

DECISION NOTICE
DOM MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA
AGRICULTURAL LEASE RENEWAL
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
19 March 2021

PROPOSAL

The proposed action is for Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) to renew an agricultural lease on the Dome Mountain Wildlife Management Area (WMA) for a 5-year period (2021-2025).

MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT PROCESS

FWP is required to assess impacts to the human and natural environment by the Montana Environment Policy Act (MEPA). The Dome Mountain WMA agricultural lease and its impacts were documented by FWP in the EA to comply with MEPA.

Public comments were solicited for 30 days from 17 February 2021 through 18 March 2021. Legal notices regarding the proposed action were printed in the Bozeman Chronicle and the Helena Independent Record, and posted on the FWP website.

No significant issues were generated during the EA review and/or public comment period to trigger further review.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENT

During the public comment period 2 comments were received, both by email. Both emails came from private individuals. The comments from each are summarized below:

Comment 1: A private individual requested additional information related to the original state of the hayfield prior to its conversion to agricultural use, potential runoff from fertilizer/herbicide, nesting birds, and fencing on adjacent private land. After receiving additional information, the individual offered the following comment:

“I guess it's the best solution for a bad situation. My only comment would be, if it's helpful to expand the WMA, I would support that.”

Response: Expansion of the WMA is beyond the scope of the EA for this lease renewal.

Comment 2: A private individual submitted the following comment:

“Dear Fish Wildlife & Parks Commission,

I support the continued lease of the Dome Mountain Agricultural Land. The lessee has done a good job of doing what they are suppose to do. If these hay fields were left without irrigation and renovation they wouldn't be hardly worth anything for wildlife habitat. This is a win/win for everyone. Thank you”

DECISION NOTICE

Utilizing the EA and public comment, a decision must be rendered by FWP which addresses the concerns and issues identified for this proposed action.

FWP's analysis supports renewing the Dome Mountain WMA as described in the proposed lease, including the Cooperative Management Agreement (Appendix B), and the EA.

I find there to be 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.

After review of this proposal, it is my recommendation to accept the draft EA as final and to renew the Dome Mountain WMA agricultural lease for a 5-year period.

The Final EA may be viewed on FWP's website: <https://fwp.mt.gov/> or obtained upon request from the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Region 3 Headquarters, 1400 South 19th Avenue, Bozeman MT 59718-5496 (Phone: 406-577-7900).



Marina Yoshioka
Regional Supervisor
Bozeman, MT