



MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL.

Meeting Date: August 15, 2019

Agenda Item: Fireman's Point FAS Forest Management Project (R5)

Action Needed: Endorsement

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 5 minutes

Background: FWP operates and manages 338 Fishing Access Sites to provide public access to water bodies for angling and other recreation where appropriate. In addition to developed recreational facilities such as parking areas, boat launches, latrines, campsites, and picnic facilities, these sites often include large areas of undeveloped land, which is often forested. Left un-managed, these forest stands can become susceptible to insects, disease, and increased wildfire fire risk in the wildland-urban interface (WUI).

FWP and DNRC's foresters have worked cooperatively with the FAS, fisheries, and wildlife managers in Region 5 to identify forest treatments that would reduce risk of wildland fire and enhance public safety while protecting fish and wildlife values.

Public Involvement Process & Results: FWP is seeking commission endorsement to move forward with identification of funding sources, analysis, and planning of the proposed project. FWP has not yet conducted any formal public involvement but has had informal local encouragement to proceed. DNRC has done environmental analysis for previous phases of fuel treatment in the area and had overwhelmingly strong support. If endorsed, FWP staff will initiate environmental analysis and solicit public comment. FWP would bring the proposed project back to the commission for final approval.

Alternatives and Analysis: Two alternatives would be analyzed and considered in the EA: Preferred Alternative: Implement proposed vegetation management practices at the Fireman's Point FAS to improve wildfire resiliency in the WUI while protecting fish and wildlife values; No-Action Alternative: FWP would not implement the proposed forest management project and increased wildfire risk and public safety concerns would persist.

Agency Recommendations and Rationale: FWP recommends the commission endorse the department's proposal for FWP to develop an environmental analysis including public involvement for a vegetation management project at Fireman's Point FAS in R5.

Proposed Motion: I move the commission endorse this proposal for further analysis and public involvement of the forest management project at Fireman's Point FAS in Region 5.