

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks Proposed Federal Land Disposal of the Sportsman's Bridge Fishing Access Site in Flathead County, Montana.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) prepared this document in accordance with the procedures for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969¹, as amended, and as it applies to the Dingell-Johnson (DJ) Sport Fish Restoration Act of 1950 (16 U.S.C. 777 et seq). The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (Department) has requested approval from the Service to dispose of the 5.43-acre Sportsman's Bridge Fishing Access Site (grant F-22-L). To remain compliant with the original grant, the Department will federally encumber and develop a new boating access site located across the river. The Service's approval of this land disposal constitutes a federal action subject to provisions of NEPA, including preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate potential impacts of the proposed action on the human environment.

A draft EA was released for a 30-day public review period from May 8, 2026, to June 7, 2026 (<https://www.fws.gov/media/mfwp-sportsmans-bridge-fishing-access-site-disposal-ea>). Two public comments were received, both expressing support for the proposed action. A Final EA, titled *Final Environmental Assessment, Sportsman's Bridge Fishing Access Site Disposal in Flathead County, Montana, June 23, 2026*, including associated appendices, has been completed to meet NEPA requirements and to assist the Service in determining whether preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is necessary.

The EA evaluated a Preferred Alternative and a No Action Alternative. Under the Preferred Alternative, the Department would dispose of the existing 5.43-acre fishing access site due to the planned expansion and replacement of the Sportsman's Bridge. The Department determined that the bridge expansion will eliminate access to the current site, preventing it from meeting the authorized purpose of the original federal award. After evaluating the effects associated with the disposal, the Department concluded the action would have no significant impact on wildlife resources or public interests. To maintain public access, the Department will federally encumber and develop an 18.22-acre parcel across the river, which will serve users accessing the lower Flathead River and Flathead Lake.

Under the No Action Alternative, the Department would retain ownership of the 5.43-acre site. However, the site would no longer provide fishing or boating access and the Department would

¹ Executive Order 14154, Unleashing American Energy (Jan. 20, 2025), and a Presidential Memorandum, Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity (Jan. 21, 2025), require the Department to strictly adhere to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321 et seq. Further, such Order and Memorandum repeal Executive Orders 12898 (Feb. 11, 1994) and 14096 (Apr. 21, 2023). Because Executive Orders 12898 and 14096 have been repealed, complying with such Orders is a legal impossibility. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service verifies that it has complied with the requirements of NEPA, including the Department's regulations and procedures implementing NEPA at 43 C.F.R. Part 46 and Part 516 of the Departmental Manual, consistent with the President's January 2025 Order and Memorandum. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has also voluntarily considered the Council on Environmental Quality's rescinded regulations implementing NEPA, previously found at 40 C.F.R. Parts 1500–1508, as guidance to the extent appropriate and consistent with the requirements of NEPA and Executive Order 14154.

not remain in compliance with the conditions of the original award, which require providing public fishing and boating access.

Based on review of the Final EA, I find the proposed action does not constitute a major federal action significantly impacting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. I also find all reasonable alternatives were considered and the project complies with the intent of the National Historic Preservation Act, Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management), and Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands). Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the proposed disposal will have no effect on any listed species or critical habitat. Therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

The Final EA is available at the Office of Conservation Investment, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Denver Federal Center, 1 Denver Federal Center, Building 53, Room FW 100, Denver, Colorado, 80225, and online at: <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/office-conservation-investment-nepa-documents>

Signature	Date
-----------	------

References:

Final Environmental Assessment, *Sportsman's Bridge Fishing Access Site*, involving lands owned by the Montana Department of Fish, Game & Parks, Flathead County, Montana. June 23, 2026. Montana Department of Fish, Game & Parks & U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.