



MONTANA STATE PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: June 15, 2016

Agenda Item: Bonner Learning Park Donation

Division: Parks

Action Needed: Endorsement

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 15 minutes

Background (Brief description of the issue, decision to be made, history, etc.): The Bonner Learning Park (BLP), owned by the nonprofit Bonner Development Group (BDG), is a 25-acre parcel along the Clark Fork River, adjacent to Milltown State Park. The BLP (also known as the Two Rivers Community Park), was donated by Champion International and developed in the mid-1990s. The park served as a small, local park until 2006 when it closed to the public with the advent of the Superfund cleanup construction work. While cleanup work is complete, public access to the park has been limited with access permitted only to the Bonner School for field trips.

Most of the BLP property is located on the north side of the river but a corner extends across the river to the southwest. Milltown State Park is the immediate upstream and downstream neighbor to the BLP. The property includes river frontage and several park amenities such as a stone and timber-framed picnic shelter with built-in grill, a vault toilet, a kiosk, a sun dial, a built-in spotting scope, a short trail network, a restored train car, and a small space for limited parking.

Recent informal discussions between Montana State Parks (MSP) and BDG staff have indicated a willingness to explore a potential donation of the park parcel.

Public Involvement Process & Results (Brief description of the type of public involvement and summary of what we heard from the public): No public involvement to date. If endorsed by the board, and upon completion of all due diligence, an Environmental Assessment would be completed and distributed for public comment prior to final approval by the board.

Alternatives and Analysis (Brief description of alternative solutions with analysis of the pros and cons of each):

Alternative 1- No Action: Do not accept the donation. The landowners would then be able to pursue other options to donate, sell, or develop the land.

Alternative 2 – Consider Donation: Enter discussions with Bonner Development Group to explore the feasibility and conditions of accepting a donation of this parcel.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale: The Department recommends approval by the Board to proceed with the formal consideration of this parcel of land.

Proposed Motion: “I move that the Division formally begin consideration of this parcel of land as part of Milltown State Park.”