

Draft Environmental Assessment



North Shore Trail Relocation Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Project



***Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks***

MEPA/NEPA/23-1-110 MCA CHECKLIST

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. Type of Proposed State Action: Construction of bike and pedestrian trail by Montana State Parks (a Division of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks), and Recreational Trails, Inc. on the Lewis & Clark Heritage Greenway near Great Falls, Montana. The Greenway is a conservation easement granted to FWP on July 22, 1999, and currently managed by Montana State Parks under a cooperative management agreement with PPL Montana, the owner of the land. The North Shore Trail is covered by a Trail Easement held by FWP.

2. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action: As provided in 23-2-101 Montana Code Annotated, it is the purpose of this part to give authority to the department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks to plan and develop outdoor recreational resources in the state.

3. Name of Project: North Shore Trail Relocation Project

4. Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor (if other than the agency)

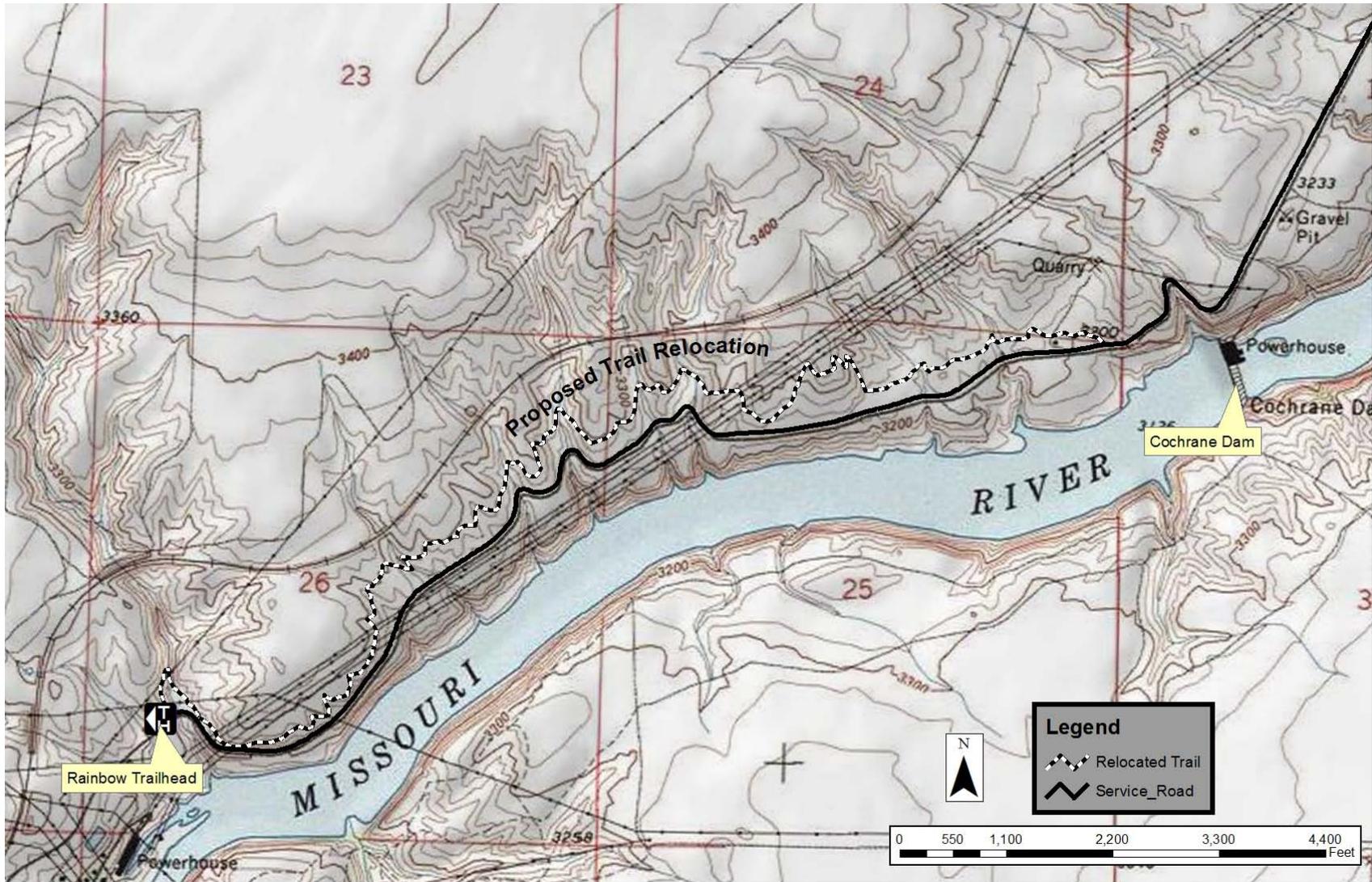
5. Anticipated Timeline:
 Estimated Construction/Commencement Date: July 2013
 Estimated Completion Date: October 2014
 Current Status of Project Design 90% Complete

6. Location Affected by Proposed Action (county, range and township)
 Cascade County, T20N R4E, T21N R4E and T21N R5E

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

	Acres		Acres
(a) Developed:		(d) Floodplain	<u>0</u>
residential	<u>0</u>		
industrial	<u>0</u>	(e) Productive:	
		irrigated cropland.....	<u>0</u>
(b) Open Space/Woodlands/Recreation.....	<u>8.24</u>	dry cropland.....	<u>0</u>
		forestry.....	<u>0</u>
(c) Wetlands/Riparian Areas.....	<u>0</u>	rangeland.....	<u>0</u>
		other.....	<u> </u>

8. Map of the proposed trail's location and path.



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

(a) Permits: None required

(b) Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
PPL Montana	\$5,000
Recreational Trails Inc.	\$5,000
Fish, Wildlife & Parks	\$5,000

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
PPL Montana -- Landowner and Lewis & Clark Heritage Greenway Conservation Easement grantor	
Recreational Trails Inc. -- North Shore Trail Easement partner in trail construction and maintenance	
Cascade Co. Conservation District -- Management of the Crooked Falls Natural Area	

10. Narrative summary of the proposed action or project including the benefits and purpose of the proposed action:

On July 22, 1999, The Montana Power Company (MPC) granted the North Shore Trail Easement to Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP). Later in 1999, MPC conveyed its assets to PPL Montana, LLC, which is also the current landowner. The Easement is now managed as part of Giant Springs State Park. Montana State Parks proposes to relocate the North Shore Trail on PPL Montana lands off of the gravel service road used by PPL Montana operations staff between Rainbow Dam and Cochrane Dam and onto adjacent hillsides.

The trail relocation project discussed in this document has been requested by PPL Montana as a safety improvement within their hydroelectric operations in order to reduce the number of hikers and bicyclists using their gravel service road connecting the dams and their warehouse/operations facilities. The road is used extensively by PPL Montana operations staff and contractors and contains numerous curves with reduced visibility, rises and dips that reduce the line-of-sight for motor vehicle operators, hikers and cyclists.

The proposal is to construct 3.8 miles of easy to moderate difficulty pedestrian and bicycle trail as a relocation of the North Shore Trail located between the Rainbow Trailhead and Cochrane Dam. The project involves relocating the trail off the existing PPL Montana service road which will reduce the potential for accidents between trail users and motorized vehicles, and which will provide for a more scenic and enjoyable experience as compared

with walking down a gravel road. The PPL Montana service road may still be available for public use, but it is anticipated that most trail users will use the newly constructed trail.

The relocated trail will be a natural-surfaced trail approximately 24 inches wide and will be constructed with self-propelled mini track loader (where ground conditions allow) and hand tools. Crews from Montana State Parks, the Montana Conservation Corps (MCC), PPL Montana and Great Falls Bicycle Club will work together to complete construction in the summer of 2013. Total estimated cost to complete trail construction is \$15,000.

All trail construction will be accomplished in a sustainable manner in accordance with International Mountain Bikers Association (IMBA) standards. These standards emphasize trail building along natural topography, minimizing soil disturbance, and building to withstand erosion. No physical structures such as water bars, check-dams or bridges are to be built, rather the trail has been designed to follow contours which reduces drainage problems and eliminates the need for control structures. Maximum grade on the proposed trail will not exceed 10%, the average grade will be approximately 5% or less which is consistent with national and IMBA standards for an easy to moderate pedestrian/bike trail. Soil types have been carefully reviewed and erodible or unsustainable soils will be avoided.

The trail alignment has been established through a cooperative effort of Parks staff and the Great Falls Bicycle Club. All individuals involved in the design have attended IMBA training in Great Falls.

The self propelled track loader will be used to establish the initial trail location on approximately 2.5 miles of new trail, and final finish work will be completed using hand tools by MCC staff and trained volunteers in accordance with IMBA standards.

Signage will be installed on the new segment to inform trail users of trail distances and degree of difficulty.

11. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives:

No Action Alternative

The no action alternative is to not construct the trail but the public would continue to make use of the PPL Montana service road. However, the service road is considered less safe and less enjoyable than the proposed trail location.

Hand Tools-Only Alternative

The hand tools-only alternative is to construct the trails with hand tools only. This is technically feasible for the trail tread itself, but is not desirable due to length of trail and difficulty presented by the native grasses which makes trail construction tedious and time consuming. Use of hand tools to construct the trail tread would in some ways reduce noise and the potential for petrochemical spills associated with equipment use. However, trail construction would take much longer to complete, so in other ways it would increase noise and the potential for petrochemical spills because of the increased number of trips to the area with motorized vehicles to transport crews. The hand tools-only option would also double the amount of time needed for Montana Conservation Corps crews, increasing the

cost by an additional \$12,900 and delaying final completion into 2014. Until the trail is completed, safety issues remain with hikers and bicyclists using PPL Montana's gravel service road.

Hand Tools and Self Propelled Mini Track Loader Alternative

This is the preferred alternative due to the fact that the small self propelled track loader will be used to establish the initial trail cut, with the finish work and shaping completed by hand by Montana Conservation Corps and trained volunteers. The compact loader will expedite the trail building process in the native grass areas, while not creating significant greater impacts. Where soil conditions or slope are not suitable for the loader, work will be completed by hand. All work will be completed in accordance with International Mountain Bikers Association standards.

12. List of agencies consulted during preparation of the EA:
Federal Energy and Regulatory Commission (FERC) for cultural compliance and consistency with existing hydroelectric license.
State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for cultural compliance.

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

1. Evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment.

A. 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				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil which would reduce productivity or fertility?			x		X	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				

1b. The 3.8 miles of trail will cause some perpetual but minor amounts of soil disruption, displacement, erosion and compaction. The trail will be constructed at grades that will minimize the potential for erosion, and water control measures will be used to minimize erosion.

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		x	2a
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		X			x	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 regs? (Also see 2a)		N/A				
f. Other:						

2a. Trail construction will create a minor amount of dust for a short period of time. Use of equipment will create a minor amount of exhaust odors/pollutants for a short period of time.

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		x	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:						

3b. The trail tread may channelize water for short distances causing some slight changes in the natural drainage pattern and the rate or amount of surface runoff. Construction of the trail at appropriate grades, and use of water control features such drain dips and out slope will minimize the potential for this impact. Native grasses will be protected throughout the project area to assist in drainage control and erosion prevention. IMBA trail building techniques include utilizing soil and grasses removed from the treadway to reestablish/enhance native grasses along the edges of the trail. Care is taken during construction to not impact grasses outside the treadway, and the soil removed from the tread enhances the lower edge through the seeds contained in the soil. These techniques lead to good vegetation conditions along the newly constructed trail.

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			4a
b. Alteration of a plant community?			x		x	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		x	4e
f. For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		N/A				
g. Other:						

4a,b The trail tread will occupy 24" of land over its length, which will no longer support plant species.

4e. Construction of the trail, as well as use of the trail over time, has the potential to introduce and spread noxious weeds through disturbance. Equipment will be washed before trail construction to minimize their potential as a seed source. As a part of routine trail maintenance, the trail will be monitored for noxious weeds, and when found, treated appropriately.

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 nongame 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:						

5g. Use of the trail by recreationists may stress individual animals through noise and other typical disturbances associated with trail use . The area is generally open to hunting and the additional trails may provide better access to the area for the legal harvest of game. There already is considerable human disturbance in the area by both the public and by PPL Montana, and the potential impacts of the trail are viewed as minor additions to ambient levels. Wildlife species that use the area have already adapted to a human presence both from current trail use and PPL Montana operations.

B. 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			6a
b. Exposure of people to serve 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:						

6a. There will be a minor and short term increase in noise associated with the mechanical equipment that will be used to construct the trail. In the long term, trail users may experience less noise on the relocated trail, since it will be off of the PPL Montana service road where motorized vehicles otherwise travel.

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				
b. Conflicted 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:						

7b. The trail will be constructed on lands owned by PPL Montana, which are managed for the benefit of PPL Montana's hydropower operations in the area. The PPL Montana lands are subject to a conservation easement that is held by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. The conservation easement specifically allows PPL Montana to grant public trail easements on its lands that are subject to the conservation easement. The proposed trail would not be a violation of the conservation easement.

The trail will pass through the Crooked Falls Natural Area which is managed by the Cascade County Conservation District. This natural area already has a loop trail in place to provide an opportunity to the public to learn about the natural area, native plants and other information. The new segment through the natural area could have some negative impacts, such as introduction of noxious weeds and soil erosion. As explained earlier in this EA, trail construction and maintenance measures will take place to minimize this potential. The trail may also have a minor positive impact by improving access to the natural area and the associated interpretation and education that the site offers.

8. <u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u>	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
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		Yes	8a
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				
d. For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)		N/A				
e. Other:						

8a. Equipment use may result in leakage of petrochemicals, but this is expected to be very minor and no more than what would be expected with any construction project. Any spills will be promptly cleaned up.

9. <u>COMMUNITY IMPACT</u>	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?			x			9a
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			
f. Other:						

9e. Public use of the area will increase with the improved trail opportunities. Any increased use is expected to be gradual, and is viewed as a positive recreation benefit to the community. There will be a positive impact by separating trail use from the existing PPL Montana service road through improved public safety.

10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	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			10a
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				
d. Will the proposed action result in increased used of any energy source?		x				
e. Define projected revenue sources		x				
f. Define projected maintenance costs.			x			10f
g. Other:						

10a. The project will increase the public's use of the area, and by nature, may increase the need for increased emergency services in the area. Any increased need is expected to be minor, and would be an increase of services that already exist in the area as opposed to having to create a new service. When the new trail is in place, parks staff will coordinate with local emergency agencies to educate them on the location of the trail, access points, etc.

10e. No revenue will be generated through the new trail.

10f. Projected maintenance costs are estimated to be about \$500 per year with most work accomplished by volunteers and Parks maintenance staff already employed and performing similar work on the conservation easement.

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				
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			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:						

11c. The project will increase both the quality and quantity of trail-associated recreation in this area, and is viewed as a positive recreational benefit. The increases are seen as minor and not significant.

12. <u>CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES</u>	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance?		x				
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		x				
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:						

The trail corridor was surveyed for cultural resources in compliance with FERC requirements by Legacy Consultants, and no cultural resources were found within the area of proposed disturbance. The proposal for the relocated trail has been submitted to FERC by PPL Montana and approved.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

13. <u>SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE</u>	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:						
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources that create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)			x			13a
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.		N/A				

13a. This relocation is part of a larger master plan to provide continuous trail access from the City of Great Falls directly to this area and eastward to Morony and Sulphur Spring. The proposed trail is a vital component in this master plan. Additional trail segments are planned for areas west of this proposed segment and will be addressed as separate projects. Currently, trail users living in Great Falls need to drive a motorized vehicle out to the Rainbow Trailhead (or other trailheads) to recreate on the North Shore Trail. The desired objective is to provide trail access directly from communities and homes in Great Falls and Black Eagle, reducing the need for motorized vehicles to access trail areas. This safe, continuous non-motorized trail is seen as a positive addition to quality of life and healthy life styles in the area.

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW, CONTINUED

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

PPL Montana has completed a comprehensive cultural review as required by their FERC license and the findings provided to FERC in PPL Montana's annual report to FERC. The findings reveal no significant cultural resources are located within the proposed trail corridor, and the trail is consistent with established recreation and mitigation plans under PPL Montana's license.

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

This community-based trail project further enhances the trail system in the Great Falls area, and connects with the extensive River's Edge Trail system already in place on PPL Montana property managed by Montana State Parks. Montana State Parks has been an integral partner in the Rivers Edge Trail system since its inception, and this current project would continue that partnership. The proposed trail segment is part of the Trail's master plans, and is in keeping with the goals and objectives established for the PPL Montana conservation easement lands.

The project will have positive impacts in several ways, including providing additional recreational trail use opportunities, improving visitor safety, and improving safety for motor vehicle operators due to expected decrease in bicycle and pedestrian use on the PPL Montana service road.

PART IV. EA CONCLUSION SECTION

1. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required (YES/NO)? No. Construction of 3.8 miles of 24" wide dirt trail with self propelled equipment and hand tools will have minor impacts both temporally and spatially. No sensitive land types such as wetlands or riparian areas exist within the project area. The project area already has a trail system in place, and otherwise has a lot of human disturbance, so the project does not create any new or unique impacts in the area. The trails themselves are expected to have a positive minor impact for trail-associated recreation activities.

The proposed project will have limited impacts, many of which can be mitigated during the construction period by good construction practices therefore an EIS is not required.

2. Public Involvement:

The public will be notified in the following manners to comment on this current EA, the proposed action and alternatives:

- Two public notices in each of these papers:
Great Falls Tribune
Helena Independent Record
- One regional press release;

- Public notice on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks web page: <http://fwp.mt.gov>.
- A copy of the EA will be placed at Region 4 FWP Headquarters for review during the comment period.

Copies or electronic versions of this environmental assessment will be distributed to the following interested parties to ensure their knowledge of the proposed project:

- PPL Montana
- Recreational Trails Inc.
- City of Great Falls Planning Dept./Trails Working Group
- Cascade County Conservation District
- Cascade County Planning Department
- City of Great Falls Parks & Recreation
- Great Falls Bicycle Club

This level of public notice and participation is appropriate for a project of this scope having limited impacts, many of which can be mitigated.

3. Public Comment Period: The public comment period will extend for twenty-one (21) days following the publication of the second legal notice in area newspapers. Written comments will be accepted until 5:00 p.m., July 8, 2013, and can be mailed or emailed to the address below:
4. Name, title, address and phone number of the person(s) responsible for preparing the EA:

Matthew Marcinek
Regional Parks Manager
4600 Giant Springs Rd.
Great Falls, MT 59405
(406) 454-5859
mmarcinek@mt.gov

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: North Shore Trail Relocation Project

Project Description: The proposal is to construct 3.8 miles of easy to moderate difficulty pedestrian and bicycle trail as a relocation of the North Shore Trail located between the Rainbow Trailhead and Cochrane Dam. The project involves relocating the trail off the existing PPL Montana service road which will reduce the potential for accidents between trail users and motorized vehicles, and which will provide for a more scenic and enjoyable experience as compared with walking down a gravel road.

The relocated trail will be a natural-surfaced trail about 24" wide and will be constructed with self-propelled mini track loader (where ground conditions allow) and hand tools. Crews from Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, the Montana Conservation Corps (MCC), PPL Montana and Great Falls Bicycle Club will work together to complete construction in the summer of 2013. Total estimated cost to complete trail construction is \$15,000.

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

Yes, as described, the 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 June 20, 2013

