

# HERITAGE RESOURCES

## Introduction

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Heritage resources involve the conservation of archeological, cultural, architectural, and historic sites and artifacts. This section describes the existing heritage resource conditions of the West Side Reservoir Project Area and how the no action and action alternatives would affect the various components of this resource. The effects analysis focuses on those areas where potentially ground-disturbing activities, such as timber harvesting, are proposed. Activities that only involve the use of hand crews and no heavy equipment, such as prescribed burning, would typically not receive consideration from heritage resource personnel.

## Information Sources

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A pre-survey files search was conducted by the forest's heritage resource staff to gather information on known, previously-identified heritage resources within the proposed West Side Reservoir Post-Fire Project analysis area boundaries. As part of this initial, pre-survey Phase I, the forest initiated consultation with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes in an attempt to identify any potential concerns the tribes may have regarding traditional heritage properties, traditional use plants, and/or areas of spiritual importance within the analysis area.

A second phase (Phase II) occurs prior to actual project implementation. Phase II consists of a thorough field reconnaissance (inventory) of all proposed areas of environmental effect from the West Side Reservoir Post-Fire Project so as to locate, record, and evaluate the historical significance of any identified heritage resources. At that time Section 106 consultation with the Montana State Historic Preservation Office (MtSHPO) is completed to determine the historical significance and National Register eligibility status of any identified sites, potential project effects to such sites, and methods for avoidance or management of any adverse effects.

Subsequent to completion of the Phase I pre-survey files search the Heritage Resource staff conducted a Phase II field reconnaissance of the proposed West Side Reservoir Post-Fire Project project area using a field methodology described in the forest's draft *Site Identification Strategy* (SIS) document currently on file with the MtSHPO in Helena, Montana. The field inventory strategy involves a pedestrian reconnaissance in areas designated for environmental impact through the vegetation treatments prescribed in all action alternatives. Regardless of the degree or type of vegetative treatment, heritage resource personnel inventory the affected areas based upon topography with "high probability areas" (ridge tops, peaks, stream terraces) receiving 100 percent coverage, "medium probability areas" (slopes less than 30 percent, rock outcrops, erosional surfaces) receiving 40 percent coverage, and "low probability areas" (slopes in excess of 30 percent, north-facing slopes, heavily timbered slopes with abundant deadfall and understory) receiving 10 percent

coverage. Survey coverage will be achieved by utilizing linear (when feasible) pedestrian transects spaced every 15 meters (roughly 50 feet) apart.

Any heritage resource sites discovered during the inventory are recorded with its National Register eligibility status evaluated in consultation with MtSHPO.

## Analysis Area

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The West Side Reservoir Post-Fire Project analysis area includes a portion of the South Fork of the Flathead River along its eastern boundary. The South Fork is the principle watershed in the analysis area with a number of tributary streams, in particular Graves Creek and Quinton-kon/Sullivan Creeks providing historic travel corridors into the South Fork from the Swan and Flathead valleys to the west.

During prehistory, these watersheds were used by aboriginal groups as travel route between the Flathead Valley to the west and the Great Plains to the far east. Archaeological sites documenting Native American occupation and use of the South Fork are known but none are identified in the analysis area. Native American occupation of the South Fork probably dates to the end of the last glacial period approximately 10,000 years ago. It was certainly used for seasonal hunting and gathering and may have been used for long-term, even winter, camps at Spotted Bear. Historically, the analysis area is part of the traditional homeland of the Kootenai people with additional use by the Salish and Blackfeet. The Hellgate Treaty of 1855 gives the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes reserved treaty rights to hunt, fish, and collect native plants in the analysis area.

In post-contact times the analysis area has been relatively remote from the center of occupation and events in the Flathead valley and the rest of Montana. The first road into the area was constructed in the 1920s and the dominant historic activities in the analysis area were Forest Service administration, recreational use (outfitters and guides), and perhaps small amounts of mineral exploration/prospecting. Except for the absence of mineral activity, this pattern continues today.

The Lewis and Clarke Forest Reserve was created Feb 22, 1897 by President Cleveland as one of the “Washington’s birthday reserves” and included lands in the South Fork. Early ranger stations were located at Riverside Creek and Elk Meadows at Logan Creek. Both sites are now submerged under Hungry Horse Reservoir. The most significant change to the South Fork was the construction of Hungry Horse dam by the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) from 1948 to 1953. The dam created Hungry Horse Reservoir flooding the road up the South Fork and the two ranger stations. To compensate the Forest Service for these loses and to maintain access to the timber and recreational resources in the South Fork the BOR built both the east and west side roads as well as Betty Creek and Anna Creek work centers.

The first recorded commercial logging operations were limited by the poor roads, the sheer rock walls along the South Fork above Devil’s Elbow (the approximate location of HH Dam), and by long distances to markets in the Flathead Valley and the railroad at Columbia Falls. The first significant timber harvest in the South Fork was to remove the timber from approximately 22,500 acres of FS land to be inundated by the reservoir. Timber harvest would

expand in the 1950s and 1960s. Timber harvesting, recreation, and Forest Service administration continue to be the dominant activities in the South Fork of the Flathead.

## **Affected Environment**

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### **Previously Identified Heritage Resources**

Prior to the two-phase inventory, the forest's Heritage Resource staff conducted an in-house files search for information on known, previously recorded heritage resources in the proposed West Side Reservoir Post-Fire Project area. General Land Office plat maps, BLM Land Status Records, historic forest maps, and the forest's cumulative site and survey atlas' were all referenced for site information. The file search identified two previously recorded historic era sites and one un-recorded site within or near the proposed project area. There were no previously recorded prehistoric sites within the proposed project area.

### **Results of Survey Methodology**

A complete inventory to locate and identify significant heritage resources within the project area will be completed by August 2004. A pre-survey file search identified the location of three historic era heritage resource sites within or near proposed project boundaries (sites 24 FH 432: Pioneer Lookout, 24 FH 438: Quintonkon Work Center, and Anna Creek Work Center). A walking reconnaissance of the fire analysis area for a post-fire BAER Team review indicated that the first two historic era sites (24 FH 432 and 24 FH 438) were dismantled in the recent past and little remains of either site. The other historic era site, Anna Work Center, has not been evaluated for listing on the National Register but is probably eligible. It is outside the proposed Post-Fire Project vegetation treatment boundaries. Implementation of proposed West Side Reservoir Post-Fire Project vegetation treatment prescriptions should have "no effect" on the historic integrity of this site. Additional inventory for the West Side Reservoir Post-Fire Project has not been completed at this time. Consultation with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) has concluded.

## **Environmental Consequences**

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### **Direct and Indirect Effects of the No Action and Action Alternatives**

The no action alternative would have any effects on cultural properties listed on the National Register or eligible for listing on the National Register. The effects related to implementing the action alternatives are not known. Field investigations have not been completed at this time. Currently there are no known, previously identified cultural resources located in or near treatment units that will be affected by this alternative. Field investigations will be completed by August of 2004. At that time direct and indirect effects to cultural properties that are

eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places will be evaluated in consultation with MtSHPO and the CSKT.

## *Cumulative Effects*

### **Past, Present and Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions**

There are no past, present or reasonably foreseeable future actions that could effect heritage resources that are either listed on the National Register of Historic Places or eligible for listing on the National Register

### **Summary of Cumulative Effects**

There are no cumulative effects on heritage resources that are either listed on the National Register of Historic Places or eligible for listing on the National Register.

### **REGULATORY FRAMEWORK/CONSISTENCY**

The Forest Service has obligations under the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA) of 1978 to "protect and preserve for American Indians their inherent right of freedom to believe, express, and exercise the traditional religions of the American Indian" [Public Law 95-442]. The CSKT also have reserved treaty rights under the Hellgate Treaty of 1855, including hunting, gathering, and grazing rights.

The CSKT of Montana have been identified as a tribal group concerned about the management of heritage resources on the Flathead National Forest. The tribes were contacted in the initial planning stages of the West Side Reservoir Post-Fire Project in order to establish lines of communication between the two parties, to advise them on the scope of the undertaking including potential effects, and to make their resource concerns (if any) an official part of the project file.

Besides AIRFA, the USDA Forest Service is also mandated to comply with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) [Public Law 89-665]. "Section 106 of the NHPA requires that Federal agencies with direct or indirect jurisdiction over Federal, federally assisted, or federally licensed undertakings afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) a reasonable opportunity for comment on such undertakings that affect properties included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) prior to the agency's approval of any such undertaking" [36 CFR 800.1]. Historic properties are identified by a cultural resource inventory and are determined as either eligible or not eligible for the National Register. Eligibility is reviewed, and concurrence given, by the MtSHPO. Sites that are determined as eligible are then either protected in-place or adverse impacts must be mitigated. This process takes place prior to any decisions relative to the project. The Flathead NF participates in the Region One Programmatic Agreement (R1PA) with MtSHPO and the Advisory Council that provides for a more efficient process for

conducting cultural resource inventories and meeting Section 106 compliance. Under the PA, if there are no eligible properties effected by the undertaking either through project redesign or because there are no properties located within the undertaking, then the undertaking is included in an annual report to MtSHPO and compliance is completed without project consultation. On the other hand, if an eligible property is effected by the proposed undertaking, then compliance is completed in the standard way with consultation with MtSHPO.

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