



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
4600 Giant Springs Road
Great Falls, MT 59405

January 19, 2021

Dear Interested Party:

The enclosed draft Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared for public review regarding a proposal to develop a campground host pad, pave a single vehicle camping space, develop two tent camp sites and accompanying single vehicle parking spaces, and develop additional single vehicle parking spaces in the day use parking area at the Craig Fishing Access Site. Development of the campground host pad is proposed in a location that currently does not support a campground site and therefore development of the new campground host pad will not reduce current camp site capacity.

Additional copies of the draft EA are available at Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks in Great Falls or the draft EA is also available on the FWP website at <http://fwp.mt.gov/news/publicNotices/>. A public review and comment period will be 30 days and available January 19, 2021. Written comments will be accepted until 5 pm on February 18, 2021. Comments can be submitted electronically via email to fwpr4publiccom@mt.gov or can be mailed to the address below:

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Craig Campground Host Pad Comments
4600 Giant Spring Road
Great Falls, MT 59405

Thank you for your interest and involvement.

Sincerely,

Gary Bertellotti
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Region 4 Supervisor
Great Falls, MT 59405
gbertellotti@mt.gov
(406) 454-5840



MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

Environmental Assessment

Craig Campground Host Pad and Site Improvements

January 19, 2021



PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

- | | <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>0</u> | Rangeland | <u>0</u> |
| Areas | | Other | <u>0</u> |

(a) Permits:

(b) Funding:

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:

9. Narrative summary of the proposed action:

Craig Fishing Access Site (FAS) is located just outside of Craig Montana on the Missouri River. Craig FAS is one of the most heavily used FAS sites in Region 4. Craig FAS receives extensive use because of high angling pressure associated with that section of the Missouri River. Day use and overnight camping at this FAS are very popular and as such places high maintenance demand on FWP staff and the high level of use has also resulted in occasional noncompliance with site rules. It is being proposed to develop a campground host pad that will create a location for a campground host to reside during the busy summer months. A campground host would help decrease the maintenance requirements of FWP staff and increase site rule compliance at Craig FAS. In addition, the Craig FAS campground host would also assist with light maintenance at Wolf Creek Bridge FAS.

The campground host pad is proposed to be developed in a location that currently does not support a campground site and therefore development of the new campground host pad will not reduce current campsite capacity. The campground host pad development will include a paved drive through camp site and hookup to electric, sewer and water on the south end of the FAS property.

In addition to the campground host pad, proposed site improvement will include paving a camp site that is not currently paved. The single vehicle camp space is located on the north side of the existing campground area. The newly paved single vehicle camp site will not increase campsite capacity because the site already receives use, but the proposed improvement is anticipated to increase use at the specific camp site.

Also, within the campground area it is proposed to develop two tent camp sites and two accompanying single vehicle parking spaces for the campsites. The tent site development is proposed to include addition of a fire ring and picnic table for each site. The two proposed tent campsite parking spaces are located on the east side of the circle drive within the campground area.

Additionally, within the Craig FAS day use area it is proposed to develop and add multiple single vehicle parking spots on the southeast side of the existing day use parking lot. During peak use, there currently is not enough parking space at the Craig FAS. It is proposed to add a total of 2-4 additional single car parking spaces to increase parking capacity in the day use area. Development of additional parking spaces in the day use area will likely require reconfiguration of the existing detention basin to maintain it's current existing volume.

10. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives:

Alternative A: No Action

No action would be to not develop the campground host pad, not pave the single vehicle campsite, don't develop tent campsites and accompanying tent camping parking spaces, and not develop single vehicle spaces in the day use area. With no action it is anticipated that the site will continue to have issues with site rule compliance, including registration

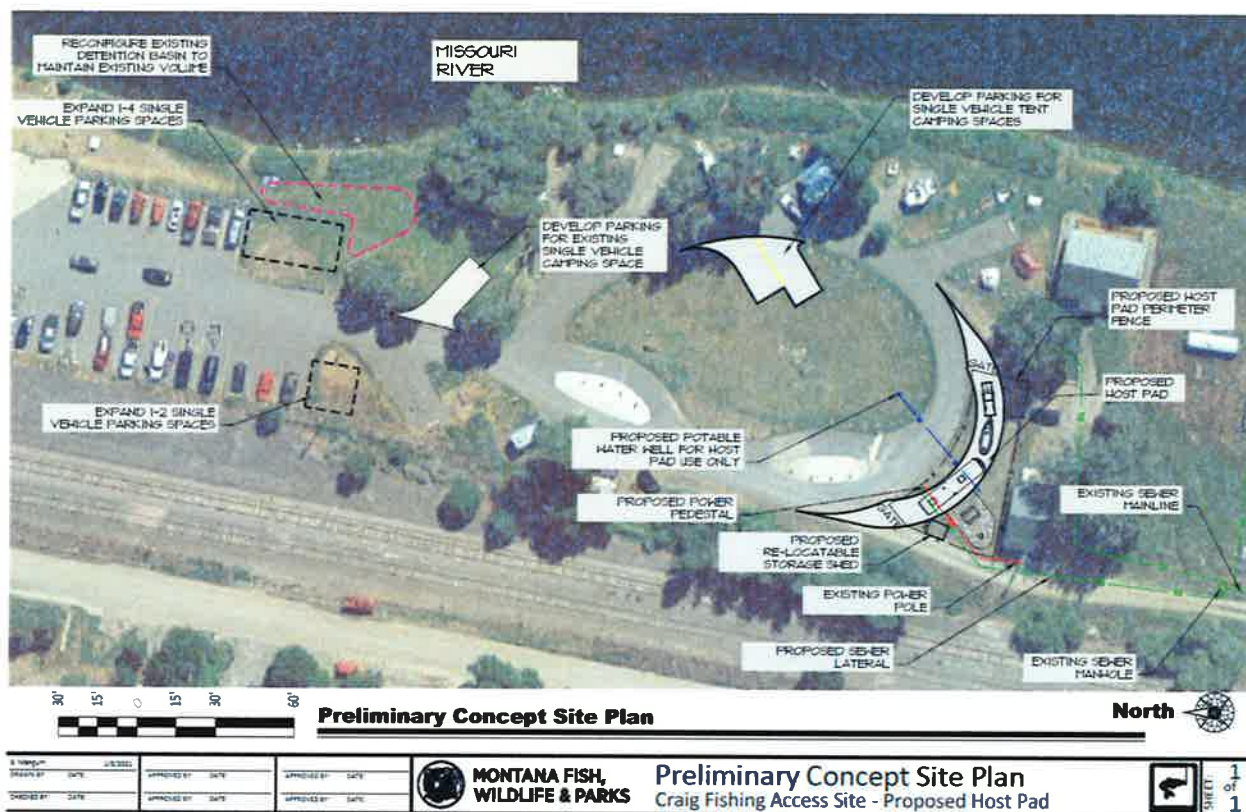
compliance and will not alleviate high site maintenance demands on staff. In addition, no action will not increase parking spaces or camping opportunity.

Alternative B: Proposed Action

The proposed action at Craig FAS is to construct a paved, pull through campground host pad that includes hookup for electric, water and sewer, pave a single vehicle camp space, develop two tent camp sites and accompanying vehicle parking spaces, and develop and pave additional parking spaces in the day use area.

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

Best Management Practices (BMP) designed to reduce sediment delivery to waterways during construction would be utilized. FWP would develop the final design and specifications for the Proposed Action. All county, state and federal permits listed in Part I 8(a) above would be obtained by FWP as required. A private contractor selected through the State's procurement and contracting processes would complete the construction.



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			1
2. Air quality or objectionable odors				x		
3. Water quality, quantity and distribution (surface or groundwater)				x		
4. Existing water right or reservation				x		
5. Vegetation cover, quantity and quality			x			1
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		

1. The proposed action includes placement of pavement that will remove and eliminate vegetated areas within the FAS. The area impacted will be limited to the campground host pad, additional parking spots, and single vehicle camping space therefore why the cumulative impact is expected to be minor.

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			1
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			2
7. Aesthetics and recreation				x		
8. Cultural and historic resources				x		
9. Evaluation of significance				x		
10. Generate public controversy				x		

1. The proposed action includes placement of pavement that will remove and eliminate vegetated areas within the FAS. The area impacted will be limited to the campground host pad, additional parking spots, and single vehicle camping space therefore why the cumulative impact is expected to be minor.
2. A campground host is anticipated to increase camp site registration compliance thereby minor increased revenue is anticipated.

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

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:

- Public notice in the newspaper;
- Statewide FWP press release;
- Public notice on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks web page: <http://fwp.mt.gov>.

Copies of this environmental assessment will be distributed to the 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 is (30) thirty days. Written comments will be accepted until 5:00 p.m., February 18, 2021.

Comments can be submitted electronically via email to fwpr4publiccom@mt.gov or can be mailed to the address below:

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PART V. EA PREPARATION

1. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? NO
If an EIS is not required, explain why

The EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action. The campground is already developed, and the actions will be further developing the FAS. The construction is limited to areas that have been previously developed and therefore result in minimal impacts.

2. Person(s) responsible for preparing the EA:

Vicki Robinson, Fishing Access Site Program Manager, Region 4

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

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Headquarters Design and Construction and Fisheries



Gary Bertellotti 454-5846 Regional Supervisor