



Draft Environmental Assessment:

**Travelers' Rest State Park
Access, Road, Parking Area and Lighting
Improvements**



January 2014

Draft Environmental Assessment MEPA, NEPA, MCA 23-1-110 CHECKLIST

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. Type of proposed state action:

Montana State Parks (MSP), a Division of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) proposes a project at Travelers' Rest State Park (TRSP) to reconfigure and pave the entry road and parking areas, reclaim unnecessary roadways and parking areas and add security lighting to the parking areas.

Additionally, a trail will be constructed to connect the park to the pedestrian trail along U.S. Highway 12. The trail is not part of this EA, as a separate EA in 2012 focused on the trail system within the park as part of an acquisition.

2. Agency authority for the proposed action:

MSP has the authority to develop outdoor recreational resources in the state per 23-2-101 Montana Code Annotated (MCA): *"for the purpose of conserving the scenic, historic, archaeological, scientific, and recreational resources of the state and providing their use and enjoyment, thereby contributing to the cultural, recreational, and economic life of the people and their health."*

Statute 23-1-110, MCA and Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) 12.2.433 guide public involvement and comment for the improvements at state parks, which this document provides. ARM 12.8.602 requires the Department to consider the wishes of the public, the capacity of the site for development, environmental impacts, long-range maintenance, protection of natural features and impacts on tourism as these elements relate to development or improvement to state parks. This document will illuminate the facets of the proposed project in relation to this rule.

3. Name of project:

Travelers' Rest State Park Access, Road, Parking Area and Lighting Improvements.

4. Name, address and phone number of project sponsor (if other than the agency):

Montana State Parks
FWP, Region 2
3201 Spurgin Road
Missoula MT 59804
(406) 542-5500

5. Anticipated Schedule:

Estimated Construction Commencement Date: 9/15/2014
Estimated Completion Date: 12/1/2014
Current Status of Project Design (% complete): 35%

6. Location affected by proposed action (county, range and township):

Travelers' Rest State Park is located in Missoula County, T12N, R20W, Section 34 & 35, within the unincorporated community of Lolo, MT and approximately 8 miles south of Missoula, Montana. Figure 1 shows the general location of Travelers' Rest State Park.

Figure 1: Location Map of Travelers' Rest State Park



7. Project size -- estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:

	<u>Acres</u>		<u>Acres</u>
(a) Developed:		(d) Floodplain	_ 0
Residential	_ 0		
Industrial	_ 1	(e) Productive:	
(b) Open Space/		Irrigated cropland	_ 0
		Dry cropland	_ 0

Woodlands/Recreation	<u> 2</u>	Forestry	<u> 0</u>
(c) Wetlands/Riparian		Rangeland	<u> 0</u>
Areas	<u> 0</u>	Other	<u> 0</u>

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

(a) **Permits:** permits will be filed at least 2 weeks prior to project start.

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permits</u>
Missoula County	paving/air quality permit
Missoula County	storm water plan review
Montana Dept. of Transportation	encroachment/approach permits
Dept. of Environmental Quality	storm water pollution prevention plan (contractor will provide)
State Building Codes Division	electrical permit

(b) **Funding:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
Montana State Parks Road Funds	\$275,000
Federal Recreational Trails Program Funds	\$ 27,000

(c) **Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
None	N/A

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

Travelers' Rest State Park (TRSP) is home to the only archaeologically verified campsite of the Lewis and Clark Expedition in the nation, and has long been known and used by Native peoples, notably the Salish. Due to the historic significance, the park is designated by the National Park Service as a National Historic Landmark (NHL). The park provides a range of recreational opportunities such as hiking, sightseeing and bird watching as well as a visitor center which hosts a myriad of interpretive and educational programs year-round. The park regularly hosts school groups for educational field trips and averages approximately 25,000 visitors annually.

The existing entrance road and parking areas located at TRSP were constructed in 2004. The road and parking areas were originally designed to be paved in 2005, but funding shortfalls left them constructed of road base and gravel. As a park that is open year round this creates challenges for snow removal and ice management during the winter season,

contributes to muddy conditions in the spring and presents issues with dust in the summer months. During the late winter, icy conditions pose a safety hazard to park visitors and staff. Additionally, with the acquisition of land and a visitor center building in 2012, the bulk of the parking is now located at a distance from the visitor center and traffic does not flow smoothly through the park facilities. The addition of the visitor center at TRSP has also led to a growing demand for evening events, programs and activities along with a desire by MSP to provide these services to the public. However, lack of outdoor lighting in the parking areas, concerns about parking conditions and distances from parking areas to the visitor center limit the utility of this public facility, particularly in the offseason and shoulder seasons.

MSP proposes to realign existing parking and internal roadways, which would include construction of a new parking lot nearer the visitor center¹, paving the entry road and parking areas, installation of concrete sidewalks built to ADA standards, and lighting and reclamation of unnecessary existing roadways and parking, thereby reducing the overall development footprint (See Appendix A for Project Design Concept).

The project would provide for improved public parking and access for park visitors to the park visitor center and park trails, as well as enhanced visitor safety and experience through better snow removal in winter months and reduced dust during the summer. Concrete sidewalks would be added to connect the parking areas to the visitor center and connect to existing and new trails within the park. Because these hardened surfaces allow for more effective snow and ice removal, this would better address pedestrian safety concerns in the winter months.

Approximately 6-8 security lights would be added to the parking areas to provide for employee and public safety.

With the new parking area, some of the original parking areas could be reclaimed as well as some of the existing road bed (See Appendix A). This will reduce the overall development footprint at TRSP by approximately 25%. These reclaimed areas would be seeded with native grass mix and be used as open space for the park. Additionally, coupled with future plans for native landscaping around the visitor center, the overall project would improve the curb appeal of this National Historic Landmark.

10. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:

Alternative A: No Action

If no action is taken, the existing parking and entry roads would remain gravel and dirt with no lighting or sidewalks installed. Public access enhancements would be limited and park management would continue to be challenged with existing visitor safety and experience concerns related to snow and ice conditions in the winter as well as mud and dust conditions in the spring and summer.

¹ The land closest to the visitor center was acquired using, in part, funds from the Missoula County Open Space Bond Fund. To respect the spirit of the bond, development of parking areas will not take place on lands acquired with bond funds.

Alternative B (Proposed Action): Realign and Pave Parking and Roads, and Install Lighting

Under this alternative, existing parking and internal roadways would be realigned, a new parking lot constructed, and surfaces paved. Concrete sidewalks and lighting would be installed, providing enhanced visitor access to the visitor center, and unnecessary existing roadways and parking reclaimed, thereby reducing the overall development footprint.

Alternative C: Pave Existing Road and Parking areas and Install Lighting

Under this alternative, the existing road and parking areas would be paved with no changes to roadways or parking alignment. Concrete sidewalks and lighting would be installed, providing some level of enhancement to visitor access to the visitor center. No reclamation of existing roadways or parking areas would occur. This alternative was eliminated from further analysis due to the inability to maximize traffic flow and parking efficiency, along with inability to reduce the overall development footprint.

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CHECKLIST

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 *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
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		Yes, Positive	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:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

1B. Although historically used for agricultural purposes, the lands affected by the proposed action are no longer used for agricultural production. The project would reduce developed areas and include reclamation with native grasses.

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

2. <u>AIR</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. **Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (Also see 13 (c).)			X			2A
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		X				
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:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 2A. Minor and temporary amounts of dust and emissions from heavy equipment may be generated during the project. Construction would be timed to minimize disturbance to park visitors. The contractor would follow Best Management Practices (BMP's) during construction to minimize risks and reduce dust. Once the paving is complete, there would be less dust in the air from the entry road and parking areas.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

3. <u>WATER</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
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		Yes	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			3H
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:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 3B. Minor changes in drainage patterns following major precipitation events could occur as a result of the paved parking and road system. Best Management Practices (BMP's) would be followed to ensure that drainage concerns are properly mitigated.
- 3H. The use of heavy equipment during construction may result in a slight risk of contamination from petroleum. BMP's would be followed during all phases of construction to minimize these risks. The application of herbicides to manage noxious weeds would be applied according to the guidelines in the FWP Statewide Integrated Noxious Weed Management Plan.

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

4. <u>VEGETATION</u> Will the proposed action result in?	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
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				
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				4D
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?			X			4E
f. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		N/A				
g. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Vegetation (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

4A. The new parking area would be placed in an open area currently covered in non-irrigated grass. Unused roadways and parking areas would be reclaimed by covering with topsoil and seeding. Vegetation in the area affected is historically prairie grasses of the Bitterroot Valley and local native grass seed mixes would be used.

4D. The proposed project area is not used for agricultural production.

4E. Soils disturbed during construction would likely colonize with weeds. Disturbed areas would be re-seeded with native grasses to reduce the establishment of weeds. MSP would continue to treat the affected area in accordance with the Statewide Integrated Weed Management Plan using chemical, biological and mechanical methods to control weeds throughout the park. This area of the park is treated annually for noxious weeds as part of TRSP weed control budget. There is not expected to be an increased cost in weed control due to this project.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

** 5. <u>FISH/WILDLIFE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
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				
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:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Fish and Wildlife:

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	
a. Increases in existing noise levels?			X			6A
b. Exposure of people to severe or nuisance noise levels?			X			6B
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:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Noise/Electrical Effects (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 6A. The use of heavy equipment during construction could add minimal noise levels for a short duration.
- 6B. The minor and temporary increases in noise levels occurring during construction may disturb some visitors or neighbors. However, MSP would attempt to complete construction during periods of lower visitation and in an expeditious timeline.

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

7. <u>LAND USE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
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				
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:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Use (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

8. <u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
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			8A
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan, or create a need for a new plan?			X		Yes, Positive	8B
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:			X		Yes, Positive	8E

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Risk/Health Hazards (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 8A. The use of heavy equipment during construction may result in a slight risk of contamination from petroleum. BMP's would be followed during all phases of construction to minimize these risks. The application of herbicides to manage noxious weeds would be applied according to the guidelines in the FWP Statewide Integrated Noxious Weed Management Plan.
- 8B. Improvements to parking and traffic flow within the park would better facilitate emergency response or evacuation if it became necessary.
- 8E. Because snow removal is difficult on the existing gravel and dirt surfaces, ice build-up is common during the thaw and freeze cycle of western Montana winters. Hardening the surface would create a better foundation for park managers and maintenance crews to remove snow and address ice hazards, greatly reducing the potential risks of slips and falls to the public and staff. Paving the entry road and parking areas will reduce dust that may otherwise have an adverse affect on a person's health.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
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		Yes, Positive	9E
f. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Community Impact (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

9E. The proposed project would likely have a positive effect on traffic flow and access for emergency vehicles.

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
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 use of any energy source?			X			10D
e. **Define projected revenue sources						10E
f. **Define projected maintenance costs.						10F
g. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Public Services/Taxes/Utilities (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 10A. The addition of paving and lighting could make the visitor center more attractive for use by community groups, businesses and individuals for meetings and events. This would likely require additional staff time to administer and manage these activities.
- 10D. Additional electricity would be needed for the lighting, which would be used during evening events or activities.
- 10E. Revenue used to cover expenses related to the proposed improvements would come from annual Montana State Park budget allocations. Additional revenue could be generated through increased public use of the visitor center.
- 10F. Projected annual service costs are estimated to be \$500.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

** 11. <u>AESTHETICS/RECREATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
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		Yes Positive	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:			X		Yes Positive	

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Aesthetics/Recreation (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

11C. The proposed project could improve the recreational opportunities and visitor satisfaction and enjoyment at TRSP by providing additional safety and better access for park visitors (See Tourism Report; Appendix C).

11E: Paving the entry road will reduce airborne dust and thereby improve park aesthetics.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

12. <u>CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. **Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance?	X				X	12A
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:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Cultural/Historical Resources (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

12A. In accordance with the Montana Antiquities Act (22-3-421 through 22-3-430, MCA) and with FWPs ARM rules (12.8.501 to 12.8.10), a heritage resource survey will be conducted prior to project development to identify possible historic and archaeological sites. Impacts to these sites, if identified, will be taken into consideration as part of project planning and will be avoided, if possible. If sites are identified and cannot be avoided in accordance with MCA 22-3-430, mitigation measures will be proposed. MSP has consulted the State Historic Preservation office regarding this project. SHPO concurs that MSP's normal compliance process is appropriate to protect cultural and historic resources.

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

13. <u>SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE</u> Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
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				
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				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Significance Criteria (attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

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

The final plans and specifications for the project will be developed by the state appointed engineering consultant in conjunction with MSP engineering staff. All required state and federal permits will be obtained prior to construction. The project construction will be completed by a private contractor and inspection will be the responsibility of the MSP Design and Construction Bureau. The private contractor will be selected in accordance with the State's purchasing procedures.

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

The proposed action is not expected to have negative cumulative impacts on the physical and/or human environments. The minor impacts identified in Part II are most likely to occur in relation to the construction phase of the project. There are no lasting negative effects anticipated in relation to this project.

Improved year-round parking with better access to the visitor center would benefit the public and the staff of TRSP over the long term and have a positive impact on the public's enjoyment of this National Historic Landmark. The minor impacts to the environment that were identified in the previous section are small in scale and would not influence the overall environment of the immediate area. The natural environment would continue to provide habitat to the transient and permanent wildlife and aquatic species.

PART IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. Describe the level of public involvement for this project if any, and, given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?

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 newspapers: *Missoulian*, *Ravalli Republic* and *Independent Record*
- One statewide press release;
- **Public notice on the Montana State Parks webpage** www.stateparks.mt.gov
- A copy of the EA will be placed at Region 2 FWP Headquarters for review during the comment period.

Copies of this environmental assessment will be distributed to the neighboring landowners and interested parties to ensure their knowledge of the proposed project. A copy of the EA will be posted on the MSP webpage www.stateparks.mt.gov ("Public Notices").

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

2. Duration of comment period, if any.

The public comment period will extend for thirty (30) days following the publication of the second legal notice in area newspapers. Written comments will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 3, 2014 and can be mailed to the address below:

Travelers' Rest State Park
ATTN: Parking and Access Improvements
PO Box 995
Lolo MT 59847

Emailed to: TReaPaving@mt.gov
Phone to: (406) 273-4253

PART V. EA PREPARATION

**1. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? (YES/NO)? No
If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for
this proposed action.**

Based on an evaluation of impacts to the physical and human environment under the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), this environmental review revealed no significant negative impacts from the proposed action; therefore an EIS is not necessary and an environmental assessment is the appropriate level of analysis in determining the significance of impacts.

**2. Name, title, address and phone number of the person(s) responsible for preparing
the EA:**

Loren Flynn
Travelers' Rest State Park Manager
PO Box 995
Lolo, MT 59847
Lflynn2@mt.gov
(406) 273-4253

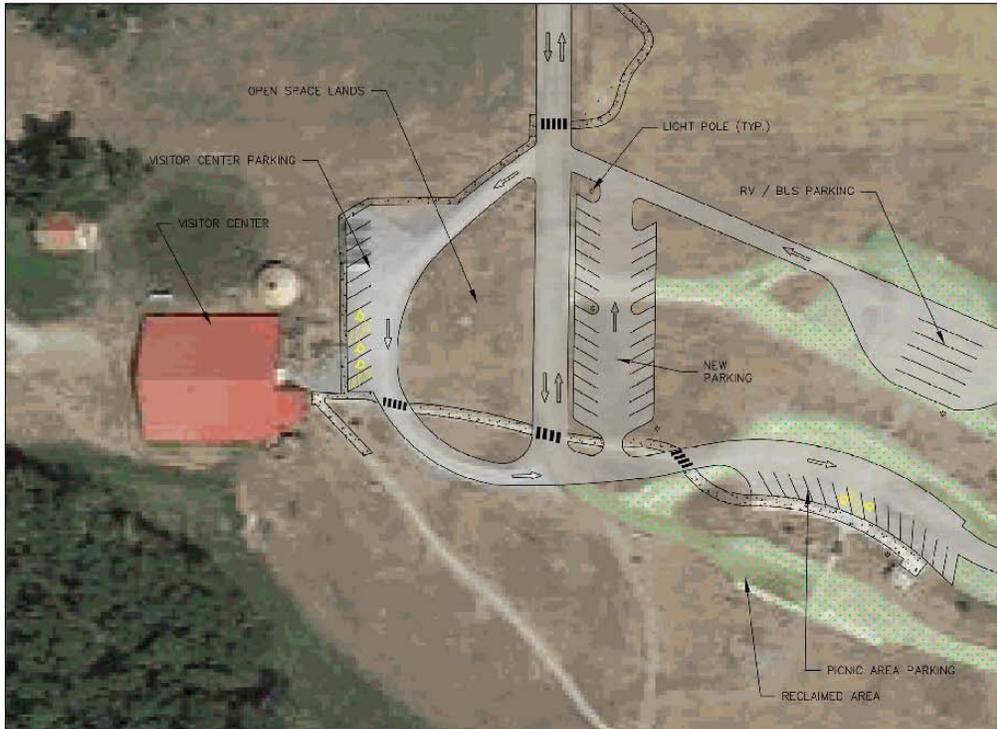
3. List of agencies consulted during preparation of the EA:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Parks Division
Fisheries Division
Wildlife Division
Design & Construction Bureau
Legal Unit
Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
Montana Department of Commerce – Tourism
Montana Natural Heritage Program – Natural Resources Information System (NRIS)
U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service

APPENDICES

- A. Project Concept Plan
- B. Project Qualification Checklist
- C. Tourism Report
- D. Threatened and Endangered Species List

APPENDIX A
Project Concept Plan



K. MILLER	12/2013					Montana Fish & Wildlife New Parking Travelers Rest State Park
DRAWN BY:	JAYE	REVISED BY:	DATE:	APPROVED BY:	DATE:	
CHECKED BY:	DAVE	APPROVED BY:	DATE:	APPROVED BY:	DATE:	

APPENDIX B
23-1-110 MCA
PROJECT QUALIFICATION CHECKLIST

Date: December 13, 2013

Person Reviewing: Loren Flynn

Project Location: Travelers' Rest State Park

Description of Proposed Work: Access, Road, Parking Area and Lighting Improvements

The following checklist is intended to be a guide for determining whether a proposed development or improvement is of enough significance to fall under 23-1-110 rules. (Please check all that apply and comment as necessary.)

- A. New roadway or trail built over undisturbed land?
Comments: *A small section of road will be built to align the roadways within the Park. However, there will be a net loss of roadways within TRSP when reclamation is complete.*
- B. New building construction (buildings <100 sf and vault latrines exempt)?
Comments: N/A
- C. Any excavation of 20 c.y. or greater?
Comments: *Yes. Excavation to construct a parking area and re-align the loop road.*
- D. New parking lots built over undisturbed land or expansion of existing lot that increases parking capacity by 25% or more?
Comments: *A new parking lot will be constructed over an undeveloped area. However, when reclamation of portions of the existing road and parking areas is complete, the net parking capacity at TRSP will remain essentially the same.*
- E. Any new shoreline alteration that exceeds a doublewide boat ramp or handicapped fishing station?
Comments: N/A
- F. Any new construction into lakes, reservoirs, or streams?
Comments: N/A
- G. Any new construction in an area with National Registry quality cultural artifacts (as determined by State Historical Preservation Office)?
Comments: *Even though Travelers' Rest State Park is a cultural site, the boundaries of the Travelers' Rest National Historic Landmark are outside the area affected by this project. This project will take place in an area disturbed both by previous agricultural use and road construction.*

- H. Any new above ground utility lines?
Comments: N/A

- I. Any increase or decrease in campsites of 25% or more of an existing number of campsites?
Comments: N/A

- J. Proposed project significantly changes the existing features or use pattern; including effects of a series of individual projects?
Comments: Improvements may increase the use of TRSP for evening and off-season events, programs and other activities.

If any of the above are checked, 23-1-110 MCA rules apply to this proposed work and should be documented on the MEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST. Refer to MEPA/HB495 Cross Reference Summary for further assistance.

APPENDIX C
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: Travelers' Rest State Park Parking, Paving and Lighting Project

Project Description: Montana State Parks (MSP), a Division of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) proposes a project at Travelers' Rest State Park (TRSP) to reconfigure and pave the entry road and parking areas, reclaim unnecessary roadways and parking areas and add lighting to the parking areas.

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 December 31, 2013

APPENDIX D

Threatened and Endangered Species List

Common name <i>Species</i>	Status*	Habitat	Status in Vicinity of Parcels
<u>Species of Concern</u>			
Bull Trout <i>Salvelinus confluentus</i>	Threatened, SOC, Tier 1	Mountain streams, rivers, and lakes	Uses Lolo Creek in Parcel #3 as a migratory corridor.
Westslope Cutthroat Trout <i>(Oncorhynchus clarki lewisi)</i>	Sensitive, SOC, Tier 1	Coldwater streams	Uses Lolo Creek in Parcel #3 as a migratory corridor.
Fisher <i>(Martes pennant)</i>	SOC, Tier 2	Mixed conifer forest	The area has low quality fisher habitat.
Hoary Bat <i>(Lasiurus cinereus)</i>	SOC, Tier 2	Conifer and riparian forests	Suitable habitat, no surveys have been done to document presence/absence.
Fringed Myotis <i>(Myotis thysanodes)</i>	SOC, Tier 2	Riparian and dry mixed conifer forests	Suitable habitat, no surveys have been done to document presence/absence.
Bald Eagle <i>(Haliaeetus leucocephalus)</i>	Delisted, SOC, Tier 1	Riparian forests	Birds present and use all of the parcels for foraging
Clark's Nutcracker <i>(Nucifraga Columbiana)</i>	SOC, Tier 3	Conifer forests	Birds present & probably use all of the parcels.
Flammulated Owl <i>(Otus flammeolus)</i>	SOC, Tier 1	Low-mid elevation conifer forests with large trees	Suitable habitat, but not yet verified on site.
Great Blue Heron <i>(Ardea Herodias)</i>	SOC, Tier 3	Riparian woodlands	Birds present and use Parcel #3 frequently for foraging.
Northern Goshawk <i>(Accipiter gentilis)</i>	SOC, Tier 2	Mixed conifer forests	Birds present and use all of the parcels.
Pileated Woodpecker <i>(Dryocopus pileatus)</i>	SOC, Tier 2	Moist conifer forests	Birds present and use Parcel #3 extensively.
Lewis's Woodpecker <i>(Melanerpes lewis)</i>	SOC, Tier 2	Riparian forest	Birds present and documented breeding in Parcel #3.
Clark's Nutcracker <i>(Nucifraga Columbiana)</i>	SOC, Tier 3	Conifer forest	Birds observed on site.
Veery <i>(Catharus fuscescens)</i>	SOC, Tier 2-3	Riparian forests, shrubby habitats	Birds present, primarily in Parcel #3.
Golden Eagle <i>(Aquila chrysaetos)</i>	SOC, Tier 2	Grasslands	Birds present and use all of the parcels for foraging.
Cassin's Finch <i>(Carpodacus cassinii)</i>	SOC, Tier 3	Drier conifer forest	Birds observed on site.
Bobolink <i>(Dolichonyx oryzivorus)</i>	SOC, Tier 3	Moist grasslands	Suitable habitat, but not yet verified on site.
Harlequin Duck <i>(Histrionicus histrionicus)</i>	SOC, Tier 1	Mountain streams	Birds verified using Parcel #3.
Brown Creeper <i>(Certhia Americana)</i>	SOC, Tier 2	Mixed conifer forests	Birds verified using Parcel #3.
Western Skink <i>(Eumeces skiltonianus)</i>	SOC, Tier 2	Rock outcrops	Suitable habitat, not verified.
<u>Potential Species of Concern</u>			
Barrow's Goldeneye <i>(Bucephala islandica)</i>	PSOC, Tier 3	Wetlands	Documented to occur in the area during migration.
An Ice Crawler <i>(Grylloblatta campodeiformis)</i>	PSOC		Unknown due to its nocturnal habits and activity at temperatures just above freezing.