

**RECEIVED**

FEB 12 2014



**Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks**  
MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL  
POLICY OFFICE

1400 South 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Bozeman, MT 59718

February 7, 2014

To: Governor's Office, Sheena Wilson, State Capitol, Room 204, P.O. Box 200801, Helena, MT 59620-0801  
Environmental Quality Council, State Capitol, Room 106, P.O. Box 201704, Helena, MT 59620-1704  
Dept. of Environmental Quality, Metcalf Building, P.O. Box 200901, Helena, MT 59620-0901  
Dept. of Natural Resources & Conservation, P.O. Box 201601, Helena, MT 59620-1601  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks:

Director's Office	Parks Division	Lands Section	FWP Commissioners
Fisheries Division	Legal Unit	Wildlife Division	Design & Construction

MT Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, P.O. Box 201202, Helena, MT 59620-1202

MT State Parks Association, P.O. Box 699, Billings, MT 59103

MT State Library, 1515 E. Sixth Ave., P.O. Box 201800, Helena, MT 59620

James Jensen, Montana Environmental Information Center, P.O. Box 1184, Helena, MT 59624

Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon Council, P.O. Box 595, Helena, MT 59624

George Ochenski, P.O. Box 689, Helena, MT 59624

Jerry DiMarco, P.O. Box 1571, Bozeman, MT 59771

Montana Wildlife Federation, P.O. Box 1175, Helena, MT 59624

Wayne Hurst, P.O. Box 728, Libby, MT 59923

Jack Jones, 3014 Irene St., Butte, MT 59701

Skyline Sportsmen, PO BOX 173, Butte, MT 59701

Montana TU, PO Box 7186, Missoula, MT 59807

George Grant TU, P.O. Box 563, Butte, MT 59702

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) and the Gallatin National Forest (GNF) are jointly requesting public input on a proposed project to restore native westslope cutthroat trout (WCT) to the headwaters of the South Fork Sixteenmile Creek drainage.

Fisheries management actions related to WCT restoration in South Fork Sixteenmile Creek are proposed in the FWP draft environmental assessment. Ground disturbing activities (installation of a permanent fish passage barrier) on forest system lands are proposed in the Forest Service Draft Decision Memo. Public comments regarding fisheries management and/or ground disturbance due to the proposed fish barrier installation will be accepted from February 7, 2014 through March 7, 2014. The documents are available for review at the following links:

FWP Draft Environmental Assessment

[http://fwphlncms001.mt.gov/news/publicNotices/environmentalAssessments/restorationAndRehab/pn\\_0125.html](http://fwphlncms001.mt.gov/news/publicNotices/environmentalAssessments/restorationAndRehab/pn_0125.html)

GNF Draft Decision Memo (<http://www.fs.usda.gov/projects/gallatin/landmanagement/projects>).

This project, if implemented, will restore westslope cutthroat trout to approximately six stream miles within five interconnected tributaries in the headwaters of the South Fork Sixteenmile Creek drainage. Project tasks include:

- Install a permanent fish passage barrier on GNF at the downstream extent of the project area (GNF).
- Restoration of a non-hybridized westslope cutthroat trout population in the Sixteenmile Creek drainage within the GNF boundary by removing non-native trout with rotenone upstream of the fish barrier (FWP).
- Replicate the genetics of nearby populations of WCT within the upper Missouri River drainage by reintroducing fish upstream of the barrier (FWP).

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and Gallatin National Forest are requesting input and comments on the proposed project by March 7, 2014. Public meetings will be held on February 18, 2014 (Bozeman Regional Headquarters) and February 20, 2014 (the Old Sedan Schoolhouse) at 7 pm.

If you have any written comments regarding the proposed treatment and restocking, please mail them to:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
c/o South Fork Sixteenmile Creek Restoration Comments  
1400 South 19<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Bozeman, MT 59715.  
[rspoon@mt.gov](mailto:rspoon@mt.gov)

If you have any questions regarding the proposed project, please call Ron Spoon (MFWP, Area Fisheries Biologist) at (406) 266-4237.

Thanks for your time and consideration of this proposed native fish restoration project.

Sincerely,



Patrick J. Flowers  
Region Three Supervisor

Attachment



File Code: ~~F26701~~ 2 2014

Date: February 7, 2014

**LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL  
POLICY OFFICE**

Dear Interested Party:

The South Fork Sixteenmile Creek Westslope Cutthroat Trout (WCT) Restoration Project is being proposed jointly by Montana, Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MFWP) and the Gallatin National Forest (GNF). In the accompanying letter from MFWP, it briefly describes this three phase project. If approved, this project would be implemented over the next two to four years.

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and GNF are presently requesting public input on their respective portions of the proposed project from February 7, 2014 to March 7, 2014. Dates for two public meeting are listed in the attached letter from MFWP.

The Gallatin National Forest has the authority to make the decision on that portion of the project requiring ground disturbance such as the construction of the fish barrier. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks have the authority to make decisions related to the treatment of non-natives and restocking with genetically pure westslope cutthroat trout. To entirely meet project objectives, all three portions or interrelated actions of the proposal would have to be completed.

Gallatin National Forest has prepared a draft Decision Memo for the Forest Service's portion of the South Fork Sixteenmile Creek Fish Barrier Project and it is available for public review. The draft Decision Memo and other pertinent information are available at the Bozeman Ranger District or on our Gallatin National Forest webpage (<http://www.fs.usda.gov/projects/gallatin/landmanagement/projects>) or by calling.

If you have any written comments regarding the construction of the fish barrier on National Forest system lands, please mail them to Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, c/o South Fork Sixteenmile Creek Restoration Comments, 1400 South 19<sup>th</sup>, Bozeman, MT 59715. Comments can also be e-mailed to Ron Spoon ([rspoon@mt.gov](mailto:rspoon@mt.gov)). The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered comments are: 08:00- 4:30 Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

In light of a recent court ruling (*Sequoia Forest Keeper v. Tidwell*, 11-cv-00679-LJO-DLB (E.D. Cal.)), the Forest Service will provide public notice, comment, and opportunity for administrative appeal for projects and activities documented with a "Decision Memo." Only those who provide comment or express interest in this proposal during this comment period will be eligible to appeal the decision pursuant to 36 CFR part 215 regulations. Individuals and organizations wishing to be eligible to appeal the Forest Service decision must meet the information requirements of 36 CFR 215.6.

For appeal eligibility, each individual or representative from each organization submitting comments must either sign the comments or verify identity upon request. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and address of those who comment, will be

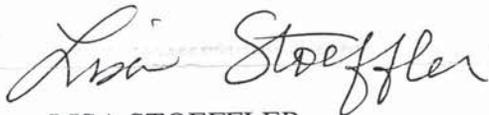


considered part of the public record on this proposed action and will be available for public inspection. In cases where no identifiable name is attached to a comment, a verification of identity will be required for appeal eligibility. If using an electronic message, a scanned signature is one way to provide verification.

Additional information regarding this project action can also be obtained from: Bruce Roberts, 3710 Fallon St., Ste. C, Bozeman, MT 59718, (406) 522-2544 or [broberts@fs.fed.us](mailto:broberts@fs.fed.us).

Thank you for your interest and participation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa Stoeffler". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

LISA STOEFFLER  
Bozeman District Ranger