

Canyon Ferry

Bureau of Reclamation

April 2004

Working Group Newsletter

Canyon Ferry Working Group, Summary to date:

Upcoming Events:

The following subcommittee meetings will be held at the East Valley Middle School, East Helena (RM 305) at 6:30 pm:

● **Transportation and Access**,
April 27, 2004

● **Land Use and Environment**,
April 29, 2004

● **Recreation and Operations**,
May 4, 2004

● **Commercial Services**,
May 6, 2004

● **Whole working group meeting**, to be held at Our Lady of the Lake church on July 29, 2004, at 6:30 p.m.

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The Canyon Ferry Resource Management Plan (RMP), released in April 2003, called for the establishment of the Canyon Ferry Working Group. The Working Group was established and held its first meeting in May 2003. The Working Group has met consistently since May at various locations around Canyon Ferry.

The first meeting was held on May 22, 2003, at O'Malley's restaurant at Canyon Ferry Reservoir. Reclamation staff presented an overview of the RMP. Attendees took turns expressing concerns and describing what they thought the working group should be. Those at the meeting expressed a strong desire for Reclamation to take their interests and the comments expressed into consideration when making management decisions. At this stage, Reclamation did not address any of the specific issues, but did assure attendees that Reclamation is committed to the establishment of the working group as a means to address issues. In the end, the group agreed that more notification needed to be done so that no one will be "left behind" in the formation of the group. In order to respond to the concerns about notification MTAO undertook mass notifications of meetings to interested persons. A mailing list of more than 800 recipients was developed which includes individuals and organizations with an interest in recreational and land management around Canyon Ferry.

The second meeting was held on July 8, 2003, at Our Lady of the Lake Church. The first meeting was summarized and the attendees decided to split the working group into four committees as follows:

Transportation & Access ~ regulations, law enforcement, legal access, off-road vehicle use, road conditions, and seaplanes.

Land Use & Environmental ~ erosion, weed control, dust abatement, septic services, cultural resources, wetland management, and privatization of land.

Recreation & Operations ~ wildlife, fisheries, user survey, campground improvements, winter use, waterfowl hunting and access to the dam.

Commercial Services ~ marinas, user survey and health & safety.

The third meeting(s) was held August 26 and 27, 2003, at Our Lady of the Lake Church. Reclamation staff presented an overview of the budget and management parameters. Each committee met separately and the topics they decided to work on are as follows:

Transportation & Access ~ outline and map out the current access, and/or transportation locations and review safety plan for asphalt millings on east and west shore drives.

Commercial Services ~ discussed contracts and timeline for commercial services plan.

Land Use and Environment ~ discussed future topics; first one will be water quality in reservoir.

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Canyon Ferry Working Group, Summary to date (continued from front):

The fourth meeting(s) was held on October 8 and 14, 2003, at Our Lady of the Lake Church. Each committee met separately.

Commercial Services ~ discussed status of the commercial services plan, contractor, timelines, and the scope of work.

Transportation and Access ~ updated reservoir maps and reported on safety plan for the asphalt millings on East and West Shore Drives.

Land Use and Environment ~ Presentation made by Reclamation on the water quality studies completed at the reservoir.

Recreation and Operations ~ reviewed guidelines required to undertake designating use areas on the reservoir.

The fifth meeting(s) was held on November 19 and 20, 2003, at the Townsend High School.

Each committee met except the Commercial Services.

Transportation & Access ~ discussed Woodridge Trail access.

Land Use and Environment ~ discussed weed management with reps from Broadwater County.

Recreation and Operations ~ developed strategy for a multi-agency flat water recreation management plan.

The sixth meeting, which was a whole group meeting, was held on January 27, 2004, at the East Valley Middle School, East Helena. Reclamation presented an overview of accomplishments for 2003 and plans and budget for projects in 2004. Bob Aukerman, recreation management consultant, spoke about the ongoing commercial services plan that he is preparing for Canyon Ferry. The Working Group discussed the direction and vision for the group and posed many questions.

We are continuing forward with our committee meetings. Part of the upcoming focus will be to appoint a committee lead and recorder. The committee leads will then provide updates to the whole working group at the meeting to be held in July.

For further information please contact Craig Trinkle of Canyon Ferry Field Office at 406-475-3922.

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