft Environmental Assessment or Draft EA as final, and approves Alternative 2, the proposed action.

AUTHORITY: MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

According to the applicable requirements of the Montana Environmental Policy Act or MEPA and its implementing rules and regulations, before a proposed action may be approved, environmental review must be conducted to identify, consider, and disclose any potential impacts of the proposed action on the affected human environment. The level of environmental review will vary with the complexity and seriousness of environmental issues associated with a proposed action. The level of public interest will also vary. The agency is responsible for adjusting public review to match these factors. *Title 75, Chapter 1, Parts 1 through 3, Montana Code Annotated (MCA)*.

Based on these factors, FWP determined a checklist (Draft EA) constitutes the appropriate level of review for the proposed action. Therefore, to assess and disclose potential impacts of the proposed action, FWP prepared a Draft EA for public review and comment. See *Public Participation Process* below.

Further, FWP must consider any substantive comments received in response to an EA and proceed in accordance with one of the following steps: determine the EA did not adequately reflect the issues raised by the proposed action and issue an Environmental Impact Statement or EIS; determine the EA did not adequately reflect the issues raised by the proposed action and issue a supplemental EA; or determine the Draft EA adequately addressed the issues raised by the proposed action and make a final decision, with appropriate modification resulting from the analysis provided in the Draft EA and the analysis of any substantive public comments received. See *Public Comment and FWP Response* below.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The Draft EA was made available for public review and comment from 02/27/2025 to 03/14/2025. A legal Notice of Draft EA was posted on FWP's Public Notice webpage: <https://fwp.mt.gov/news/public-notices>. The Draft EA was also made available for public review on the Environmental Quality Council or EQC website: <https://leg.mt.gov/mepa/search/>, by individual request, and through notice to identified interested parties. FWP did not comments during the public comment period.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION

FWP has developed a twofold plan to address the safety concerns and reopen the Milltown State Park Overlook.

Relocating the overlook area inland to the south/southeast roughly 50 yards to an area that is geologically stable. Cut and flatten slope of new overlook area to create unobstructed viewing platform. The relocation would provide unobstructed views of the Clark Fork River flood plain to the East as well as views of the confluence of the Clark Fork and Blackfoot rivers to the North/Northeast. Using fill from the cutting and flattening of the slope to build up new picnic table area. Purchasing 4 Pilot Rock UT series steel frame picnic tables for the picnic table area. Salvage and relocate existing steel security fence, interpretive panels, benches and barrier rocks from current overlook area to new overlook area as feasible. Pave new 8' wide overlook path and overlook interpretive area. Approximately 2,000 square feet.

Demolish and remove existing asphalt path in current overlook area. Seed & re-vegetate disturbed areas of current overlook. Salvage and relocate existing chain link fence as needed to permanently close off unsafe areas of the bluff the current overlook is located on. Sign area as being unsafe to help discourage use/access

PURPOSE AND NEED

The proposed project would relocate and reopen the Milltown State Park Overlook providing interpretive insights and recreational amenities to users of Milltown State Park. It would also provide security features to curb public access to geologically unstable areas of the bluff the overlook is located upon.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYZED

Alternative 1: No Action

In addition to the proposed action, and as required by MEPA, FWP analyzes the "No-Action" alternative in the EA. Under the No-Action alternative, the proposed action would not occur. Therefore, no additional impacts to the human environment would occur. The No Action alternative forms the baseline from which the potential impacts of the proposed action may be measured.

Under the No Action alternative, the Overlook at Milltown State Park would not be relocated and the existing overlook area would not be demolished and reclaimed.

Alternative 2: Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, Relocation of the overlook to an area inland to the south/southeast roughly 50 yards to an area that is geologically stable. Cut and flattening of slope of a new overlook area to create an unobstructed viewing platform, providing views of the Clark Fork River floodplain to the east. Demolish and remove existing asphalt path in the current overlook area. Seed and re-vegetate the disturbed areas of the current overlook. Salvage and relocate fencing, signage, and infrastructure.

PUBLIC COMMENT AND FWP RESPONSE

No public comments were received during the public comment period.

DECISION

Based on the environmental review provided in the Draft EA, and in accordance with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and policies, FWP determined the proposed action (Alternative 2), will not have significant adverse impacts on the human environment associated with the proposed action and constitutes a reasonable and appropriate strategy to achieve identified objectives. Therefore, preparation of an EIS is unnecessary. FWP hereby adopts the Draft EA as final and approves the Alternative 2, the proposed action.

With this DN, FWP hereby adopts the Final EA, with modifications, and approves the proposed action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kendra McKlosky". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Kendra" is written with a large, stylized 'K' and 'M' for McKlosky. The signature is positioned above the printed name and title.

Kendra McKlosky
Region 2 Supervisor
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks