

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Yellowstone River Campground and RV Park Expansion

**Township 1 S. Range 26 E. Section 11
Yellowstone County, Montana
July 2015**

Performed By:



ENGINEERING WEST

LAND • WATER • SEWER

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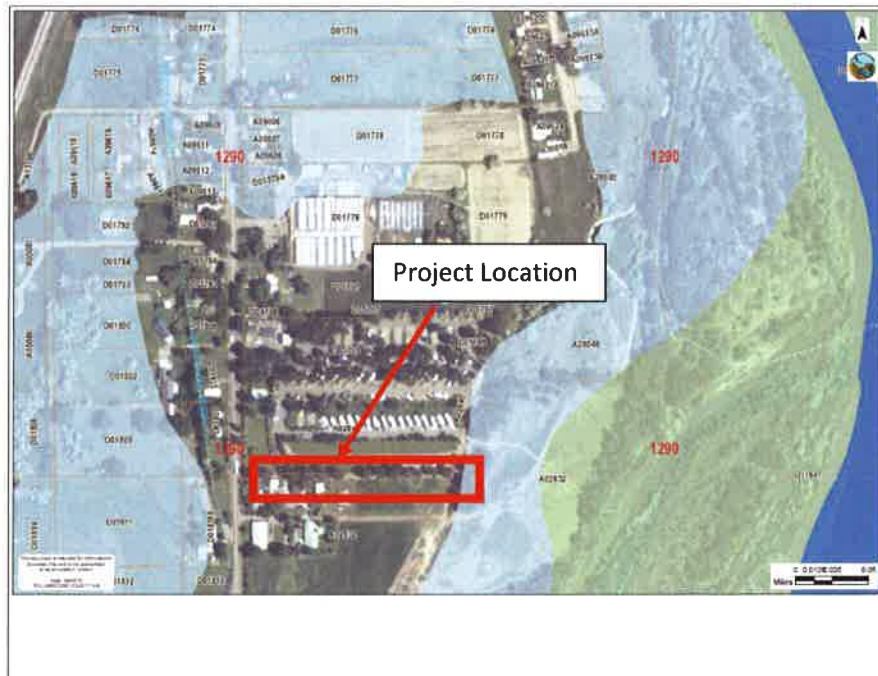
Purpose.

The Yellowstone River Campground and RV Park Expansion is a proposed 36-unit expansion of an existing RV park located in the E2 Section 11, Township 1 South, Range 26 East, in Yellowstone County, Montana. The proposed campground expansion is located along Garden Avenue, approximately .25 mile south of the intersection with S 27th St (Highway 3). Access will be off of Garden Avenue. The campground expansion contains approximately 2.84 acres. The landowner/developer is Doug Barnes.

Environmental Description.

A. Surface Water.

1. Locate on a plan overlay or sketch map all surface water and the delineated floodways that may affect or be affected by the proposed campground expansion including natural water systems (streams, lakes, rivers, or marshes), artificial water systems (canals, ditches, aqueducts, reservoirs, irrigation or drainage systems), and land subject to flooding. **FEMA flood map number 30111C1290E is attached. This project is not located in the floodplain. The Yellowstone River Channel Migration Study conducted by the Yellowstone Conservation District Council shows the property may be impacted by channel migration (<http://yellowstonerivercouncil.org/maps.php>).**



FEMA map with project location noted.

2. Describe all surface water that may affect or be affected by the proposed campground expansion including name, approximate size, present use, and time of year that water is present. **The Yellowstone River is located east of this project. Water is present year-round.**

3. Describe the proximity of proposed construction (such as buildings, sewer systems, roads) to surface water. **A 36-unit expansion of the existing Yellowstone River Campground RV Park is proposed to be located approximately ¼ mile from the river bank. No activity is proposed to occur within the mapped floodplain.**

4. Describe any existing or proposed stream bank or shoreline alterations and/or any proposed construction or modification of lakebeds or stream channels. Provide information on the location, extent, type, and purpose of any proposed alteration. **None.**

5. Please indicate which of the following water quality permits have been or will be applied for and describe the reasons why these permits are required. **None.**

<u>PERMIT</u>	<u>AGENCY</u>
310 Permit	Local Conservation District
SPA 124 Permit	Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Floodplain Permit	County Floodplain Administrator
Section 404 Permit, Section 10 Permit	U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
318 Authorization	Department of Environmental Quality
Navigable Rivers Land Use License or Easement	Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

B. Groundwater.

1. Using available information, provide the estimated seasonal minimum and maximum depth to the water table, dates on which these depths were determined, and the location and depth of all known aquifers that may be affected by the proposed campground expansion. **Test pits were excavated to eight-feet and no water was observed at this depth. Monitoring was begun at the end of August, 2014, and continued through spring and summer 2015.**

2. Provide a description of any steps necessary to avoid the degradation of groundwater and groundwater recharge areas. **DEQ approval will be obtained for proposed RV park expansion. As long as the specifications for water and wastewater are followed as approved by DEQ, there should be no degradation of groundwater and groundwater recharge.**

C. Geology/Soils/Slopes.

1. Using available information, locate on a plan or overlay any known geologic hazards affecting the proposed campground expansion which could result in property damage or personal injury due to any of the following: rock falls or slides; land, mud or snow slides; high water table, unstable or expansive soil conditions, slopes greater than twenty five percent (25%). **None.**
2. Explain the measures that will be taken to prevent or materially lessen the danger of future property damage or injury due to existing geologic hazards. **None.**
3. Provide a statement describing any unusual soil, topographic or geologic conditions on the property, which may limit the capability for construction or excavation using ordinary and reasonable techniques. The statement should address conditions such as shallow bedrock, high water table, unstable or expansive soil conditions, and slope. Describe the location and amount of any cut or fill three (3) or more feet in depth. Where cuts or fills are necessary, describe prevention of erosion and the promotion of revegetation, such as replacement of topsoil and grading. **None.**
4. Include soil reports obtained from the U.S.D.A., Natural Resource and Conservation Service (NRCS) containing the physical properties and engineering indices for each soil type, the soil limitations for sanitary facilities, building site development, and water features for each soil type. Describe any special design methods planned to overcome the soil limitations. **A soil report is included as part of this preliminary plan application.**

D. Vegetation.

1. Indicate the distribution of the major vegetation types and identify critical plant communities as identified by the NRCS. **The site consists mostly of grasses, with landscape-type trees along the north and south portion of the site.**
2. Describe measures to preserve trees and critical plant communities (e.g., design and location of roads, lots and open spaces). **None. No critical plant communities on site.**

E. Wildlife.

1. Describe species of fish and wildlife that inhabit the area affected by the proposed campground expansion. **This campground expansion is in proximity to deer and antelope habitat.**

2. Identify on an exhibit map any known critical or "key" wildlife areas, such as big game winter range, big game migration routes, waterfowl nesting areas, habitat for rare or endangered species, and wetlands. **There is no identified "key" wildlife areas on the site.**

3. Submit the impacts of the proposed development on fish and wildlife as identified by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MFWP). Provide a written statement outlining any recommendation of MFWP and any mitigation efforts to mitigate adverse impacts. **Ray Mule of MFWP states that MFWP has no specific comments about the proposed campground expansion.**

Community Impact Report.

A. Impact on Agriculture/ Agricultural Water User Facilities.

1. Describe the number of acres in crop production and whether the property is in whole or in part a viable farm unit, e.g. was the property under production during the last regular season. **This site is not currently in use for agricultural purposes. It is adjacent to and in the same ownership as an existing RV park. Approximately 3 percent of the site is classified as prime farmland if irrigated.**
2. Describe the uses of land within the vicinity of the proposed campground expansion. **The current use of the land is a vacant area adjacent to an under the same ownership as an existing RV park (Yellowstone River Campground).**
3. Describe existing irrigation rights on the property and whether the rights will be transferred, retained by the original owner, or severed. **There are no water rights associated with this property.**
4. Explain any modification or relocation of ditches or any easements to be provided with the campground expansion. The subdivider shall notify the affected ditch company of the campground expansion and shall obtain permission to reroute or alter the ditch in any way. **No ditches or ditch easement will be modified as part of this campground expansion.**

B. Impact On Local Services And The Public Health And Safety.

1. Water Supply.

- a. Describe how water will be provided for domestic use and fire protection. **Yellowstone River Campground is served by municipal water from the City of Billings. There is an existing fire hydrant located at the entrance of the campground.**
- b. Indicate the number of gallons per day of water the proposed campground expansion will require and whether the water supply is sufficient to meet the needs of the anticipated population of the campground expansion. Describe any anticipated effects on existing water systems or wells within the area. **The campground expansion will be served by a municipal water supply from the City of Billings. The City currently has sufficient capacity to handle demand from this campground expansion.**
- c. Based on available information, specify whether the proposed water supply satisfies the standards set forth by MDEQ for quality, quantity and

construction criteria. Unless cisterns are proposed information should be obtained from one or more of the following sources:

- i Well logs or testing of onsite or nearby wells;
- ii Information contained in published hydrogeological reports; or
- iii As otherwise specified by the rules adopted by the MDEQ pursuant to 76-4-104, MCA.

Water will be supplied by municipal water from the City of Billings, per DEQ and City of Billings requirements.

d. If connection to an existing public, community, or shared water system is proposed, identify and describe the existing system and approximate distance to the connection from the proposed campground expansion.

i Provide written evidence that permission to connect to that system has been obtained. **Please see the DEQ application which contains a copy of a letter from Joe Sheridan of the City of Billings Public Works Department, Engineering Division, stating that the property is currently served by municipal water.**

ii Provide information regarding the capacity of the existing water system and its adequacy for serving the proposed campground expansion. **Please see the DEQ application which contains a copy of a letter from Joe Sheridan of the City of Billings Public Works Department, Engineering Division, stating that the water system has sufficient capacity to meet demand from this campground expansion.**

e. If a new community or shared water system is proposed, identify who will install that system, and how the system will be maintained. **The municipal water supply is maintained by the City of Billings Public Works Department.**

f. If individual water systems are proposed, describe the adequacy of supply of groundwater for individual wells or cisterns and the method used to determine adequacy. **No individual water systems are proposed. Water supply will be from the City of Billings.**

2. Sewage Disposal.

a. Describe the proposed method of sewage disposal. **A community drainfield is proposed for the campground expansion, and will be submitted to the Montana Department of Environmental Quality for review and approval.**

b. Indicate the number of gallons of effluent per day that will be generated by the proposed campground expansion at full occupancy, whether the proposed method of sewage disposal is sufficient to meet the anticipated needs of the campground expansion, and whether it meets the standards of MDEQ. **Assuming each RV will generate 100 gallons of wastewater per day, it can be expected that 3,600 gallons of wastewater will be generated by this campground expansion each day. A septic and drainfield system built to DEQ's specifications should be adequate for the needs of the proposed campground expansion.**

c. If connection to an existing public sewer system is proposed, provide a description of the system and the approximate distance from proposed campground expansion.

i. Provide written evidence from the appropriate sewer jurisdiction granting permission to connect to that system shall be submitted with the preliminary plan.

ii. Provide information regarding the installation, maintenance and phasing of any proposed public sewage disposal system.

No connection to an existing public system is proposed.

d. If a new community or shared sewer system is proposed, identify who will install that system, and how the system will be maintained. **The new community system will be owned and maintained by the Yellowstone River RV Park. The system will be installed using private funds and will be built to DEQ specifications.**

e. If individual septic systems are proposed, describe the location and specifications of septic systems. **No individual septic system are proposed**

3. Solid Waste Disposal.

a. Provide evidence that there is an existing solid waste collection and disposal system available that can accommodate the anticipated additional

volume. **Solid Waste will be disposed of at the Billings Regional Landfill.**

b. If no existing collection and disposal system is available, describe the proposed method of solid waste collection and disposal. **Solid waste disposal will be the responsibility of individual property owners and will be contracted with a licensed hauler**

c. Describe how the proposed system satisfies the standards set forth by MDEQ. **The property owners will contract with a licensed hauler for disposal, as required by DEQ.**



Existing dumpster in southeast portion of existing park.

4. Storm water.

a. Provide calculations indicating how much storm water run-off will be generated as a result of the proposed development. **Stormwater runoff calculation are included in the DEQ application, which is included as part of this application.**

b. Provide a description of the proposed storm water collection and drainage systems that satisfy the standards set forth by Section 4.7. **Proposed stormwater collection and drainage details are included in the DEQ application, a copy of which is included as part of this**

application. Sotrmwater drainage and collections systems will be installed per DEQ requirements.

5. Roads.

a. Describe any proposed access roads or substantial improvements to existing public or private access roads. **Access will be from Garden Avenue utilizing an existing approach and the existing internal road network of Yellowstone River Campground. No improvements to existing road are planned. However, there will be an emergency-only secondary access provided to the south of the site on property also owned by the subdividers**

b. If connections to any existing roads are proposed, identify all access permits that are necessary from the city, county or state. **Yellowstone River Campground has an existing access to Garden Avenue. No new or improved connections are proposed other than the above mentioned emergency access, which will also utilize an existing access onto Garden Avenue.**

c. Discuss whether any of the individual lots or tracts have access directly to arterial roads. **The new proposed RV spaces will not access directly onto Garden Avenue. They will utilize the internal road network of Yellowstone River Campground and access Garden Avenue via the existing access.**

d. Explain any proposed closure or modification of existing roads. **No closure or modification of existing roads are proposed or expected for this campground expansion.**

e. Describe provisions considered for dust control on roads. **Garden Avenue and the internal road network of Yellowstone River Campground are constructed with a dust-resistant asphalt surface. No additional dust-control measures are proposed.**

f. Explain how road maintenance will be provided to meet MDEQ guidelines for prevention of water pollution and erosion. **A grading and drainage plan will be submitted to DEQ for review and approval. All construction will adhere to the stipulations of the DEQ approval.**

g. Indicate who will pay the cost of installing and maintaining the roads. **No installation of road is proposed. The existing internal road network of Yellowstone River Campground is and will continue to be privately maintained by Yellowstone River Campground. This includes the emergency-only access.**



Current internal road on south side of park looking west. Additional RVs will be on left side of picture.

h. Discuss how much daily traffic will be generated on existing local and neighborhood roads and main arterials when the campground expansion is fully developed. **Assuming and additional two trips per day for each RV space, this campground expansion would generate approximately 72 additional trips per day when fully developed.**

i. Indicate the capacity of existing and proposed roads and if they are capable of safely handling the increased traffic resulting from the proposed campground expansion. Describe any additional maintenance that will be necessary due to increased traffic and who will pay the cost of maintenance. **The existing roads are capable of safely handling the increased traffic. No additional maintenance is anticipated.**

j. Indicate ownership of any private access to the campground expansion, including private driveway easements. **Access will be from a privately owned and maintained road network for Yellowstone River Campground. This private road network has access onto Garden Avenue, a public road.**

6. Utilities.

a. Indicate which utility companies are proposed to serve the campground expansion. **MDU provides natural gas to the area. Northwestern Energy provides electrical service.**

b. State the method of furnishing electric, natural gas or telephone service, the extent to which these utilities will be placed underground, and the estimated completion of each utility installation. **Dale Nafts of MDU reports that they have a gas main in Garden Avenue and can provide gas if easements are provided.**

Northwestern Energy currently serves the existing campground from a 100 KVA single phase transformer, per Jordan McNaught, an engineer with Northwestern Energy.

No response has been received to our request for comments from Century Link regarding availability of telephone service.

c. Indicate if there are any existing utility lines on the property such as transmission lines, pipelines, etc. and if so, describe the impacts they may have on the proposed campground expansion. **There are existing overhead transmission lines on the west side of the campground expansion along Garden Avenue, which provides electrical service to the area, including to the existing campground. No negative impact to the proposed campground expansion is anticipated.**

7. Emergency Services.

a. Describe the emergency services available to the campground expansion including fire protection, police protection, ambulance, and medical services. **Fire Chief Paul A. Dextras has not yet responded to our request for comment on this proposed campground expansion. However, since there is currently an existing campground in the location it is unlikely that this campground expansion would significantly adversely impact the Fire Department's ability to serve the area. At the pre-application meeting it was mentioned that an emergency 2nd access, which could be gated, would likely be required. There is an existing fire hydrant at the entrance to the campground.**

The Yellowstone County Sheriff's Office has not yet responded to our request for comments. However, with an existing campground on the site it is unlikely that this campground expansion would significantly adversely impact the Sheriff Office's ability to provide law enforcement services in the area.

b. Provide an estimate of the number of responses generated by the campground expansion, and the method of determining those numbers. **Since this campground expansion is an expansion of an existing use which largely caters to the tourist/vacation industry, this proposal should not generate a large amount of emergency responses.**

c. Describe roads to the campground expansion and provide information on compaction standards and widths that satisfy the requirements set forth for emergency vehicle access. **Garden Avenue is a public road built to City/County standards with a paved width of approximately 26 feet. The internal road network is paved with widths of approximately 16 feet and is sufficient for RV and emergency service use. A secondary emergency access will be provided to the south of the site, utilizing property also owned by the developers.**



South side of property looking west in area of proposed drainfield and emergency exit.

d. In the event that the proposed campground expansion is located within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), the subdivider shall submit a plan to mitigate fire hazard in accordance with the fire department having jurisdiction. **This proposed campground expansion is not located in a mapped WUI.**

e. Describe any health or safety hazards on or near the campground expansion, such as mining activity, high-pressure gas lines, dilapidated structures or high voltage power lines. These conditions should be

accurately described and their origin and location identified and any proposed mitigation. **The Yellowstone River and Interstate 90 are relatively close to the campground expansion. However, the Yellowstone River Campground has been in existence at its current location for many years without significant health and safety hazards being identified, which would be well known by this time if they existed.**

8. Schools.

a. Describe the available educational facilities that would service this campground expansion. **According to information obtained from <http://www.co.yellowstone.mt.gov/schools/>, students in the campground expansion will be served by Newman Elementary School, Riverside Middle School, and Senior High School. However, it is doubtful that an RV park would generate many students.**

b. Provide an estimate of the number of school children that will be generated from the proposed campground expansion and provide the basis for the estimate. **It is doubtful that an RV park expansion, such as this, would generate many, if any, students due to the tourist nature of park users.**

c. Provide information regarding whether increased enrollment can be accommodated by the present personnel, facilities and the existing school bus system. This should include any recommendations of the administrator(s) and plans to mitigate adverse impacts of the proposed development on the provision of educational services. **Comments have not yet been received from the school district. However, due to the small number of students this campground expansion is anticipated to add to the school system there should not be any issues accommodating the increase in students.**

9. Parks and Recreation Facilities.

a. Describe any park and recreation facilities to be provided within the proposed campground expansion and other recreational facilities that may serve the campground expansion. **No additional park and recreation facilities will be provided. Cash-in-lieu-of-parkland will be provided at 11% of the unimproved value of the property. It can be assumed that residents in this campground expansion will utilize the parks and trails located within the City of Billings, due to this campground expansion's close proximity to Billings.**

b. State how the required parkland dedication is being satisfied. **Cash-in-lieu-of-parkland will be provided at 11% of the unimproved value of the property, pursuant to 76-3-621 (3)(d), MCA.**

C. Land Use.

1. Indicate compliance with zoning encompassing all or part of the proposed campground expansion. If the proposed campground expansion is located near the jurisdictional area of an incorporated city or town, state whether annexation is proposed. **This site is currently zoned Agricultural-Suburban and this proposal necessitates Special Review in order to comply with the zoning. Annexation is not proposed.**

2. Describe how the campground expansion will affect access to any public lands. Where public lands are adjacent to or near the proposed development, describe present and anticipated uses for those lands. **There are no public lands adjacent to the proposed campground expansion, the Mystic Park is in relatively close proximity to the north. No access to public lands will be affected by this campground expansion.**

3. Describe the effect of the campground expansion on adjacent land uses. **The proposed campground expansion should have little effect on adjacent land uses since this project is an addition to an existing RV park. Most surrounding land is residential, commercial, and agricultural.**

4. Describe any on-site or off-site land uses creating a nuisance, such as unpleasant odors, unusual noises, dust or smoke. **No on or off-site nuisance are anticipated as the subject property is already in use as an RV park, and this campground expansion continues that use.**

D. Historical Features.

Provide a letter from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) indicating whether any historic features such as paleontological, archeological or cultural sites, structures, or objects are present on the subject property. If such features are present, provide a written statement outlining any recommendations of SHPO and any plans for inventory, study and/or preservation and mitigation for any adverse impacts. **Damon Murdo, Cultural Resource Manager for the State Historic Preservation Office, responded to our inquiry and stated that their records show no previously recorded cultural resources in the area and that a cultural resource inventory is unwarranted at this time due to the low likelihood that cultural properties will be impacted.**

E. Visual Impact.

1. Describe any efforts to visually blend development activities with natural surroundings. **This proposed campground expansion should blend nicely into the surroundings, since it is an expansion of an existing use.**
2. If the campground expansion is located near the Yellowstone River or the rimrocks, describe any potential impacts to these natural amenities. Discuss any mitigation efforts to preserve the views. **This campground expansion is located near the Yellowstone River, but no mitigation should be necessary to preserve the views since the subject property is already used as an RV park. The river is not visible from Garden Avenue.**
3. Provide information regarding revegetation after construction and any proposed landscaping to be provided along streetscapes. **Areas disturbed by construction will be revegetated after construction has been completed. Landscaping will continue to be grasses and landscaped tree rows.**

Summary of Probable Impacts (76-3-603(1)(b), MCA)

A. Describe the effects the proposed campground expansion has on the following:

1. Agriculture. **Effects on agriculture should be minimal. The proposal is an expansion of the Yellowstone River Campground and no land will be removed from agricultural production as a result of this campground expansion. Surrounding land has a mix of uses.**

2. Agricultural water user facilities. **There are no ditches on the property, or other agricultural water user facilities.**

3. Local services. **Neither the Yellowstone County Sheriff's Office nor the City of Billings Fire Department have responded to our request for comments.**

Joe Sheridan of the City of Billings Public Works Department, Engineering Division, reports the City's water system has sufficient capacity to serve this campground expansion.

4. The natural environment. **Any effect on the natural environment from this campground expansion should be minimal, as it the existing campground has been in existence and this proposal is an expansion of that use.**



Existing RV park north of the proposed expansion.

5. Wildlife and wildlife habitat. **Ray Mule of MFWP states that MFWP has no comments on the project at this time.**

6. Public health and safety. **Children should be supervised to make sure they don't wander too close to the river or towards the interstate. However, this property has been in use as an RV park and campground for many years and any health and safety issues should be well known by now.**

B. Describe how the proposed campground expansion complies with the following:

1. Survey requirements provided in Part 4 of the MSPA. **All survey requirements as delineated in state law have been and will be adhered to through final plan.**

2. These subdivision regulations. **The Yellowstone County Subdivision Regulations have been adhered to throughout the subdivision process.**

3. The subdivision review process as described in Chapter 3 of these Regulations. **The subdivision review process has been followed as described in the Yellowstone County Subdivision Regulations.**

C. Describe how the proposed campground expansion provides for easements for the location and installation of any planned utilities. **Montana Dakota Utilities have a gas main installed in Garden Avenue and would be able to provide gas if easements are provided.**

Northwestern Energy provides electricity to the existing campground and reports the ability to extend service to the proposed campground expansion.

D. Describe how the proposed campground expansion provides for legal and physical access to each lot and the required notation of that access on the plan. **The campground expansion has access from Garden Avenue utilizing a private road network privately owned and maintained by Yellowstone River Campground.**