



**2019 Environmental Analysis Form
Montana Recreational Trails Program**

- 1. **Proposed RTP Project Name: Waterworks Hill Trailhead**
- 2. **Organization Applying for RTP Funds: City of Missoula**
- 3. **RTP Grant Year: 2019**

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

- 1. **Type of proposed action (new trail construction, new snowmobile grooming route, relocation of existing trail, new trailhead structure, etc.):** Construction of Improvements, including ½ mile of new gravel trail, 31 space paved trailhead, pit toilet, signage, and accessible scenic overlook.
- 2. **Agency authority for the proposed action:** City of Missoula
- 3. **Name, address and phone number of RTP applicant (if other than the agency):**
- 4. **Anticipated Schedule: (change as necessary)**
 Estimated Construction Commencement Date: March, 2020
 Estimated Completion Date: July, 2020
 Current Status of Project Design (% complete): 25%
 Summarize precisely when (what time of year) project phases will be occurring:

If fully funded, the entire project would be advanced according to the following general schedule: Final Design: May - June, 2018; Survey & Engineering: August, 2019; Prepare construction drawings: September, 2019; Project Bidding: October - November, 2019; Award: December, 2019; Construction: March - July, 2020; New trailhead and trails open to public: August, 2020; Site restoration seeding: October, 2020.

- 5. **Location affected by proposed action. Include a map. If your project will take place on specific trails, ensure they are clearly identified here by name as well as on your map:**
- 6. **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	<u>0</u>
Residential	<u>0</u>		
Industrial	<u>0</u>	(e) Productive:	
(b) Open Space/ Woodlands/Recreation	<u>1.7</u>	Irrigated cropland	<u>0</u>
(c) Wetlands/Riparian Areas	<u>0</u>	Dry cropland	<u>0</u>
		Forestry	<u>0</u>
		Rangeland	<u>0</u>
		Other	<u>0</u>

8. Permits, Funding & Overlapping Jurisdiction.

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

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permits</u>
City of Missoula (Development Services Unit)	Excavation Stormwater Protection Building
DEQ	State Enviro Protection

(b) Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
City of Missoula	\$400,000
Missoula County	\$150,000
State/Federal RTP	\$100,000

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
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9. Narrative summary of the proposed action (include reasons why project is necessary and benefits of the project): Construct new Waterworks Hill Trailhead – 31 parking space paved formal trailhead; ADA access parking, trailhead, restroom, and trail; and, provide for increased recreational capacity to serve users of the North Hills trail system - Missoula's most popular open space hiking destination. The project will also remediate past damage to lands from informal trailhead uses.

10. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives:

Alternative A: No Action – continue lack of capacity and infrastructure to support current and future trail use volumes and user groups, continued negative impacts to soil, vegetation and water quality from erosion and trail tread widening; continued inability to provide for restroom services; and, in ability to provide reasonable accommodation for wheelchair and other mobility device users.

Alternative B: Proposed Action - add trailhead parking capacity and infrastructure to support current and future trail use volumes and user groups; establish environmentally sustainable trail access; mitigate and ameliorate negative impacts to soil, vegetation and water quality; provide for restroom services; provide ADA trail and reasonable accommodation for wheelchair and other mobility device users; and, promote trail and open space ethics, interpretation and observance of rules through signage. Promote the visual quality of the Missoula Valley and surrounding open spaces.

Other alternative(s): Close or reduce size of existing informal trailhead – Option would be ineffective due to popularity of North Hills trail system and limited enforcement ability. Existing parking capacity is likely to be disrupted and diminished in future when access drive is fully developed as a public road to serve new development on private properties to the north of location. Reduced size option is likely to increase incident of user conflicts, primarily over availability of parking spaces and vehicular access.

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

The City of Missoula’s Development Services Department is the primary permitting agency that will require compliance with applicable standards for development, grading, stormwater management, buildings, and revegetation.

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CHECKLIST

Include a statement either here or under the No Action and other alternatives to describe the impacts of those actions. The checklist typically only illuminates the Proposed Action impacts.

Evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment.

A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Provided
1. Geology and soil quality, stability and moisture					XX	1
2. Air quality or objectionable odors				XX		
3. Water quality, quantity and distribution (surface or groundwater)					XX	3
4. Existing water right or reservation				XX		
5. Vegetation cover, quantity and quality					XX	5
6. Unique, endangered, or fragile vegetative species				XX		
6. Terrestrial or aquatic life and/or habitats				XX		
7. Unique, endangered, or fragile wildlife or fisheries species				XX		
8. The nesting or movement of migratory bird species				XX		
9. Introduction of new species into an area				XX		
10. Changes to abundance or movement of species				XX		

Insert comments here on each checklist item. Number comments accordingly (1, 2, 3...). Be sure to address what sources were consulted for your determination of level of impact.

1. Site grading will have a temporary impact on soil erosion and water quality. The majority of the soils in the vicinity of the trail head are disturbed and/or imported spoils from past operation of the water company by a private entity. Soil disturbance will be mitigated during construction through use of best practices for storm water protection measures (design, wattles, anti-track out measures, dust control, and revegetation). Existing damage will also be mitigated through minor regrading and revegetation. (Sources: Conceptual plan, site visit, site's land use history)
3. See above (#1) statement regards water quality mitigation.
5. Approximately 70% of the existing ground cover species and trees are non-native species – pasture grasses and Russian Olive. The project will reseed disturbed areas using native seed stock. The City water company's property outside the existing water tank will be subject to City's Conservation Lands program management for noxious and invasive weeds. Populations of Missoula Phlox occur along the ridge line to the west of the

proposed trailhead facilities. The City's Conservation Lands program has surveyed the project area and found no Missoula Phlox or other endemic species of concern. (Sources, site visit, City Water - Parks & Recreation project discussion agreement points; City Parks - Conservation Lands manager site assessment, Conservation lands program data).

B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Provided
1. Noise and/or electrical effects				XX		
2. Land use				XX		
3. Risk and/or health hazards				XX		
4. Community impact				XX		
5. Public services/taxes/utilities			XX			5
6. Potential revenue and/or project maintenance costs			XX			6
7. Aesthetics and recreation			XX			7
8. Cultural and historic resources				XX		
9. Evaluation of significance				XX		
10. Generate public controversy				XX		

Insert comments here on each checklist item. Number comments accordingly (1, 2, 3...). Be sure to address what sources were consulted for your determination of level of impact.

5. Development of the proposed improvements will require increased tax funding for routine maintenance as well as cyclical maintenance. Maintenance funding has already secured as a result of recent passage of a City-wide mil levy specifically dedicated to enhance the City's Conservation lands program which will be responsible for the operation and maintenance of the proposed improvements.

6. As noted previously, City-wide mil levy for improved maintenance of open space lands, trails, and facilities will provide for necessary revenue for maintenance and staffing needed to maintain the proposed improvements.

7. Mass grading of the proposed trailhead and access drive will be visible from homes located on the east side of the Rattlesnake valley but not from the larger community located within the Clark Fork River valley. The proposed trailhead location was chosen because of its location and low impact on visual resources. The concept grading design takes advantage of prior development and use of the lands by the former private operators of the water company to blend in the new development for minimal visual impact. Additionally, the project includes revegetation element that will help blend in the improvements and grading as well as help re-establish native grass and forb species.

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

1. Summarize the impacts of the proposed action and address any cumulative impacts:

The proposed project addresses short comings in the location and use of an existing informal trailhead and provides for enhanced protection and restoration of open space lands and the environment through compliance with applicable development and environmental regulations as well as providing for user education and enhanced maintenance. The proposed trailhead addresses capacity needs and provides for a safer parking area with support amenities to promote cleanliness, social equity (ADA access), environmental stewardship, and restoration of the City's conservation land values.

PART IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. Public involvement:

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 papers:
- One statewide press release (if applicable);
- Public notice on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks web page: <http://fwp.mt.gov>.

Copies of this environmental assessment will be distributed to the neighboring landowners and interested parties to ensure their knowledge of the proposed project.

This level of public notice and participation is appropriate for a project of this scope having limited impacts, many of which can be mitigated. **Is this a true statement for your project? YES**

2. Duration of comment period:

The public comment period will extend for (30) thirty days following the publication of the second legal notice in area newspapers. Written comments will be accepted until **5:00 p.m., _____ date _____, 2019** and can be mailed to the address below:

PART V. EA PREPARATION

1. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? (NO)? If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action. The proposed project involves less than 1 acre of disturbance over a site that has been heavily impacted by prior private water utility activity, development and maintenance practices. Most of the soils and vegetation to be affected by grading for the trailhead access and parking area are imported, non-native materials and species not routinely found in the North Hills of Missoula.

2. Person(s) responsible for preparing the EA: David Selvage, Missoula Parks & Recreation Systems & Services Supt.; Morgan Valliant, Conservations Lands Manager; Neil Minor, PLA, Parks & Trails Design Development Manager.

3. List of agencies or offices consulted during preparation of the EA: City of Missoula Parks & Recreation Conservation Lands program; State DEQ species of concern web pages; City Of Missoula Water Utility.

Add appendices as necessary