

Draft Environmental Assessment

Makoshika State Park McCarty Cabin

April 15, 2014



MEPA / NEPA / HB495 CHECKLIST

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. **Type of Proposed Action:** Park Capital Improvement

The improvement proposed herein for Makoshika State Park is the restoration of the McCarty Cabin, the McCarty Cabin access road and McCarty Cabin parking loop. The cabin is a 20 foot by 20 foot log cabin situated within the property boundaries of Makoshika State Park, County of Dawson, in the NE ¼ of Sec 18, T15N, R56E. The cabin sits at the top of a steep draw or coulee within that area, on the edge of where the coulee meets a grassy bench at an elevation of 2,500 feet above sea level.

2. **Agency Authority for the Proposed Action:** Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks has the authority to provide development for public recreation on Department lands (23-1-102 MCA).

3. **Name of Project:** McCarty Cabin

4. **Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor:**

Friends of Makoshika
PO BOX 1242
Glendive, Montana 59330
(406) 377-5384

Makoshika State Park
1301 Snyder Avenue
Glendive, Montana 59330-1242
(406) 377-6256

5. **If Applicable:**

Estimated Construction/Commencement Date: June 2014

Estimated Completion Date of the First Phase: November 2015

Current Status of Project Design (% complete): 100%

6. **Location Affected by Proposed Action (county, township and range):**

Dawson County; N47⁰ 03.572', W104⁰ 40.502', NE ¼, Sec 18, T15N, R56E

Legal description(s):

N47⁰ 03.572', W104⁰ 40.502', NE ¼, Sec 18, T15N, R56E of Dawson County, Montana

Total Acres affected: 0.23 Acres

7. Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:

- (a) Developed:
 - residential0.00 acres
 - industrial0.00 acres
- (b) Open Space/Woodlands/Recreation.....0.23 acres
- (c) Wetlands/Riparian Areas.....0.00 acres
- (d) Floodplain.....0.00 acres
- (e) Productive:
 - irrigated cropland.....0.00 acres
 - dry cropland.....0.00 acres
 - forestry.....0.00 acres
 - rangeland.....0.00 acres
 - other.....0.00 acres

8. Map/site plan: See Appendix A; Site Map

9. Narrative Summary of the Proposed Action including the Benefits and Purpose of the Proposed Action.

The cabin suffers from unmitigated decay resulting from environmental exposure, disuse and lack of upkeep. The most significant structural damage occurs along the western wall, which receives the prevailing westerly wind and weather. There is decay and collapse of three of the logs on the western wall, with the southern portion of the western wall, extending from the southwest corner to a point including the southernmost window on the western wall, having fallen outward and exposing the interior of the structure.

The roof has decayed, causing openings in the roof in the southeasterly quarter of the roof. There are no windows left in the window frames, and both the main entry door and the door to the porch are ill fitting and do not close properly. The porch is collapsed over much of the southern half of the flooring, and the railing is all that remains of what was once a screened porch around the flooring. The foundation, flooring and all cabin walls except the western wall are in good condition.

The cabin and surrounding property has not received any site modifications or modernization following the early 1940s land donation to Dawson County for the purposes of establishing the site as a county park. The cabin and 160 acres surrounding the cabin remained under private ownership during this time. Following the 1953 establishment of Makoshika State Park as a Montana State

Park, barrier posts were installed at the entrance to the cabin's access road to restrict access to the property, as the cabin remained in the McCarty's possession until 2010, when the cabin and the surrounding 160 acres reserved by the McCartys was gifted to Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks.

The intent of this project is to accomplish three objectives. The first objective is to restore the cabin for safe use. The historical appearance and cabin size will remain the same. Replacement logs will be used to replace old rotten logs but they will match the existing logs. The roof will be replaced with a metal roof for durability and fire safety that will resemble the current tarpaper roof in appearance. The back porch area needs full replacement because of deterioration and public safety concerns. The doors and windows will be replaced with modern, energy efficient features that resemble the originals in appearance and function. Electrical power will be added to the cabin. Consideration will be made to provide for water use in the cabin. There is an existing hand pump well located down slope of the cabin. Options for a grey-water drain for supply and washing purposes will be explored and put in place if practical and appropriate.

The second objective is to restore the abandoned road to the McCarty Cabin utilizing the existing road footprint and to provide for parking. The road will be 18 feet wide and 600 feet in length. The road surface will contain packed gravel. Road construction will be a width of at least 18 feet wide and 285 feet in length. In addition to the road, and included in the road length, we will add a loop at the end of the road for parking and ease of exit from the area. The loop will be large enough for parking six vehicles, including a compliant Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) parking space. The loop will be visible from the main road and serve for trail parking as well. Beyond the loop, a gated road will provide access to the cabin itself for maintenance and disabled visitors with a two vehicle parking space.

The third objective is to install a vault latrine in the area. The cabin is expected to generate overnight use and a vault latrine will be needed and installed near the parking loop area (see Appendix A: Site Maps).

The Montana State Parks Heritage Program leader completed a cultural survey of the site on June 4th, 2014 and found no evidence of cultural resources that would adversely affected by the project.

The proposed project is intended to expand existing recreational and interpretive offerings within the park. The proposed project is consistent with park management plan objectives as outlined in the park's 2005 Management Plan. Specifically, the reconstruction of the McCarty Cabin satisfies the plan's objective of proactively maintaining buildings, expanding opportunities for a diversity of park users and developing interpretive opportunities. The plan strengthens community relations through the plan's stated objective of recommended actions to establish overnight opportunities, maintain existing buildings and increase programs focused

on local interests. Potential uses of the McCarty Cabin include overnight rental for the general public, volunteer housing and serve as an interpretive education center. The loop, parking and latrine will also provide trailhead opportunities with a direct tie in to the Ponderosa Trail.

The proposed project meets user preferences of Makoshika’s visitor base, as evidenced by visitor input and participation in the park’s most recent management plan update and input from numerous visitation assessments (see Appendix B: Visitor Preference Assessment Reference List).

Finally the proposed project provides developed recreational opportunities, increases the diversity of recreational use at a state park, and provides visitors with healthy outdoor participation options in safe and defined areas.

10. Listing of any other Local, State or Federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction.

(a) Permits:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Date Filed/#</u>
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Department of Environmental Quality	Latrine Permit Water system permitting	
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(b) Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
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Fish, Wildlife & Parks	\$50,000
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(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
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City of Glendive – Adjacent Land Owner	
Montana Department of Environmental Quality	
State Historical Preservation Office – cultural & historical resources	

11. List of Agencies Consulted During Preparation of the EA:

Montana State Parks
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks – Fish and Wildlife Divisions
State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO)

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. <u>LAND RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT ^{□*}				Can Impact Be Mitigated ^{□*}	Comment Index
	Unknown ^{□*}	None	Minor [*]	Potentially Significant		
▶ a. Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?			X		Yes	1a
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil, which would reduce productivity or fertility?			X		Yes	1b
▶ c. Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 1a. The McCarty Cabin is situated on Blanchard Series soils, consisting of deep, somewhat excessively drained, gently undulating to hilly and steep to very steep soils on the side slopes of sedimentary plains, formed in material weathered from sandy sedimentary beds. Within the Blanchard Series, McCarty Cabin is situated on Blanchard-Dimyaw complex soils, characterized as rolling and strongly dissected uplands with steep to very steep side slopes, sandstone outcrops, exposed silty clay loam and silty clay sedimentary beds. Surface runoff is slow to medium on the Blanchard and rapid on the Dimyaw. Hazard of water erosion is indicated to be slight to moderate on the Blanchard soil and high on the Dimyaw. Scattered pine trees grow on the Blanchard soil. Road construction will be confined to a width no greater than twenty feet and a depth no greater than six feet and is mainly associated with establishing the road and trail surface. Most soil disturbance will be contained to the upper two soil horizons. Post-construction reclamation will address instability resulting from the proposed site development.

- 1b. Proposed work will require removal, movement, and replacement of approximately 3,540 cubic yards of surface soil, constrained to a depth not to exceed 72 inches. The design and construction methods employed will reduce long-term impacts and post-construction site reclamation requirements, including native seeding and landscaping, and will mitigate short-term impacts. Inspection and maintenance programs will be affected to address changes in long-term erosion and drainage patterns.

2. <u>AIR</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT ^{□*}				Can Impact Be Mitigated ^{□*}	Comment Index
	Unknown ^{□*}	None	Minor ^{□*}	Potentially Significant		
▶ a. Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (also see 13 (c))		X				
b. Creation of objectionable odors?			X		Yes	2b
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. ♦For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge which will conflict with federal or state air quality regulations? (Also see 2a)		N/A				
f. Other		X				

2b. Proposed work requires the installation of a vault latrine. Modern technology will minimize the odor generated from this facility. Odors are expected to be minimal and confined to a small area away from the overnight visitor, similar to other vault latrines in the park.

3. <u>WATER</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT ^{□*}				Can Impact Be Mitigated ^{□*}	Comment Index
	Unknown ^{□*}	None	Minor ^{□*}	Potentially Significant		
► a. Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?		X				
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?			X		Yes	3b
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of floodwater or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
l. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c)		N/A				
m. ♦For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a)		N/A				
n. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 3b. The drainage characteristics of the site will not significantly change. Surface treatment of the road and trail will direct runoff faster than the current unpaved condition, but will not result in the removal or redirection of any additional water from the site, nor divert runoff in a manner inconsistent with current drainage patterns.

4. <u>VEGETATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT ^{☐*}				Can Impact Be Mitigated ^{☐*}	Comment Index
	Unknown ^{☐*}	None	Minor ^{☐*}	Potentially Significant		
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?			X		Yes	4a
b. Alteration of a plant community?			X		Yes	4b
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?			X		Yes	4e
f. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		N/A				
g. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 4a. Development of park facilities and infrastructure will lessen plant productivity and abundance in the immediate areas of the development. Plant diversity will not be affected. Any revegetation would utilize native plant species.
- 4b. Post-construction landscaping and revegetation around all developments will incorporate native plant species present in the park and will assist in promoting plant health and diversity by way of erosion abatement, nutrient retention and production of beneficial soil organics.
- 4e. Soil disturbance during construction will allow the introduction of unwanted weed species. Landscaping, revegetation and weed control efforts will eliminate the establishment or spread of noxious weeds. FWP has also increased its efforts to control noxious weeds and these additional controls will apply to the construction/development area.

5. <u>FISH/WILDLIFE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT [□] *				Can Impact Be Mitigated [□] *	Comment Index
	Unknown [□] *	None	Minor [□] *	Potentially Significant		
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of non-game species?		X				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?			X			5g
h. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f)		N/A				
i. ♦For P-R/D-J, will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d)		N/A				
j. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 5g. Wildlife disturbance will be minimal. Previous site developments in the upper portion of the park have shown no extensive long-term impacts on the movement or health of wildlife and initial disturbance levels will decrease as wildlife movement adjusts to long-term human use patterns at the site.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT [□] *				Can Impact Be Mitigated [□] *	Comment Index
	Unknown [□] *	None	Minor [□] *	Potentially Significant		
a. Increases in existing noise levels?		X				
b. Exposure of people to severe or nuisance noise levels?		X				
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				
e. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

7. <u>LAND USE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT ^{□*}				Can Impact Be Mitigated ^{□*}	Comment Index
	Unknown ^{□*}	None	Minor ^{□*}	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?			X		Yes	7a
b. Conflicts with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				7b
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		X				
e. Other: _____		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

7a. The proposed action will increase revenue for Makoshika State Park from public overnight use of the cabin.

7b. The Proposed Action complements the land use directives for Montana State Parks.

8. <u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT ^{□*}				Can Impact Be Mitigated ^{□*}	Comment Index
	Unknown ^{□*}	None	Minor ^{□*}	Potentially Significant		
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?		X				
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				8c
d. ♦For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)		N/A				
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

8c. The current condition of the cabin is a potential safety hazard; the risk of accidents will be greatly reduced by stabilizing and weather-proofing the cabin.

9. <u>COMMUNITY IMPACT</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT <input type="checkbox"/> *				Can Impact Be Mitigated <input type="checkbox"/> *	Comment Index
	Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> *	None	Minor <input type="checkbox"/> *	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		X				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?			X			9e
f. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

9e. The restored cabin in the park will result in minor increases in visitation to the park.

10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT <input type="checkbox"/> *				Can Impact Be Mitigated <input type="checkbox"/> *	Comment Index
	Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> *	None	Minor <input type="checkbox"/> *	Potentially Significant		
a. Will the proposed action have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify:		X				
b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				
c. Will the proposed action result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?			X		Yes	10a
d. Will the proposed action result in increased use of any energy source?		X				
▶ e. Define projected revenue sources		X				
▶ f. Define projected maintenance costs.			X		Yes	10f
g. Other:		X				

10c. Electricity will be brought to the cabin. Alteration of power will be minimal. Alternating current from Montana Dakota Utilities is the type of electricity we will be using.

10f. Future maintenance costs will be covered under the existing park operations and maintenance budget with the potential of rental revenue partially off-setting maintenance costs.

11. <u>AESTHETICS/RECREATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT ^{□*}				Can Impact Be Mitigated ^{□*}	Comment Index
	Unknown ^{□*}	None	Minor ^{□*}	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?			X		Yes	11a
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		X				
►c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report)			X		Yes	11c
d. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c)		N/A				
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 11a. The redevelopment of the McCarty Cabin road may slightly alter the view. The current road is covered in grass and will be replaced with gravel.
- 11c. The proposed site improvement will diversify and improve recreational opportunities for Makoshika's visitors. The cabin will encourage more use within the park.

12. <u>CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT ^{□*}				Can Impact Be Mitigated ^{□*}	Comment Index
	Unknown ^{□*}	None	Minor ^{□*}	Potentially Significant		
►a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance?			X			12a
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?			X			12b
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a)		N/A				
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 12a. The Montana State Parks Heritage Program leader completed a cultural survey of the site on June 4th, 2014 and found no evidence of cultural resources that would adversely affected by the project. Final location and design will address any cultural resources as appropriate and as found and will preserve the heritage values of the cabin and surrounding area.
- 12b. The historical appearance and cabin size will remain the same. Replacement logs will be used to replace old rotten logs, but they will match the existing logs. The roof will be replaced with a metal roof for durability and fire safety and of similar color and appearance to the existing roof. The back porch area needs full replacement because of deterioration and public safety concerns. The doors and windows will be replaced with modern, energy efficient features and of a similar appearance and function of the historic features. Electrical power will be added to the cabin.

13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:	IMPACT [□] ✧				Can Impact Be Mitigated [□] ✧	Comment Index
	Unknown [□] ✧	None	Minor [✧] □	Potentially Significant		
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources, which create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)		X				
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?		X				
f. ♦For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e)		N/A				
g. ♦♦For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

1. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider, and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:

No Action: This alternative involves no action by FWP; that is, the State would not renovate the McCarty Cabin, reconstruct/re-purpose the McCarty Cabin road or add a vault latrine next to the parking area. FWP's Parks Division has made a commitment to eastern Montana and Makoshika State Park with respect to increased development and recreational opportunities. No development will leave this building in an unsafe condition. No development will leave Makoshika State Park with unmaintained buildings, less diverse opportunities for park users and underdeveloped interpretive opportunities.

Reduced Project Scope: Reducing the scope of this project will hamper efforts to provide access to the McCarty Cabin. Not renovating the cabin will allow its continued deterioration. Not reconstructing the road will cause people to park along our busy roadway and create unsafe conditions for visitors. Additionally, not installing a vault latrine will cause a potential health hazard in the area.

Proposed Project: With the proposed project, renovation/re-purposing of the McCarty Cabin, we can strengthen community relations through the management plan's stated objective of establishing overnight opportunities, maintaining existing buildings and increasing programming focused on local interests. Post-development reclamation in the form of revegetation and noxious weed control measures will be affected to mitigate site disturbance associated with the development. Maintenance and impact assessment plans will be initiated to minimize and control long-term use patterns and impacts.

The development will satisfy the public's expressed desire for developed recreational sites within the park and satisfies the department's desire to provide developed recreational opportunities with land use directives. The cabin will provide a safe, enjoyable and aesthetically pleasing overnight recreational opportunity. The proposed project allows increased interpretive offerings in the park and potential volunteer housing. This is our preferred alternative and action.

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

N/A

4. 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:

An EIS is not required. There will be no significant impacts to the natural or human environment. An EA is sufficient for the analysis of impacts of the proposed action.

5. Describe the level of public involvement for this project, if any, and given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?

A statewide press release will be conducted. A thirty-day comment period provides involvement by written comment. This level of public involvement is appropriate given the circumstances of this proposal. Considering the project and impacts, this is an adequate level of public involvement.

6. Duration of comment period if any:

Review copies of the EA will be emailed to appropriate agencies, government officials, and nonprofit natural resource groups. The public will be notified in the following manners to comment on the environmental assessment and the proposed action and alternatives:

- 4 legal notices published twice in both these newspapers: *Glendive Ranger Review* and *Helena Independent Record*.
- 1 legal notice on Montana's Website
- 30 day comment period from July 3, 2014 at 8:00am until August 2, 2014 at 5:00pm

7. Name, title, address and phone number of the Person(s) Responsible for Preparing the EA:

Nathan Powell
Makoshika State Park
1301 Snyder Avenue
P.O. Box 1242
Glendive, Montana 59330-1242
(406) 377-6256

Doug Habermann
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
2300 Lake Elmo Dr
Billings, MT 59105
406-247-2954

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

The Proposed Action increases opportunities and preserves a unique historic building in Makoshika State Park. Renovating the cabin, the cabin road and adding a latrine promotes outdoor activities, an active lifestyle and a healthy community. With the addition of the cabin in the park's overnight opportunities, operation costs will increase slightly but will be absorbed into the existing repair and maintenance budget within the park. The cabin is anticipated to be a permanent long-term structure.

The proposed project allows Makoshika State Park an opportunity for volunteer housing in the park. This will benefit our volunteer program by providing overnight opportunities for volunteer groups. We will now have the ability to encourage groups to work on volunteer projects for multiple days instead of just one. This will help our staff maintain the park, complete projects and lower costs.

This cabin and road project reflects State Parks' desire to provide safe and aesthetically pleasing recreational opportunities. The Glendive community has expressed interest in the continued development of additional opportunities at Makoshika State Park. The development of recreational facilities at Makoshika supports the community's and the division's desire to provide recreational opportunities to visitors.

The cabin road would be constructed on the original road footprint along the main road leading to the

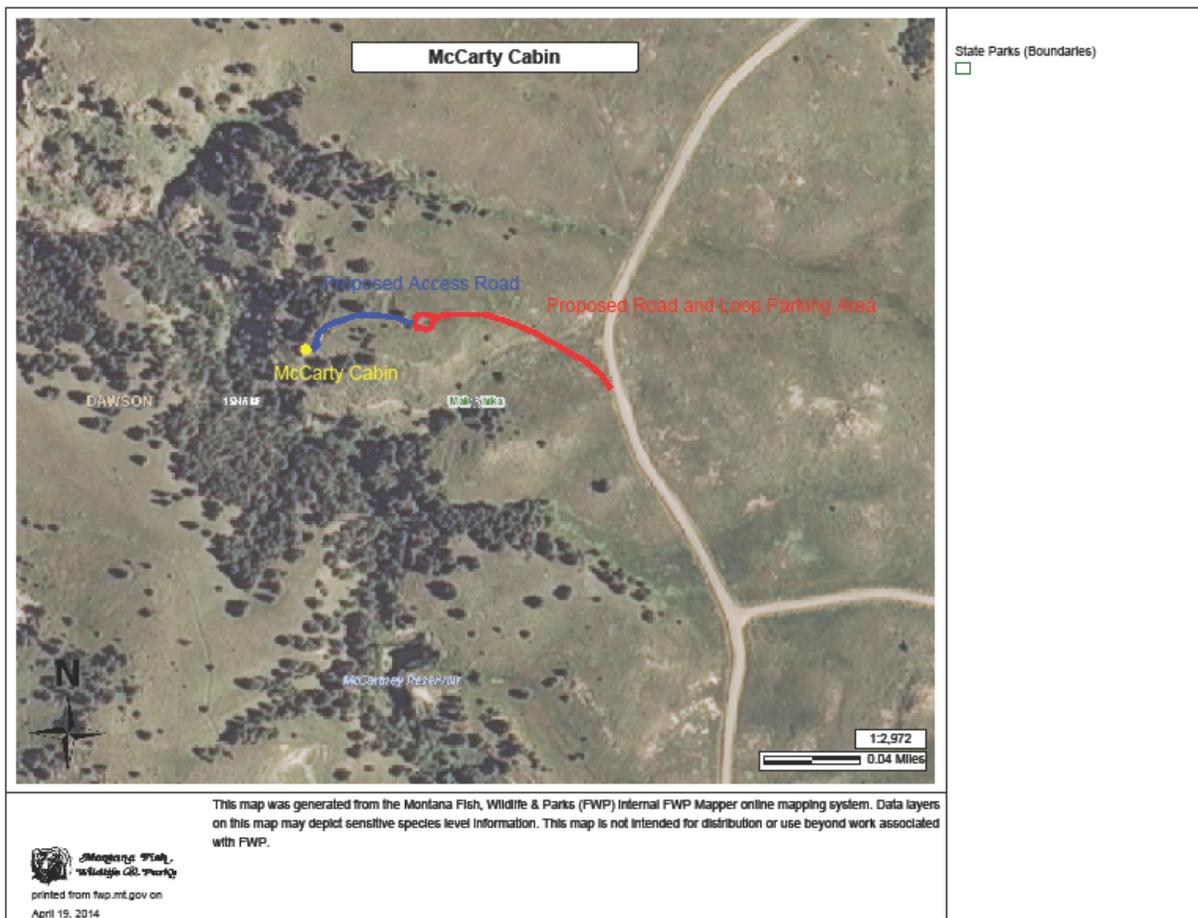
Amphitheater. The McCarty Cabin is the location of other developed facilities, including the amphitheater, Pine on Rocks campground, a main road and trailhead for the Kinney Coulee Trail. The site is suitable for development with respect to the physical capacity of the site to withstand the proposed modifications, and the site is considered to have relatively stable soils. The potential for disruption or destruction of significant geological, physical and paleontological resources is low in most areas of consideration and mitigation is available and determined to be suitable to offset such disturbances. The Montana State Parks Heritage Program leader completed a cultural survey of the site on June 4th, 2014 and found no evidence of cultural resources that would adversely affected by the project. No significant changes in air quality are expected. The characteristics of surface water discharge and/or the alteration of surface water quality will not change significantly.

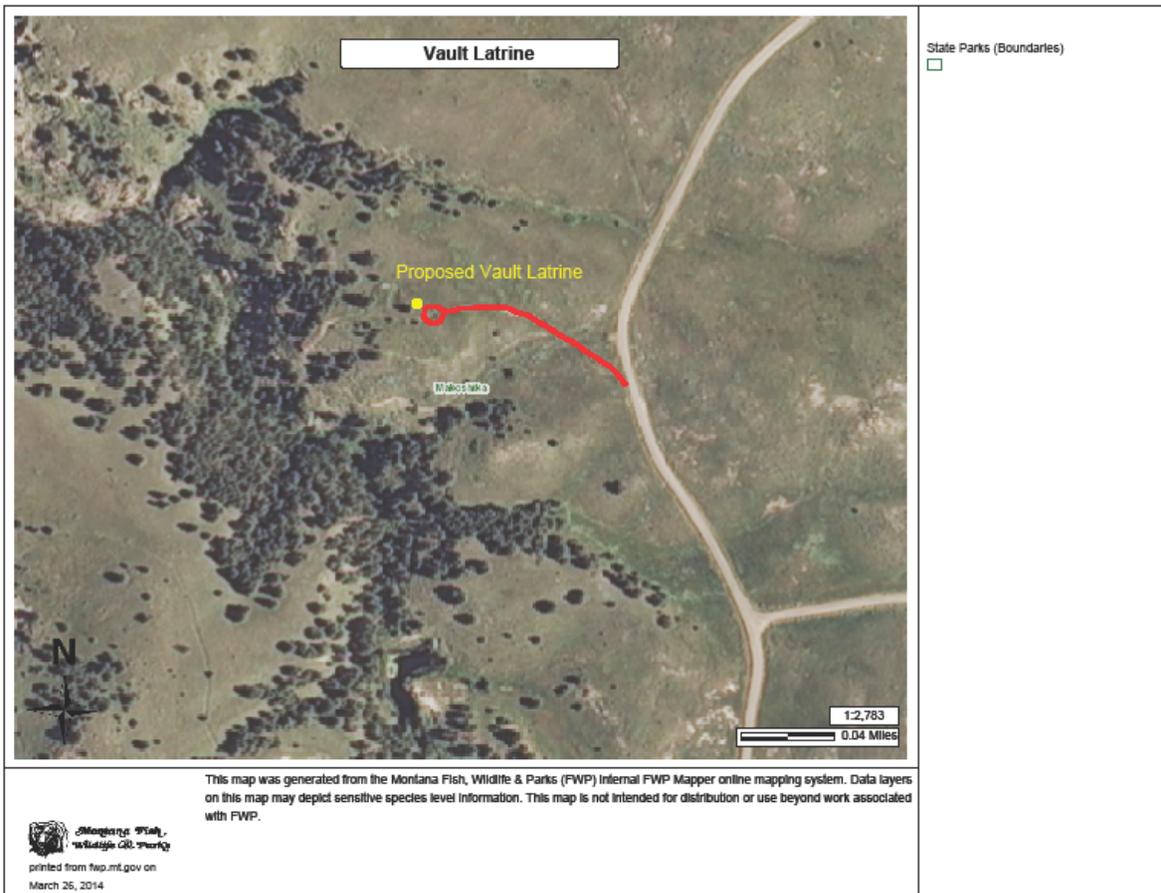
The proposed action is expected to have a positive impact on tourism in Dawson County. Developed overnight opportunities complements the land use directives of the Parks Division and provides an integrated recreational opportunity within Dawson County. It combines the availability of developed recreational facilities with access and proximity to other interpretive and nature-based recreational opportunities.

Funding to begin this project was made possible by FWP.

Appendix A: Site Maps

N47° 03.572', W104° 40.502', NE ¼, Sec 18, T15N, R56E of Dawson County, Montana





Appendix B: Visitor Preference Assessment Reference List

**Economic Impact Survey of Visitors to Montana’s State Parks and Fishing Access Sites.
Nov 2002. Bureau of Business and Economic Research, University of Montana – Missoula**

**Interpretive Services Assessment Survey
1997. Makoshika State Park**

**Custer Country Travel Region Visitor Attraction Survey
May 2003. Custer Country Tourism, Billings MT**

**Non-Resident Summer Travel Survey
1996. Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research. University of Montana – Missoula**

**Park Visitor Survey
Dec 2003. Makoshika State Park**

November 22, 2013

To:

Fish, Wildlife and Parks, 1420 East Sixth Ave, PO BOX 200701, Helena, MT 59620
FWP-Design & Construction— Paul Valle
FWP-D&C Civil Engineer- Kelly Williams
FWP-Director's Office — Colleen Furthmyre
FWP Lands Section— Candace Durran
FWP Parks Division— Deb McRae
FWP-Fisheries Division— Jackie Windon
FWP-Wildlife Division—Laura Geary
FWP Legal Unit—Kaedy Horne
FWP Lands Section Supervisor—Hugh Zackheim
FWP Commissioner - Matt Tourtlotte
FWP Regional/Area Office Managers
FWP Regional Supervisors
DEQ—Bonnie Lovelace
Montana Audubon Council—Janet Ellis
Montana Environmental Information Center—Adam McLane
Montana State Library
Montana Wildlife Federation—Craig Sharpe
Montana Historical Society—Brian Shovers
Legislative Services
Montana Environmental Quality Council (Leg Services)—Todd Everts
Governor's Office-Tim Baker
MT Historical Preservation Office—Stan Wilmoth
DNRC, State Director—John Tubbs
Dawson County Commissioners, Dawson County Courthouse, Glendive, MT 59330
Glendive Chamber of Commerce
Dawson County Economic Council
City of Glendive
Friends of Makoshika

Ladies and Gentleman,

The enclosed Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared for the Makoshika Capital Improvement project proposed herein and is submitted for your consideration. Questions and comments will be accepted until May 16, 2014. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Nathan Powell, Park Manager, at (406) 377-6256. All comments may be sent to the undersigned.

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

Nathan Powell
Makoshika Park Manager
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

TOURISM REPORT

MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA) & MCA 23-1-110

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks has initiated the review process as mandated by MCA 23-1-110 and the Montana Environmental Policy Act in its consideration of the project described below. As part of the review process, input and comments are being solicited. Please complete the project name and project description portions and submit this form to:

Carol Crockett, Visitor Services Manager
Montana Office of Tourism-Department of Commerce
301 S. Park Ave.
Helena, MT 59601

Project Name: McCarty Cabin

Project Description: Makoshika State Park intends to restore the McCarty Cabin, add a latrine, reconstruct the original road to the cabin and build a loop parking area for the cabin.

1. Would this site development project have an impact on the tourism economy?
NO YES If YES, briefly describe:

Yes, as described, this project has the potential to positively impact the tourism and recreation industry economy if properly maintained. We are assuming the agency has determined it has necessary funding for the on-going operations and maintenance once this project is complete.

2. Does this impending improvement alter the quality or quantity of recreation/tourism opportunities and settings?
NO YES If YES, briefly describe:

Yes, as described, the project has the potential to improve quality and quantity of tourism and recreational opportunities if properly maintained. We are assuming the agency has determined it has necessary funding for the on-going operations and maintenance once this project is complete.

Signature Carol Crockett, Visitor Services Manager Date April 7, 2010