



Montana State Parks and Recreation Board Meeting Agenda Item Cover Sheet

THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL.

Meeting Date: October 7, 2021

Agenda Item: Somers Beach Dynamic Beach Project

Division: Parks and Outdoor Recreation

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 10 Minutes

Background:

FWP recently acquired Somers Beach State Park, located on the northwest shoreline of Flathead Lake. Decades of dam operation that maintains full pool water levels for extended periods of time has resulted in a steady loss of shoreline due to erosion, including portions of the new state park lakefront.

The goal is to create a dynamic 3D gravel beach system that will 1) stop the loss of existing shoreline to wave erosion 2) provide a natural transition from the shoreline to fringing wetland that maintains the hydrologic connection with the lake. The hydraulic processes that shape the beach will also maintain and enhance the growth of wetland plants. Additionally, the project will result in more useable shoreline for visitors during full pool, and conserve wetland habitat for waterfowl.

This erosion control technique has been utilized elsewhere on Flathead Lake, including Finley Point State Park, and has proven to be very effective. A dynamic 3D beach utilizes washed rock and large woody debris to absorb wave action. In September, a cost estimate of \$565,000 was received based on the scope of the project and general increases in construction costs. The project scope of work identifies multiple tasks that must be completed including: hiring a consultant to oversee the project; acquisition, hauling and placement of material; building of gravel beaches along the nearly 6,000 feet of long marsh shoreline via a temporary access road; and creating the recreational beach.

Public Involvement Process & Results: Formal public involvement has not been solicited by FWP to date but will be upon the release of the environmental assessment. Upon approval by the Board, FWP would conduct appropriate due diligence, analysis, and a public review process.

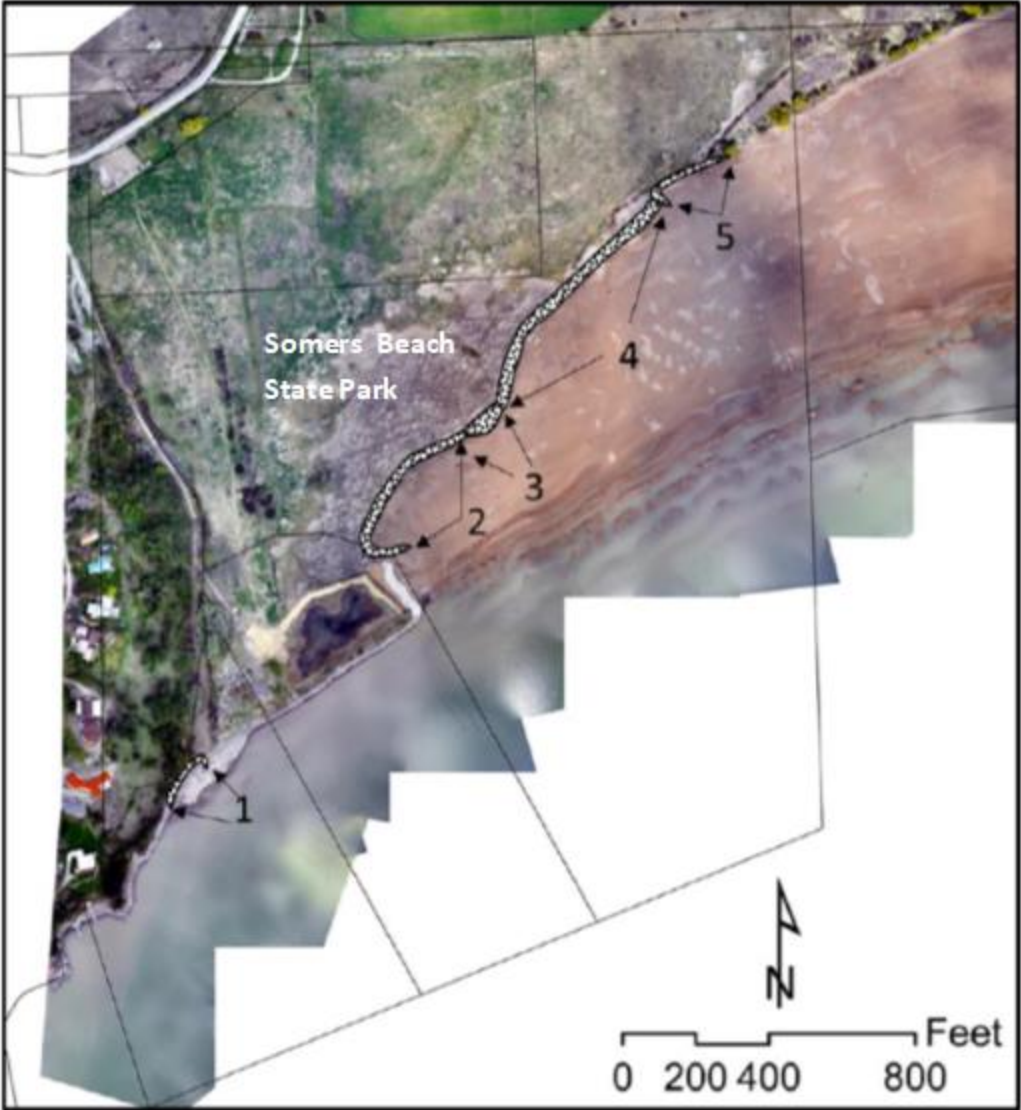
Alternatives and Analysis: Proposal alternatives and analysis would be developed by FWP in the fall of 2021 upon approval by the Board and released in a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for public review/comment opportunity.

Agency Recommendation and Rationale: FWP recommends approval of this proposal contingent upon a positive environmental analysis.

Proposed Motion: I move the Parks and Recreation Board approve the development of a dynamic 3D beach at Somers Beach State Park contingent upon a record of decision to implement the project following the environmental analysis.



SOMERS BEACH STATE PARK SHORELINE EROSION CONTROL PROPOSAL.



A May 2018 aerial photograph taken of the site location showing the proposed 5 gravel beach sections. Sections 1, 2 and 5 have gravel spits incorporated into the plan.