

EIS Overview and Response Instructions Spring 2010 Sanders County Extension

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An Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared for the Eurasian Watermilfoil/Curlyleaf Pondweed Research and Implementation: Phase 2 project is available for public review. A copy of the EA can be downloaded from the following websites: <http://www.co.sanders.mt.us/> or Noxon Cabinet Shoreline Coalition's website www.ncshorelines.com. A hard copy of the EA can be obtained by contacting John Halpop at the Sanders County Extension office via email to jhalpop@montana.edu or by calling (406) 827-6934.

The Project has been proposed by the Eurasian Watermilfoil Task Force (EWMTF), Sanders County Weed District and Avista Utilities to continue to study the feasibility of using herbicides as a management tool for controlling aquatic weeds in Noxon Rapids and Cabinet Gorge Reservoirs as part of an Integrated Weed Management approach. The proposed action alternative would allow Avista Utilities, the Sanders County Weed District, and the EWMTF to continue with herbicide research within Noxon Reservoir and consequently, implement operational herbicide weed control as a portion of an integrated weed management approach within both Noxon Rapids and Cabinet Gorge Reservoirs.

The proposed research, implementation and maintenance would occur over the next ten years. Research within Noxon Rapids Reservoir is proposed to continue during the summer of 2010, and research could potentially be required during the summer of 2011. Implementation of herbicide treatments within known Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM) and/or Curlyleaf Pondweed beds would occur within the three to four years following the completion of research. The Sanders County Weed District and the EWMTF received a Montana Noxious Weed Trust Fund Grant from the Montana Department of Agriculture and a Montana Department of Natural & Resources Conservation Reclamation and Development Grant to conduct a dye and herbicide treatment plot study.

This research project provides follows up on a similar project conducted in 2009 and is designed to determine the concentration and plot size required to effectively remove the infestation with herbicides. The necessary funds have been granted to the applicants to conduct dye studies to determine the potential behavior of applied herbicides and to treat the research plots with herbicides. The project site is located on Noxon Rapids and Cabinet Gorge Reservoirs, which are part of the Clark Fork River watershed.

Please submit any comments that you have by 5:00 P.M., June 16, 2010 to the Sanders County Extension office at the address listed above or via email to jhalpop@montana.edu. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at (406) 827-6934. Please note that this draft EA will be considered as final if no substantive comments are received by the deadline listed above.