



MONTANA STATE PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: August 28, 2013

Agenda Item: Milltown State Park update

Division: Parks

Action Needed: Informational

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 15 minutes

Background

A new state park has been in the making for over a decade at the confluence of the Clark Fork and Blackfoot Rivers, the site of the Milltown Reservoir Superfund cleanup. With the dam and sediment removal and restoration work complete, park development is now underway. The parks division has worked with a broad community-based working group to develop a vision for the new Milltown State Park. There are challenges the Parks' Division is working through before this park can open.

Milltown State Park will encompass more than 500 acres surrounding the confluence and on the lower Blackfoot River. Montana State Parks is in the final stages of planning, engineering and permitting for the Gateway and Confluence areas, located on the rivers' north bank. Proposed developments include a riverfront bike-pedestrian trail, walk-in river access and a parking area and bus pullout. Trailside exhibits will interpret the rich natural and cultural history of the area.

Milltown will serve as a capstone for a Superfund project that stands out as a national showcase for successful, integrated environmental remediation, ecological restoration and site redevelopment. Combining outdoor recreational opportunities, heritage tourism, and environmental education, the Milltown State Park will prove itself a force for community revitalization and serve as a positive influence on economic activity in the Bonner-Milltown area and Missoula County.

The Parks Division has been allocated more than \$5.5 million from the DOJ Natural Resource Damage Program to acquire lands and for the initial site development of the park, including 5 years of operations. No state park fees have been allocated to date for managing or developing this site.

Challenges posed at Milltown State Park include the absence of legal access across property owned by the International Paper Company, which provides the only reasonable access point to the core of the park at the confluence area; the limited remaining operations funds from our Natural Resource Damage Grant, coupled with the uncertainty of securing long term funding sources to staff and operate the park.

The division is actively cooperating with Missoula County and other interested parties to secure access to the park and get development underway in 2014.

Public Involvement Process & Results: N/A

Alternatives and Analysis: N/A

Agency Recommendation & Rationale: N/A

Proposed Motion: N/A