



## MONTANA STATE PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

**Meeting Date:** July 6, 2017

**Agenda Item:** Ackley Lake Update

**Division:** Parks

**Action Needed:** Informational

**Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation:** 20 Minutes

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**Background;** In August of 2016, the lease Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (FWP) held with the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) was renewed through December of 2017. The public expressed considerable concern over the possible departure of State Parks from the Ackley Lake site. In August of 2016 the Parks Board requested that a transition team be organized by State Parks to consider and explore options that will maintain public access at Ackley Lake. In February of 2017 the lease with FWP was extended for 5 years till 2021.

**Public Involvement Process & Results;** Since the 5-year lease extension to 2021, the transition team has disbanded and a friends group has been established in its place with many of the transition team participants becoming members of the friends group. The Ackley Lake Club now has a 7- member board of directors and will operate under the Central Montana Foundation, a non-profit organization, to accept donations. The group will contribute to Ackley Lake through donations that will fund improvements State Parks is unable to provide due to lack of funding and staffing. A donation box will be set up at Ackley Lake and will be serviced by the friends group. The group is currently working on by-laws, mission statement, and a marketing plan. Parks is working on a Memorandum of Agreement with the friends group and a Donation Agreement to comply with the Department's Non-State Fund Policy. The group has conducted 2 meetings so far and will continue to meet on a monthly basis.

**Alternatives and Analysis;** The establishment of a friends group for Ackley Lake is a positive step for visitors, local users, businesses, and Montana State Parks. The group is enthusiastic about their role and their potential to assist MSP with donations, volunteer help, and improvements at the site. Many challenges remain regarding the management and maintenance of Ackley. Working with this group has been and continues to be a rewarding experience. This has truly become a collaborative process between government agencies and citizens groups to maintain and improve recreation opportunities in central Montana. This effort would have to be considered a successful outcome of the classification process.

**Agency Recommendation and Rationale:** N/A

**Proposed Motion:** N/A