

**EA CHECKLIST**

Project Title Dover Island Acquisition

Project Description The Montana Department of Justice Natural Resource Damage Program (NRDP) proposes to partially fund a property acquisition by the Yellowstone River Parks Association (YRPA) to purchase the Dover Island property, a single parcel property located at 3114 Dover Road, Billings, Montana, in Yellowstone County. YRPA has arranged for other funding to match the State funding to complete the purchase. The property is approximately 288.87 acres in total size and is bordered by the Yellowstone River to the south and east, and agricultural or light industrial land to the east, west, and north. The subject property consists of native hay fields and forested river bottom land, except for a portion near Dover Road that contains several buildings including two houses, a barn, a garage, a shop, several outbuildings, gravel and dirt access roads and parking area, and an irrigation ditch system. Partial funding by NRDP is consistent with the *Final Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan and Final Programmatic Environmental Assessment for the ExxonMobil Pipeline Company July 1, 2011 Yellowstone River Oil Spill* (restoration plan). Impacts of terrestrial habitat acquisitions on the resources injured by the Yellowstone River oil spill were addressed in Chapter 6 of the restoration plan.

Person Preparing Checklist Alicia Stickney Phone 406-444-1346

**POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL and HUMAN ENVIRONMENT**

	<b>MAJOR</b>	<b>MODERATE</b>	<b>MINOR</b>	<b>NONE</b>	<b>UNKNOWN</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Topography				X		
Geology: Stability				X		
Soils: quality, quantity, distribution				X		
Water: quality, quantity, distribution				X		
Air: quality				X		
Terrestrial, avian, and aquatic: species and habitats				X		A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program 's (MNHP) Species of Concern database found no Montana animal Species of Concern within the vicinity of Dover Island (2021). The wildlife habitat on the property is already protected with a Nature Conservancy Conservation Easement and would not change with a change in ownership of the parcel. No species of Special Concern would be affected by the acquisition. FWP wildlife staff did not express concerns about wildlife habitats.
Vegetation: quantity, quality, species				X		A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program's (MNHP) Species of Concern database found no Montana plant Species of Concern within the vicinity of Dover Island (2021). The property is already protected with a Nature Conservancy Conservation Easement. YRPA would embark on a restoration project to restore native vegetation, but that is not part of the acquisition.
Agriculture, grazing, crops, production				X		The property is currently not used for commercial agricultural crops, and YRPA would be prohibited from engaging in commercial agricultural activities on the property.
Unique, endangered, fragile or				X		

limited environmental resources						
Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air, and energy				X		
Historical and archaeological sites				X		Four sites have been identified in Section 8, T1N, R27E. No change to buildings and nor any ground disturbance would occur as part of the acquisition.
Aesthetics				X		The Dover Island property would only be used for purposes consistent with its current uses, which are protected open space and natural habitat.
Social Structures & more				X		
Cultural uniqueness, diversity				X		
Population: quantity and distribution				X		
Housing: quantity and distribution				X		
Human health and safety				X		
Community and personal income				X		
Employment: quantity, and distribution				X		
Tax base: local and state				X		YRPA would pay taxes on the property.
Government services: demand on				X		YRPA is a private, non-profit organization. No demands would be made on government services because of their ownership of the property.
Industrial, commercial, and agricultural activities				X		
Recreation and wilderness			X beneficial			Recreational access to the Yellowstone River would be improved because YRPA would be required to manage the property as a privately-owned but publicly-accessible park.
Environmental plans and goals, local and regional				X		
Demands for energy				X		
Transportation networks and traffic flows			X			Traffic would increase to Dover Island when it is publicly accessible. When the Billings By-Pass is completed, the entire area will be more accessible by vehicles.

List all groups or agencies contacted and the contact person's phone number.

Mike Ruggles, Montana FWP, 406-247-2960; Damon Murdo, State Historic Preservation Office, 406-444-7767, File search dated 5/28/21

**References:**

Montana Plant Species of Concern Report. Montana Natural Heritage Program. Retrieved on 5/14/21, from <http://mtnhp.org/SpeciesOfConcern/?AorP=p>

Montana Animal Species of Concern Report. Montana Natural Heritage Program. Retrieved on 5/14/21, from <http://mtnhp.org/SpeciesOfConcern/?AorP=a>

