

**MISSOURI-MADISON RIVER FUND RECREATION PROJECT
FY2024 GRANT APPLICATION FORM**

Project Name: White Bear Fishing Access Site Improvement Plan

Reservoir or River Segment: Missouri River Great Falls Area County(ies) Cascade County

Site Name (or project location): White Bear Fishing Access Site

Applicant Name: Cannon Colegrove

Position and Agency: Recreation Manager, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks

Telephone: 406-454-5854

Email: cannon.colegrove@mt.gov

Project Sponsor Name: Same as applicant

Position and Agency: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Project Cost Breakdown and Financial Request:

Complete the financial section below by providing total project cost (to the nearest dollar), contributions by applicant and cooperators, request for NorthWestern Energy match of agency funds (see detailed instruction), and River Fund Grant request. Document in-kind contributions by public agencies for determination of NorthWestern Energy match request. A description of funding sources and in-kind contributions should be included in the Project Description.

Total project cost:	<u>\$242,046</u>	
Applicant Contributions – cash	<u>\$36,500</u>	
Applicant Contributions – value of in-kind:	<u>\$0</u>	
Other Contributions – Please list by source:		
	<u>\$</u>	
	<u>\$</u>	
	<u>\$</u>	
	<u>\$</u>	Percentage of Total Project Cost:
Total Applicant and Other Contributions:	<u>\$36,500</u>	<u>15 %</u>
NorthWestern Energy Match Request:	<u>\$36,500</u>	<u>15 %</u>
River Fund Grant Request:	<u>\$169,046</u>	<u>70 %</u>
Proposed Project Implementation Period:	<u>2024</u>	

**MISSOURI-MADISON RIVER FUND RECREATION PROJECT
FY2024 GRANT APPLICATION FORM**

1. Has this project been previously submitted for funding consideration by the River Fund Board, either as a separate project or part of another project? Yes No

If yes, please identify which years the application was submitted and, if the project was previously funded, list the amount funded by year.

2. **Project Description:** Provide a description of the proposed project. Be sure to include specific project elements that are planned, and any associated cost detail.



Background: White Bear Fishing Access Site (FAS), managed by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (FWP), is located on the Missouri River three miles upstream of the Great Falls city limits on the northwest shoreline of the Missouri River. The 41-acre FAS is accessible by driving on Fox Farm Road and then turning on either Fawn Drive, Highwood Drive, or Dune Drive. The FAS is also accessible from the Missouri River by watercraft. White Bear FAS has a beach along the river shoreline a short walk from the parking area that provides opportunity for swimming, angling, and launching of non-motorized watercraft. White Bear FAS is located along the Missouri River to provide access for floaters to launch at White Bear FAS and float downstream to Great Falls, or launch upstream at Cottonwood Grove FAS and float down to White Bear FAS. There’s a concrete latrine located in the graveled parking lot at White Bear FAS.

Undesirable and illegal public behavior at the FAS (underage drinking, intoxication, illegal drug use, after-hours use, etc.) and concerns raised by the public (many of which included nearby homeowners) prompted the Fish and Wildlife Commission (commission) to implement a temporary, seasonal closure at White Bear FAS in 2015 that restricts public entry June 1st through early September of each year. The closure was implemented as a temporary measure to allow FWP time to identify actions that would mitigate the undesirable and illegal behavior, or to trade or dispose of the FAS in the event satisfactory mitigation is not achievable at the affected site. FWP has developed a plan to improve public safety, reduce unwanted, undesirable, and illegal behavior at the property, prohibit entry at night, and create recreational opportunities that enhance desirable public use of the White Bear FAS.

Project Cost Details

Security and Safety Total	112,018.97
Electronic Gate Opener	9,168.97
Automatic Accessories	(8,618.97)
Mobilization of equipment	(550.00)
Light	350.00
Security Camera System	4,500.00
Electrical Connection, est.	98,000
Approx 1600’ buried line	(48,000)
Under-road routing	(50,000)
Developments Total	77,012.35
Graveled Access Road	9,157.50
Excavation and offsite removal	(1,831.50)
Fabric	(3,330.00)
Road mix in 2” lifts	(3,996.00)

Trail System	49,595.86
Crusher fines for path surfacing	(11,634.84)
Road mix base for path construction (2"-4")	(8,156.52)
Nonwoven geotextile fabric	(11,736.00)
Excavation and offsite removal	(8,068.50)
North dirt trail loop	(10,000.00)
Mobilization	5,000.00
County Floodplain Permit	500.00
Cultural Resource Survey	10,000.00
Dog Waste Station	328.99
Dog Waste Station	(289.00)
Shipping and Handling	(39.99)
Benches (3)	2,430.00
Concrete Park Bench (3)	(1860.00)
Concrete Bench Pad (3)	(570.00)
Signage Total	11,840.50
Interpretive Signage (4)	8,435.50
CHPL Panels 24x36 (4)	(722.64)
Aluminum Frame for Panels	(2,353.44)
CHPL Color Samples	(50.00)
Graphic Design and Interpretive Writing	(4,500.00)
Wrapping and Crating	(45.00)
Shipping and Handling	(764.42)
FAS signage	3,405.00
Fishhook Entry Sign	(420.00)
Site Open Hours Sign	(600.00)
Kiosk with signage	(1,930.00)
Secondary Regulation sign at river	(215.00)
Traffic Signage	(240.00)
Project Total:	200,871.82
20% Construction Contingency	40,174.36
Advertising and Printing Costs	1,000.00
Project Total:	\$242,046.18

Description of Proposed Project: Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks has developed a twofold plan to address the issues that have plagued White Bear FAS and prompted the commission to impose seasonal closures at the site. The plan proposes additional safety and security measures, as well as additional recreational amenities to attract desirable use of the site.

Safety and Security Measures:

FWP proposes to install the following safety and security measures:

- an automatic electronic gate at the entrance of the White Bear FAS to increase compliance with the existing “day use only” rule. The electronic gate would prevent entry during the hours the FAS is closed (8 pm to 6 am). The gate could be programmed to allow vehicles to exit, after the gate has closed.
- a light pole that would illuminate the electronic gate.
- security cameras would be positioned to capture video of the electronic gate and the parking area within the FAS.
- a twelve-foot-wide graveled access road for authorized vehicle access from the existing parking area down to the river’s edge. The road would be developed behind an existing locked metal gate and open only to authorized vehicles for law enforcement patrols, maintenance, emergency access to the river, and other authorized use.

Recreational Amenities:

FWP proposes to develop and install the following recreational amenities:

- a sixty-inch-wide trail system totaling approximately one mile in length that would complete a loop on the south end of the property and another loop on the north end of the property. Each loop would be approximately 0.5 miles in length. The southern loop would be developed with crushed stone. Since the project is in the flood plain, we are anticipating being required to have no net gain of material at the site, because of the project (haul out material to bring material in). The northern loop would be developed by disking and blading to establish a natural surface trail. Culverts would be located and installed along the trail loops, as necessary, to enable proper drainage.
- a dog waste bag dispensing box as well as a small garbage disposal can for those who utilize the trails to walk their dogs.
- 3 benches along the trail that would allow visitors to sit and observe the surrounding natural area.
- signs at the parking lot entrance, within the parking lot, near the river, and along the trail that would provide visitors with information pertaining to rules and regulations, a map of the trails, and interpretive information about the natural resources and historical significance of the area.

3. **Project Phasing:** Briefly discuss whether the project could be phased over more than one year or construction season.



The White Bear FAS is under a temporary restriction that prohibits all public access to the site from June to September in 2023 and 2024 (commission order). FWP believes it is important to incorporate all components of the improvement plan in one phase, prior to the site being open to the public to curb the undesirable and illegal use of the property that prompted the closure. If the site is re-opened without all components of the proposed project completed, there is concern that the undesirable activity will continue.

4. **Cultural Resource Management:** Cultural Resource Management (CRM) requirements for any activity related to this Project must be completed and documented to NorthWestern Energy as a condition of awarded River Fund grant funds or NorthWestern Energy matching funds. Grant and matching funds may not be used for any land-disturbing activity, or the modification, renovation, or removal of any buildings or structures until the CRM consultation process has been completed. Agency applicants must submit a copy of the proposed project to a designated Cultural Resource Specialist for their agency. Private parties or non-governmental organizations are encouraged to submit a copy of their proposed project to a CRM consultant they may have employed. Private parties and non-governmental organizations may also contact the NorthWestern Energy representative for further information or assistance. Applications submitted without this section completed will be held without any action until the information has been submitted.

Summarize how you will complete requirements for Cultural Resource Management.

- ▶ By Montana law (22-3-433 MCA), all state agencies are required to consult with the State Historic Preservation Office to identify heritage properties on land owned by the state that may be adversely impacted by a proposed action or development project. Construction of parking areas, trails and other ground disturbing activities would require consultation with the State Historical Preservation Office. FWP will work with our Heritage Specialist to be in compliance of the conditions of the awarded River Fund grant funds and Montana law.

5. **Scoring Criteria.** Respond to the following Scoring Criteria. Put answers in the cell after ▶.

5.1 Does the project occur at a 2188 license site?

- ▶ No

5.2 Project is for operation and maintenance of an existing recreation site. Describe if the project will meet operation and maintenance needs. Higher points awarded to projects that are higher priority and are not a recurring expense. Lower points awarded to projects that are low priority and/or have been previously funded. It is unlikely that the timeframe of River Fund would address emergency operation and maintenance needs but could support non-emergency operation and maintenance needs.

- ▶ The proposed project would meet operation needs by implementing safety and security measures, along with enhancing desirable recreational use of the site to allow the property to be reopened for public recreation during the summer months. Installing an automatic gate would reduce the demands on FWP Law Enforcement staff to patrol this site at night, when calls for service would historically occur. The electronic gate would close automatically which would create a barrier for entry to the site during the nighttime hours. The installation of an automatic electronic gate would also remove the need to have FWP staff or contracted services manually close a gate every night, which has proven to not be a viable option in the past. Currently, FWP maintenance staff mows and clears a trail loop on the south side of the FAS and would be able to absorb the maintenance required on the new north side trail. Improvements to White Bear FAS are a high priority to FWP.

5.3 Project involves collaboration with other agencies or organizations. Identify project partners other than NorthWestern Energy or River Fund, if any, and describe their participation. Document all funding sources and all in-kind support and services to a project because all are sources of partnerships and in-kind contributions from public agencies qualify for calculation of NorthWestern Energy matching funds. If there are no project partners, explain why.

- ▶ FWP's major partners have been the two adjacent homeowner's associations (Fox Farm HOA and Riverwood Villas HOA). These groups have been very active in the management of White Bear FAS dating back to before the seasonal closures started in 2015. The HOAs have worked with FWP to document incidents, report unwanted and illegal activities and are now working with FWP to develop the plan to fully reopen the White Bear FAS. FWP typically meets annually with the HOA's to discuss ongoing enforcement challenges, and FWP expects to continue meeting with the HOA's in the future. In the spring of 2023 FWP created a scoping survey for impacted residential homeowners near White Bear FAS to better understand the desires for future management of the FAS. The survey was provided to neighbors at a meeting and mailed to 140 addresses near the White Bear FAS. 64 residents responded to this survey which helped FWP develop the improvement plan. On September 12, 2023, FWP published a Draft EA for the proposed project. Results from the survey were included in the Draft EA and can be found at: <https://fwp.mt.gov/public-notice/news/2023/sept/0907---white-bear-ea>

5.4 Project provides a benefit to public recreation in the Project Area and addresses specific issues and goals of the Missouri-Madison Comprehensive Recreation Plan (CRP). Identify how the project provides a benefit to public recreation and describe how the project specifically addresses issues and goals in Chapter 2-1 of the CRP.

- ▶ Since 2015 public entry and recreation at White Bear FAS has been prohibited during the months of June to September. This temporary restriction was implemented to allow FWP time to create an improvement plan that addresses the safety and security issues at the site, as well as the undesirable activity such as drinking, partying, night-use, and illegal activity. During those 9 years FWP looked at multiple options for the site, including trading the property and divesting of it. FWP leaned toward improving the site and in 2023 developed an improvement plan that we believe will address many of the concerns from the agency, public, homeowners, and the commissioners.

The proposed project specifically addresses the goals in Chapter 2-1 of the CRP in the following ways:

- The proposed developments would allow the site to be re-opened to year-round public access as outlined in the vision statement.
- *Goal: To provide safe and well-managed recreation sites and dispersed use areas that provide enjoyable user experiences across a spectrum of opportunities and seasons.* The proposed plan would provide for a safer and more well-maintained site through the development of safety measures, improved signage, and well-maintained trails. These improvements would offer the public a more enjoyable experience through multiple recreation opportunities, across all seasons of the year.
- *Goal: To monitor and evaluate through surveys of visitors and managers the emerging and changing trends in recreation uses and desires within short and long-term timeframes and develop responses appropriate to the intensity and priority of the demand.* FWP's survey of homeowners near White Bear FAS shows diverse recreational uses of the property. Walking, Nature Viewing, Fishing, Photography, and non-motorized boating are among the top uses. FWP looks to enhance those opportunities through the development of a graveled access trail through the site and a graveled path to the river from the parking area.
- *Goal: To identify and implement management strategies that reduce and/or mitigate conflicts among recreation uses and users and that reduce and/or mitigate conflicts among recreationists and landowners.* The proposed developments are anticipated to reduce the conflicts between people participating in unwanted and undesirable behavior, nearby homeowners, and the public utilizing the site.
- *Goal: Continue to improve and expand recreation opportunities that offer universal accessibility.* While the proposed developments would not necessarily meet ADA standard, the crushed gravel trail and the improved access road would provide expanded opportunities over what is currently available at the site.
- *Goal: To maintain or proactively increase public safety for recreationists in the Project Area.* The proposed developments are anticipated to reduce law enforcement demands and address the illegal and unwanted behaviors that the site has previously experienced.
- *Goal: To promote responsible user behavior that protects natural, cultural, and social resources in the Project Area.* The proposed development of improved signage and established walking trails would encourage more responsible user behavior to protect the resources and experience when recreating at the White Bear FAS.

5.5 Project responds to a clearly identified need. Describe and document the need for this project and how the project would address that need. Cite specific sources, as possible, to establish need and support the project. Discuss consequences if the funding request is unsuccessful. For a new construction or acquisition project, identify how post-project, long-term costs (such as site maintenance and management) will be provided.

- ▶ The intent of FWP's fishing access sites is to provide public access to high quality waters for angling, boating, rafting, and other recreational opportunities. The unwanted, undesirable, and illegal activity occurring at White Bear FAS has resulted in a seasonal closure of the site for the last 9 years. FWP and the commission recognize that it is past time to make improvements to allow the site to remain open year-round. FWP is not interested in continuing to restrict public access. The public has also made it clear that recreational access in this area is a priority. A prime example of this is the push by locals to preserve 90 acres of DNRC land downstream from White Bear FAS for public open space after the DNRC looked to sell the property. If funding this project is unsuccessful, FWP would likely again look to trade for a different property or divest from the property altogether. The commission has already made it clear that they do not intend to continue instating seasonal closures at White Bear FAS and the unfavorable and illegal activity would likely continue if no improvements were made.

5.6 Project design options have been considered, estimated, and a preferred design selected. Well-designed projects reduce occurrences of budgetary overages, design changes, and additional complications. Discuss the current design phase for this project, demonstrate that the project has been well vetted, and include cost estimates.

- ▶ A conceptual design plan for developments was prepared by Region 4 staff with input from our Law Enforcement Division. The initial conceptual plan was then presented to two Homeowner's Associations near White Bear FAS at a meeting on May 31st, 2023, to gather input on the initial conceptual ideas. FWP also mailed a survey to 140 residential homes near White Bear FAS to gather additional input on the proposed designs and developments. 64 people completed the survey, and the comments/answers were evaluated by staff to make decisions on the improvement plan. Region 4 staff then worked with FWP's Design and Construction Bureau to finalize the design and development plan for White Bear FAS as well as develop a cost estimate of the proposed developments. A line-item breakdown of costs associated with this project is included under the project description.

5.7 Project supports or protects other resources and is consistent with or supports resource plans in the Project Area. Describe how this project will protect resource values (such as public access, water quality, fisheries, wildlife, habitats, and cultural resources) and support other resource and agency plans, including Project 2188 License plans and land use and land management plans in place in the Corridor. Management plans should provide justification for the project.

- ▶ The proposed project would protect public access by allowing public access to occur at the site year-round. The developments would allow for a more desirable experience for the public while reducing conflicts with nearby residential properties and demands on Law Enforcement resources. The proposed project would also protect wildlife and habitats by making improvements to the site that would reduce the unwanted and undesirable activities that could lead to the agency divesting from the property. If FWP were to sell or trade the property, the 41 acres of wildlife habitat the property currently provides could be lost. The proposed project is a unique solution to long term issues and it aligns with 6 of the goals listed in the Missouri Madison Comprehensive recreation plan.

6. Insert map(s) showing the location of the proposed project, drawings and design work related to the project, and a reasonable number of photos (as available) here.



WHITE BEAR FISHING ACCESS SITE

LOCATION MAP

cascadecountymt.maps.arcgis.com

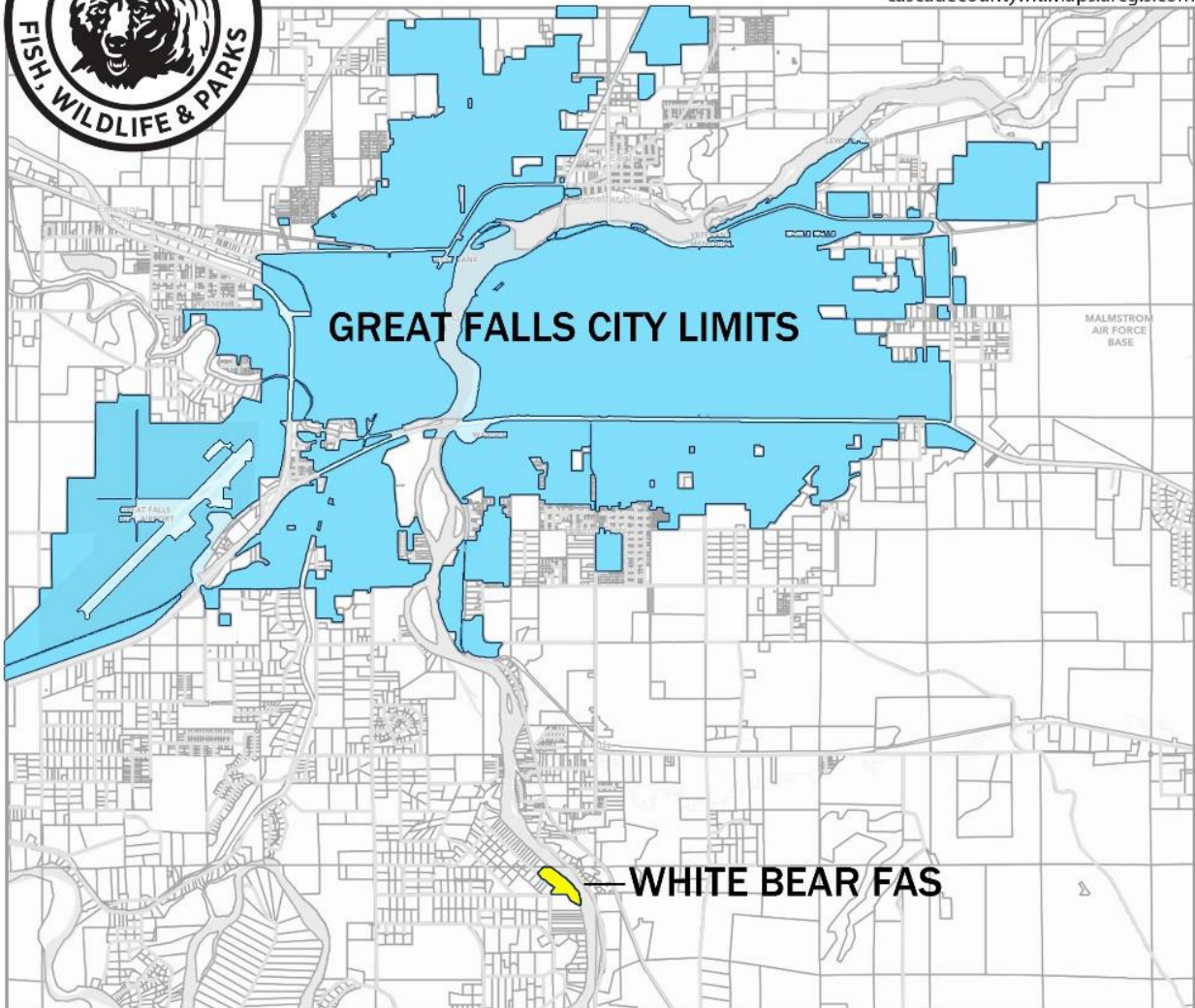


Figure 1: Location of White Bear Fishing Access Site (FAS)



Figure 2: Aerial view of White Bear FAS

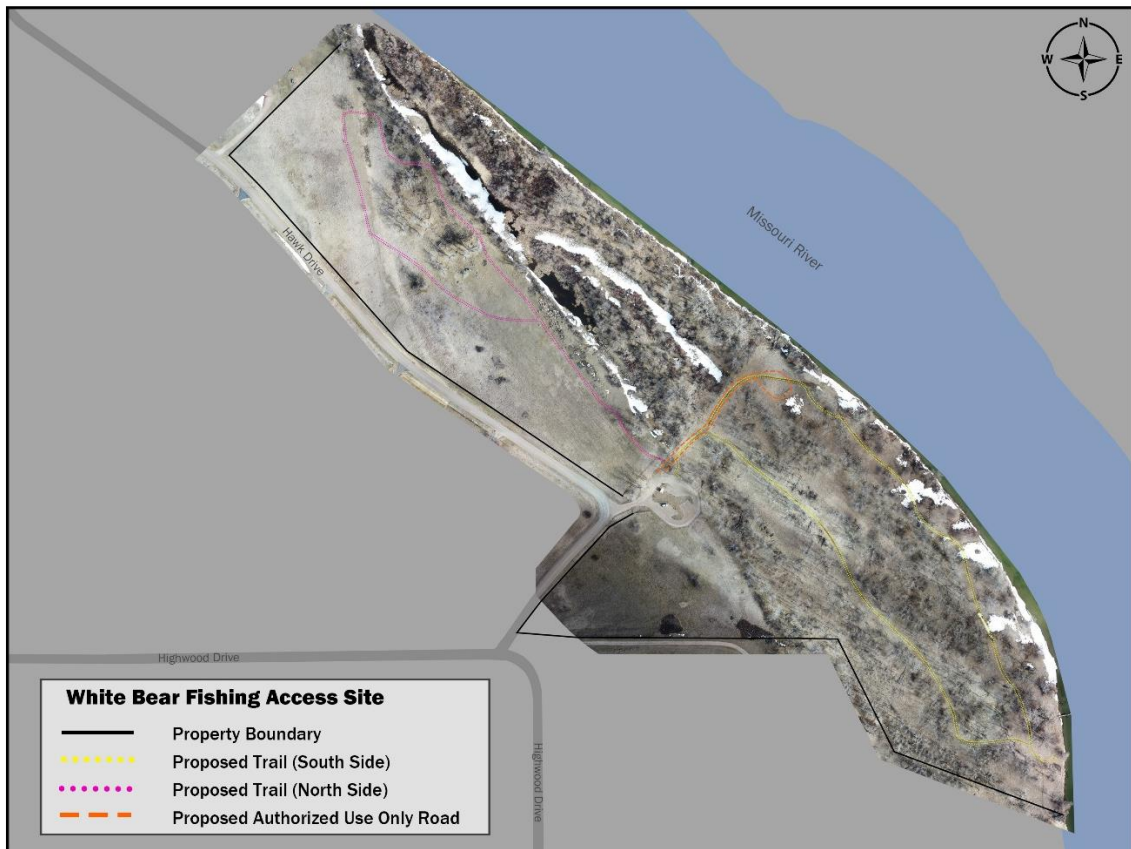


Figure 3: Proposed trail and graveled road addition overview map

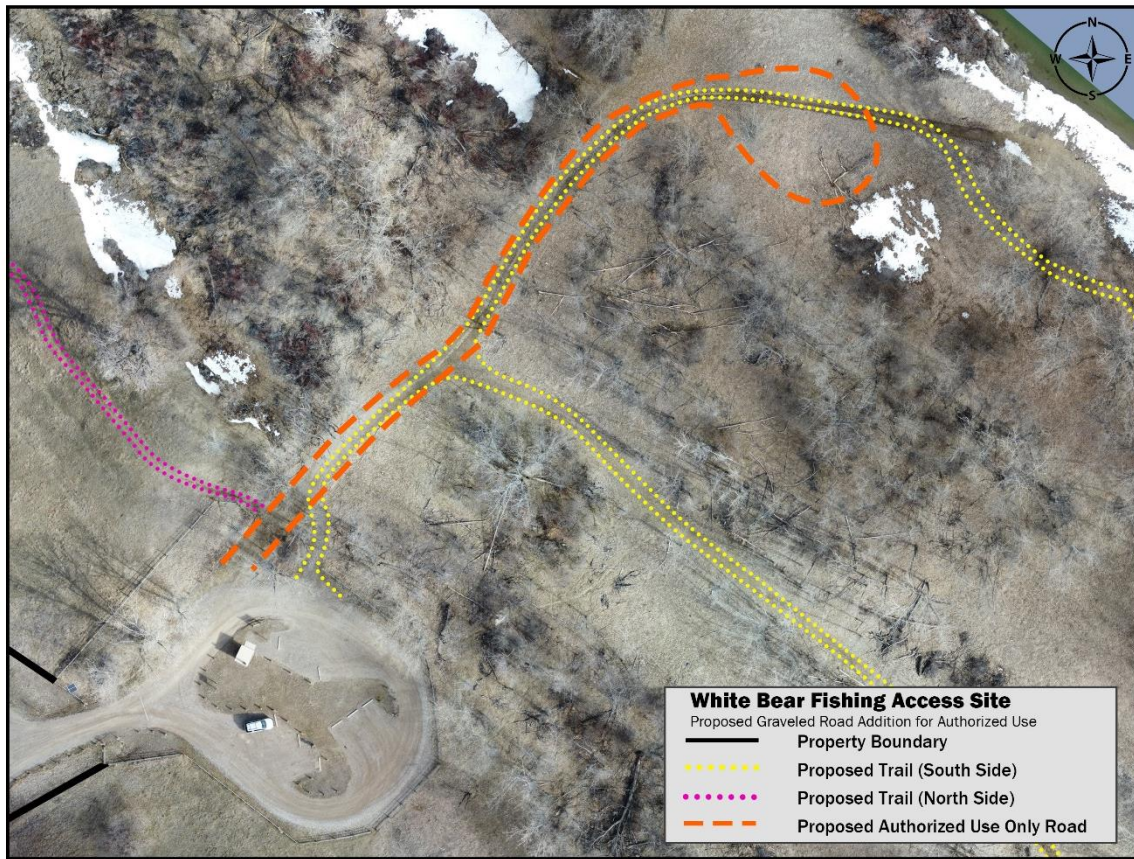


Figure 4: Proposed Graveled Road Addition for Authorized Use



Figure 5: Proposed South Side Trail Addition

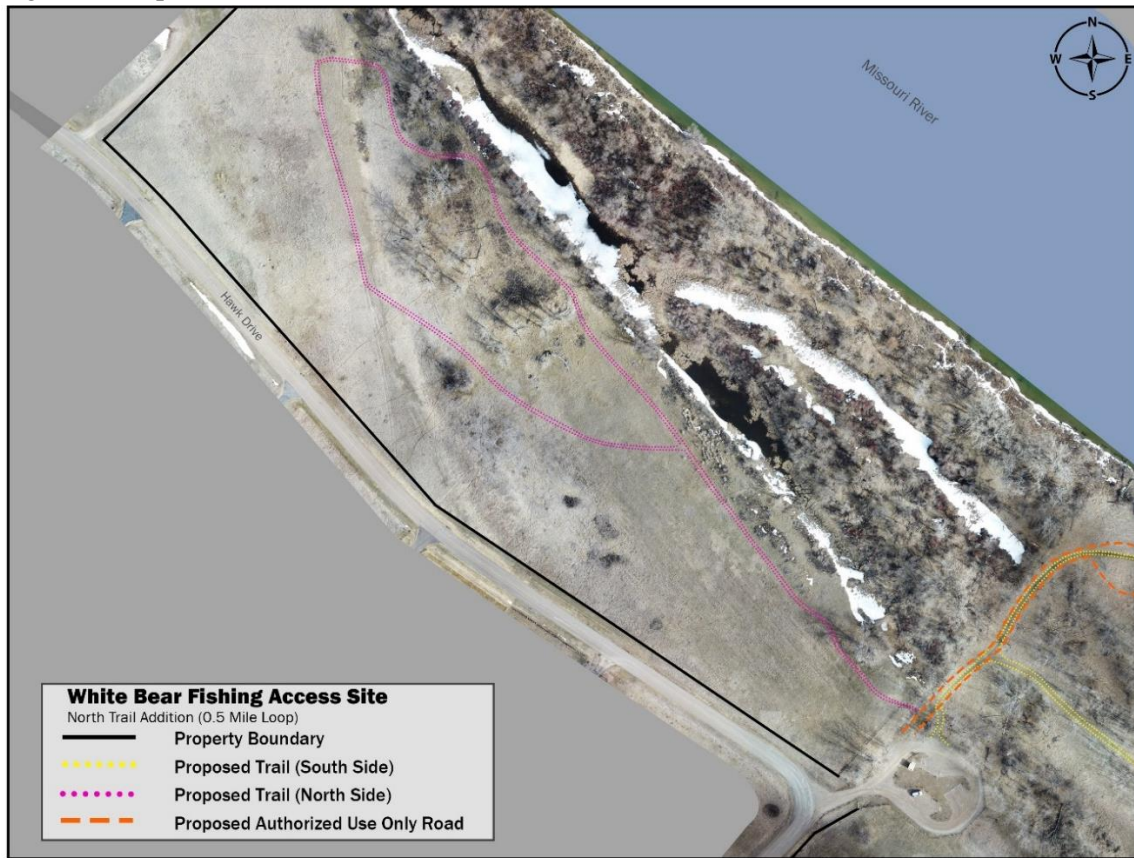
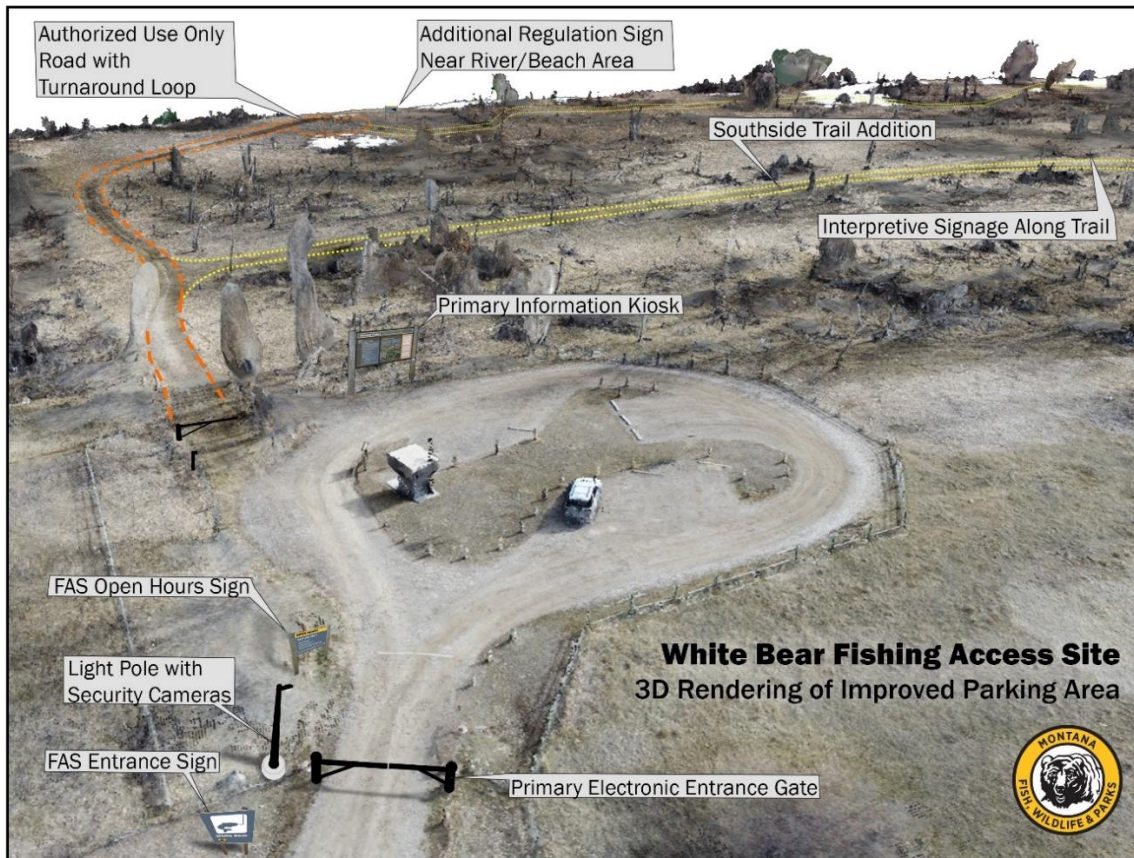
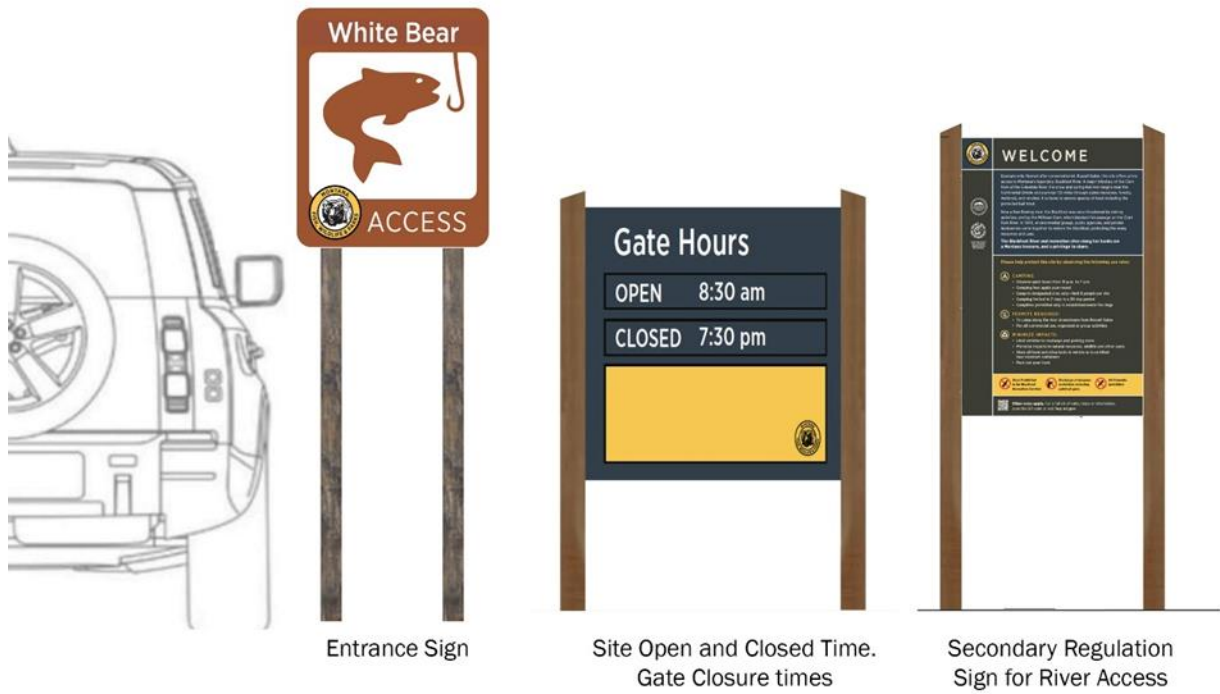


Figure 6: Proposed North Trail Addition



White Bear FAS Signage Plan



Entrance Sign

Site Open and Closed Time.
Gate Closure times

Secondary Regulation
Sign for River Access



Primary Kiosk. Information to include rules/regulations, map of the site, and information about the site.

Figure 7: Overview of existing parking area developments and improvements

Figure 8: White Bear FAS Signage Improvement Plan. The illustrations above reflect only the design of the signage types, and do not display the accurate text to be used on the sign. The actual text and information will be developed by staff to reflect rules, regulations, and information pertinent to White Bear FAS.

White Bear FAS Interpretive Signage Plan

NPS Style - Cantilever Framed Pedestal

In-Ground Mount and Surface Mount All Aluminum Construction

> For use with .090 and 1/8" panels only

> Standard Posts 2" x 3"

Post length & material varies by style and frame height

Custom post sizes available:

- ✓ 2" x 3" ✓ 2" x 6" ✓ 4" x 4"
- ✓ 2" x 4" ✓ 3" x 5"

* Custom post lengths available

* Standard and custom color options available

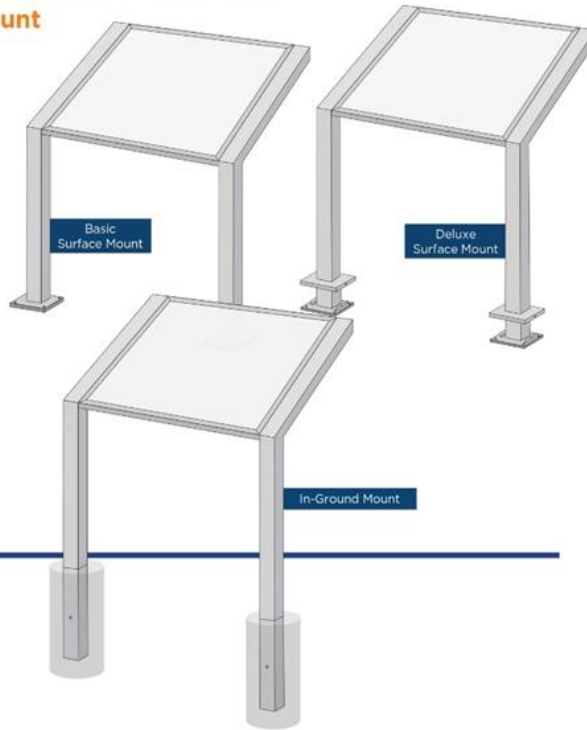
> Standard panel height 24"

> Frame will be flush with top of the posts

> Frame installs to posts with drive rivets

Length of post arm varies by panel height.

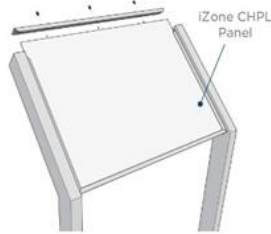
* Post length is determined by panel height, installation height and burial depth



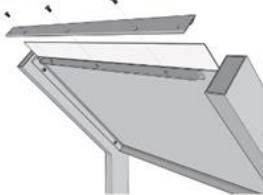
NPS Style - Cantilever Framed Pedestal

In-Ground Mount and Surface Mount All Aluminum Construction

FRONT VIEW



REAR VIEW

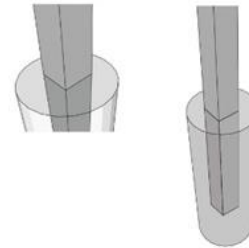


> Post Mounting Options

Surface Mount



In-Ground Mount



Deluxe Surface Mount

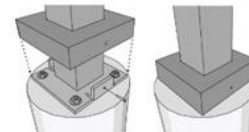
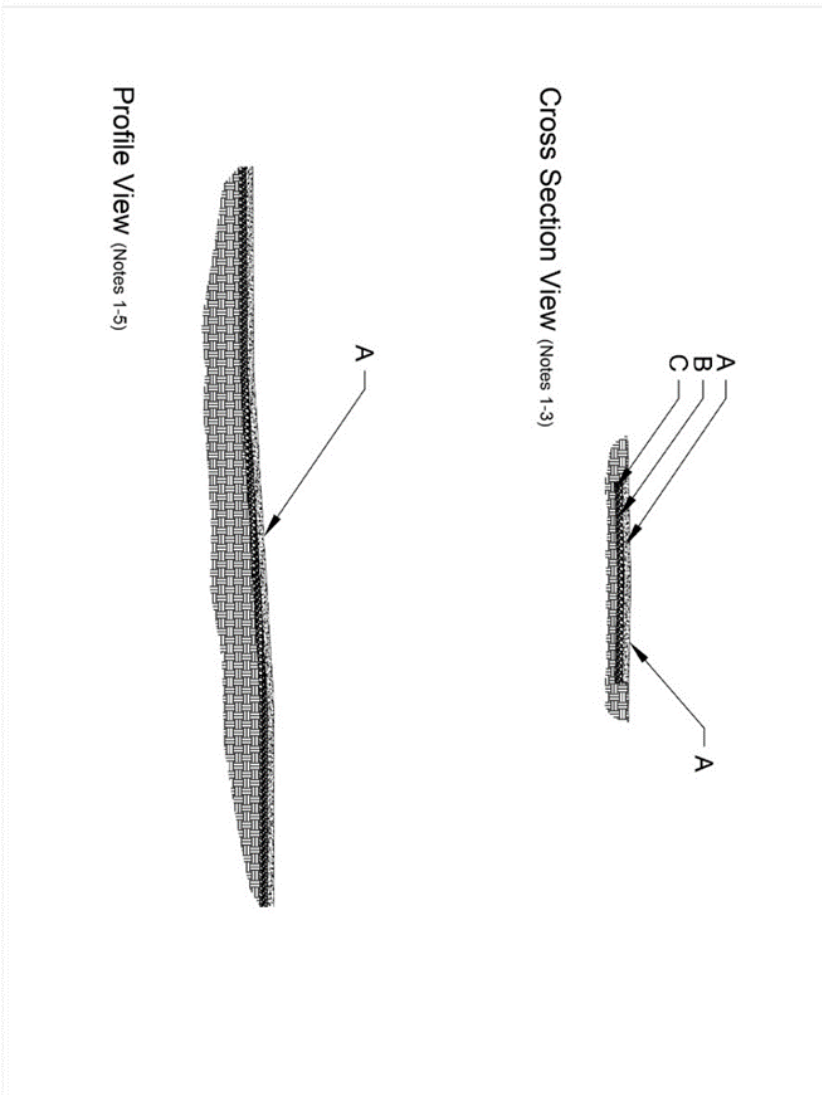


Figure 9: White Bear FAS Interpretive Signage Plan

- Materials**
- A - Compacted Crusher Fines; 2" depth
 - B - Roadmix Base, Compacted; 2-4" depth
 - C - Nonwoven Geotextile; 8 oz.
 - D - Slope 2% From Centerline

- Notes**
1. Path width is 60"
 2. Compact aggregate material in 2" lifts until firm and stable, do not compact when material is dry.
 3. Ensure geotextile is wrapped up excavated margins, covered by surface
 4. Maximum slope is 6%
 5. Maximum ramp rise is 30" before a 60" long resting area at a maximum 2% slope.



Cross Section and Profile Views of Proposed Crushed Stone Pathway

DATE: 06/23	APPROVED BY: DATE:	APPROVED BY: DATE:	 MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS	White Bear Fishing Access Site Crushed Stone Path	SHEET: 1
DRAWN BY: DATE:	APPROVED BY: DATE:	APPROVED BY: DATE:			OF 1
CHECKED BY: DATE:	APPROVED BY: DATE:	APPROVED BY: DATE:			1

Figure 10: Crushed Stone Trail Specs