



MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL.

Meeting Date: April 18, 2023

Agenda Item: Property Addition to Paul's Memorial Fishing Access Site

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 10 minutes

Background: Paul's Memorial Fishing Access Site (FAS) provides the only public access to Lake Five near West Glacier. The site is 10 acres with approximately 150 feet of shoreline and includes a boat ramp, boat dock, parking area, latrine, and host campsite. Lake Five is popular with anglers and non-anglers alike. Because there is only 150 feet of shoreline, the boat ramp and dock are often crowded with swimmers and sunbathers, creating problems, safety hazards, and conflicts between boaters trying to launch and recover boats and other recreational users. In the spring of 2022, a neighboring landowner offered to donate approximately 4 acres of property adjacent to the existing FAS. The property includes 250 feet of additional shoreline. FWP's ownership would be subject to a life estate held by one of the donor's family members. Thus, FWP proposes to accept the donation and take possession of the 4 acres as an addition to Paul's Memorial FAS upon the death of that family member.

Public Involvement Process & Results: Regional staff published a draft environmental assessment on Dec. 15, 2022, and accepted public comment for a 30-day period ending Jan. 15, 2023. A modified final environmental assessment and decision notice were issued Feb. 10, 2023.

Analysis & Alternatives:

Alternative A: No Action. FWP would not accept the donation of 4 acres adjacent to Paul's Memorial FAS on Lake Five. Overcrowding, congestion, safety hazards, and conflicts between users at the boat ramp and dock would continue. If FWP does not acquire the property, it is unknown what would happen to the property and what impacts could occur there. It would continue to be off limits to the public and at risk of development.

Alternative B: Proposed Action. FWP proposes to finalize the donation of 4 acres adjacent to Paul's Memorial FAS on Lake Five to alleviate crowding, congestion, safety hazards, and conflict at the FAS boat ramp and improve the quality of public recreational opportunity on Lake Five. The property would be incorporated into the existing FAS and existing maintenance and enforcement schedules. No improvements are planned at this time, and any future improvements would require a separate environmental assessment.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale: The department recommends the commission approve the acquisition of 4 acres to be added to Paul's Memorial FAS on Lake Five. The additional property would provide dedicated space for non-boaters to swim and relax by the water and reduce crowding, congestion, safety hazards, and conflicts at the boat ramp.

Proposed Motion: I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission authorize FWP to accept the donation of 4 acres to expand Paul's Memorial FAS subject to the terms of the life estate.