

GALLATIN COUNTY  
RECREATION PLAN  
1989

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## INTRODUCTION

### Planning Area

Gallatin County stretches 115 miles in length, sharing a third of that length with Yellowstone National Park to the southeast. The county boundary continues north from Yellowstone through the Gallatin, Madison and Hyalite mountains to the northern edge of the Bridger Range in the northeast. From east to west, the county begins on the historic Bozeman Pass, runs west the width of the Gallatin Valley and terminates just west of the confluence of the Jefferson, Madison and Gallatin Rivers near the town of Three Forks. Its western border runs southwest from Three Forks, then east again to the Madison - Gallatin divide, and south along this rugged, high mountain crest to the southern tip of the county, which lies due south of the town of West Yellowstone, Montana. All told, Gallatin County encompasses 2,510 square miles.

### Population

According to The Montana Department of Commerce, the population of Gallatin County in 1986 was 47,800. Of those 47,800 people, approximately 30,470 of them lived in the cities of Bozeman, Belgrade, Three Forks, Manhattan and West Yellowstone. That means approximately 17,330 people live outside of incorporated cities and towns.

The population growth rate of Gallatin County has slowed considerably since the boom years of the 1970's and early 1980's, and is now estimated between 1-2% annually. This contrasts with a growth rate of 11.5 percent from 1980 to 1986. The Department of Commerce has projected Gallatin County's annual population growth rate from 1986 to the year 2000 will be, on the average, about 1.1 percent per year.

### Recreation Planning Process

Despite a slumping economy and slower population growth, people continue to move their residences and businesses to Gallatin County. This can be attributed to the area's high quality environment and its proximity to vast amounts of public recreation lands, most of which are in Federal ownership. But most of the public lands available for recreation are undeveloped. This leaves a gap in the recreational opportunities available to Gallatin County residents. A recreation survey conducted in 1986 found that county residents desire additional developed recreational facilities. Therefore, Gallatin County has undertaken the responsibility to examine the need for additional recreation facilities, and the resources available which might be developed to provide for those needs.

Gallatin County First adopted a county-wide Recreation and Open Space Plan in 1980. Since that time, several new recreation issues have arisen, including the possibility of selling certain county subdivision parks to raise revenue for other recreation needs, along with the need to develop criteria for selecting a site for a new multi-purpose county recreational facility. These, along with other issues and concerns, have been the driving force behind this Recreation Plan Update.

However, many of the recreation issues have remained the same since 1980, such as the need for more sports playing fields, more public lands access, more cross-country ski trails, and additional developed parks. Much of the information in the 1980 Recreation Plan remains relevant today and has therefore been incorporated in this updated edition. The earlier plan explored limits to growth in Gallatin County and attempted to measure and fine growth. That plan also provided an inventory of County recreation sites. The 1980 Plan laid the foundation for recreation issues, while this Plan updates the findings and inventory from 1980. This plan also documents current County recreation needs through a new recreation survey of County residents. Perhaps most importantly, this Plan identifies local recreation issues in the context of the County's physical and financial capabilities to provide better recreation opportunities, and offers alternative policies and methods to help plan for those needs.

### Purposes and Objectives

The primary goal of the Gallatin County Recreation and Open Space Plan is to improve and enhance the quality and quantity of recreational opportunities available to county residents and visitors to the area. Meeting the recreational needs of the county must be commensurate with its physical and financial capabilities. Therefore, it is also a goal of this plan to commend alternative sources of funding for the County's recreational needs. The following is a list of specific objectives formulated to meet the most pressing recreation needs in Gallatin County:

1. Determine what types of park, recreation, and open space areas and facilities are needed in Gallatin County.
2. Provide a range of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities to meet the present and future needs of County residents.
3. Develop an inventory of County Recreation sources.
4. Establish a park classification and standards system

that will serve as a basis for future recreation planning efforts.

5. Establish criteria for the sale and/or exchange of County parklands.
6. Establish criteria for the location and development of County parks and County Subdivision parks.
7. Establish criteria for accepting parkland during the Subdivision review process.
8. Establish criteria for disbursing County Park Fund monies.
9. Support the development of a system of linear recreation trails and bikeways that link parks, schools and residential areas.
10. Establish and preserve natural and open space areas through zoning, acquisition, conservation easements, grants, donations, transfer of development rights, and other means to prevent undesirable land uses in ecologically sensitive areas such as riparian and wetland uses.
11. Preserve areas identified as having historic and/or archeological significance.
12. Recommend alternative sources of funding for recreation needs.
13. Provide for access and use by handicapped persons of all County park facilities.
14. Encourage volunteer participation in the creation, development, and management of County recreational facilities.
15. Support the development and use of the county Fairgrounds for multi-purpose ballfields.
16. Establish regulations and adopt a lease policy for use of county parks.
17. Prepare a directory of county owned parks and identify each park with signs and boundary markers.

## RECREATION NEEDS AND RESOURCES

### PARK DEFINITIONS, FUNCTIONS AND STANDARDS

This section of the plan is concerned with defining, listing the functions, and establishing standards for neighborhood, community, linear, and specialty parks. Also, the chapter establishes guidelines for determining when, where, how much, and what types of parkland are desirable in the growing areas of the County.

It should be noted that these definitions and functions are for parks that have reached full development, which can take a long time. Development of parks should remain sensitive to the people who will be using them and basically provide opportunities that are needed, wanted, and affordable.

### NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS/SUBDIVISION PARKS

#### DEFINITION:

Neighborhood parks and/or Subdivision Parks are considered to be low-key, conveniently located parks that provide residents of a fairly well defined neighborhood with a combination of active and passive recreation opportunities not available at home. The primary emphasis is to provide space for active play areas to be used by neighborhood residents. Simplicity in design and development, using natural materials and landscapes wherever possible, is part of the neighborhood park concept.

#### FUNCTIONS:

1. A neighborhood or subdivision park should provide a combination of active and passive recreation uses for neighborhood residents. The more important function should be to provide playfields for active recreation.
2. There should be enough space for at least one playfield or ballfield.
3. Provisions for passive forms of recreation that are attractive to adults should be of secondary consideration. These include: picnic areas, shade trees, and areas for walking.
4. Access is the most important characteristic of neighborhood parks. Users should not have to cross or travel any arterial or heavily traveled street to reach it.

5. Parking should not be necessary as the park serves primarily persons within walking distance.
6. It is desirable for the park to be centrally located within a developed area. Due to the gridiron system of roads surrounding the sections in the County, it seems necessary to locate the park serving a particular square mile within the same section in order for park users to avoid heavy traffic. The recommended service area, therefore, is one-half mile.
7. Full development of neighborhood parks may not be necessary from the onset. Utilization of natural materials and opportunities such as stream courses, ponds, hills, dirt piles, vegetation, etc. is encouraged.
8. A desirable size for a neighborhood park is seven acres. This size makes it possible to have one ballfield and still have ample room for passive recreation uses and buffer areas.

#### COMMUNITY PARKS

##### DEFINITION:

Community parks are sites which provide a wide range of recreational opportunities, passive and active, for the full range of age groups found in a "community".

##### FUNCTIONS:

1. At full development community parks should provide space for a balance of active and passive forms of recreation, serving the total spectrum of recreation needs for its service area.
2. Space for buffer zones between active recreation areas and the surrounding neighborhoods is an important part of community parks as they tend to be more intensely developed.
3. The primary access to a community park will be by automobile, therefore, a location with good highway access is necessary. There also must be ample provision for parking.
4. It is desirable for these parks to be centrally located to the populations to be served.
5. Utilization of interesting natural features, such as water courses, vegetation, rock outcroppings, topographic features, scenic views, etc., are important to the development of a park with its own identity. These features



can offer opportunities for both passive and active forms of recreation.

6. The minimum size of community park should be 20 acres, with 30 acres being desirable. At least ten acres of the site should be available exclusively for athletic playfields. This should be enough space for two or more full-sized ballfields. Additional acreage is needed for playfields or other types of active recreation. (This acreage can serve effectively as a buffer between the athletic fields and other uses.)
7. The park should be developed and maintained for intensive use. Also, some types of maintenance may be necessary to accommodate winter time activities.
8. While community parks serve many functions, these do not always have to be accommodated on the same site. More importantly, the functions of the park should be thought of as being provided within their service area.

#### RECREATION NEEDS BASED ON PARK STANDARDS

Because this plan is concerned with providing parks for those areas outside incorporated areas, then the parkland needs would be 61 acres of neighborhood parks, and 26 acres of community parkland. The County presently owns approximately 350 acres of neighborhood and subdivision parks that could be used for one form of recreation or another. At this time, less than 50 acres of this parkland have actually been developed for recreation purposes. Therefore, based solely on the park standards in Appendix A, Gallatin County currently lacks 10-20 acres of developed neighborhood parks. This shortage of developed parks will grow as the population increases. The County has no developed community parks outside of any incorporated area, making the need for this type of facility even more apparent. At this point, it should be noted that the park standards used in this plan are meant to be used as a general guide for determining and assessing parkland needs. These standards are not absolute and many other factors come into play when determining actual park requirements. Other factors have been listed in the Appendix E (Evaluation Guidelines For Park Development Potential).

#### RECREATION NEEDS BASED ON A SURVEY OF RESIDENTS

From August to September of 1986, the Gallatin County Planning Office conducted a telephone survey throughout the County to identify outdoor recreation uses and needs. The survey followed

the methodology used for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grants administered by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks. Appendix B contains the results of that survey.

The survey revealed the recreational priorities of Gallatin County residents. As might be expected, Gallatin County residents are very active participants in outdoor recreation. Most respondents were satisfied with the supply of outdoor recreation, but when asked what one kind of recreation activity/facility they would prefer if funding were available, several choices emerged. Swimming pools were the most requested by the residents of Belgrade and Manhattan. Other respondents preferred linear parks and developed parks, fishing accesses, open space, and soccer and softball fields.

An optional Gallatin County question was asked regarding the sale or exchange of county subdivision parks. Seventy-five percent (75%) of the respondents favored selling or exchanging undeveloped parks provided that any money generated would be used for recreation purposes. This proviso is assured because state law requires it. Interestingly, the survey discovered that most respondents were unaware that the county had the authority to sell parks.

When asked what they perceived as the single greatest outdoor recreation concern facing Gallatin County today, those surveyed gave a wide range of responses. Lack of funding (15%) was given most often. A group of concerns that could be addressed by a multi-purpose park was the next largest category at 10%. Lack of funding and access to public lands were given as the two greatest outdoor recreation concerns facing the state of Montana.

Phone number prefixes of the respondents indicated where in the county they lived. Belgrade (388) and Manhattan (284) numbers generally desired swimming pools and ballfields. Gallatin Gateway (763) residents were generally satisfied with recreation opportunities. Big Sky (995) residents desired more golf and fishing access. Three Forks (295) and West Yellowstone (646) respondents were generally satisfied, while Bozeman (586-587) residents indicated a whole range of desires for more recreational opportunities. Most older people throughout the county declined to participate in the survey.

Many respondents cited recreational activities that were beyond the ability and authority of the county to provide. These activities included more hunting on private land, more areas for motorized vehicle use, better maintained back country trails, and more downhill ski facilities.

Activities that are within the scope of county authority and listed most often were:

- \*more Fishing spots;
- \*better access to public lands;
- \*more swimming Facilities outside Bozeman area;
- \*more cross-country ski trails;
- \*more soccer, baseball, and softball Fields, and
- \*more open space in the form of parks and linear parks.

Once the recreational demands of county residents are identified, the issue becomes that of how to best provide for these demands within a limited county budget and how to allocate those limited funds to the various recreation needs.

Providing recreational opportunities to meet the needs identified by county residents can involve several approaches. In a broad sense, county recreation policy cannot possibly address all facets of "quality of life" and "open space". These concerns revolve around open vistas afforded by farmlands held privately and also by activities held on Federal and state lands such as state fishing accesses and national forests. But this plan can focus on recreation concerns that arise from the following facts:

1. 85% of the population of Gallatin County is, and will be for the foreseeable future, centered in the Bozeman-Belgrade area;
2. 38% of the land in the County is held by federal or state authority;
3. Gallatin County presently has no recreation department and no recreation budget;
4. The County, at this writing, has approximately, \$43,000 in the cash-in-lieu of parkland fund.
5. There are 43 subdivision parks in Gallatin County, most of them undeveloped;
6. The prospect of higher taxes may not be popular with many County residents.
7. Agriculture is experiencing difficult economic times, but is still vitally important to the county's economy;
8. Gallatin County residents enjoy, and want to protect, the "quality of life" afforded by panoramic Vistas, and the open spaces associated with adjacent farms and public lands.

If these assumptions are accepted, and are related to their respective recreation needs identified in the survey, they raise several relevant questions:

- \*What recreation opportunities could be provided by County government for the benefit of the greatest number of residents?

- \*Should the County develop a multi-sport recreation complex? If so, where should it be located? How should it be financed and maintained?

- \*What should be done about the 43 county-owned subdivision parks?

- \*Should certain subdivision parks be sold in order to raise revenue for other recreation needs in the County?

- \*How should future subdivision parks be located and developed?

- \*How should money in the cash-in-lieu of parklands fund be distributed?

- \*Should the County form a County Park District?

The Gallatin County recreation survey has provided much needed data concerning the recreational desires of county residents. The remainder of this plan identifies physical limits to development in Gallatin County and the principle recreational issues facing us. It also offers policy options and alternatives that could be used as solutions to the recreation problem.

### Inventory of Recreation Resources

Before any recreation plan can be implemented, it is necessary to inventory the available park and recreation land which could potentially be developed to provide more recreation opportunities for County residents.

#### County-Owned Park and Open Space Lands

Gallatin County owns 45 parks and other recreation sites. These include 43 subdivision parks, one golf course and the County Fairgrounds. The 43 subdivision parks comprise a total of 287 acres. Table 1 is a list of these parks and facilities. A location map of county and homeowner parks is shown on Map 1).

### Homeowners Association Parklands

Many subdivision parks in the County are dedicated and owned by homeowners associations. There are presently 13 subdivision parks in Gallatin County dedicated to their respective homeowners association. These parks comprise a total of 192 acres. It must be emphasized that these are private parks and are only open to the public at the discretion of the homeowner's associations. See Table 2.

### State Owned Recreation Sites

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks owns and maintains 15 developed recreation sites in the County, most of which are fishing access sites. They also include two state parks and one state monument. These lands total 3,092 acres. Table 3 is a listing of these sites.

### Federally Owned Recreation Sites

The U.S. Forest Service maintains 19 developed recreation sites in Gallatin County. These sites include picnic areas, campgrounds, and natural-historic areas. Altogether, the Gallatin National Forest controls 605,240 acres in Gallatin County, which provides County residents with many undeveloped recreation opportunities. (Table 4)

TABLE 1  
COUNTY OWNED PARKS AND OPEN SPACE  
LANDS

PARK NAME	TOWNSHIP	RANGE	SECTION	ACRES	DEVELOPMENT STATUS
ANNETTE PARK	2S	6E	30	4.78	UNDEVELOPED
ARROWLEAF HILLS #3	2S	6E	21	5.00	UNDEVELOPED
BOGART #2	1S	5E	26	1.00	UNDEVELOPED
CHIMARRON	2S	4E	13	3.90	UNDEVELOPED
CLOVER MEADOWS	2S	6E	16	3.59	UNDEVELOPED
COVERED WAGON PARK	2S	5E	1	5.00	DEVELOPED
EDGEWATER ACRES	2S	4E	10	2.44	UNDEVELOPED
ELK	2S	6E	14	1.58	UNDEVELOPED
FIRST PINE VIEW	3S	5E	11	4.35	UNDEVELOPED
FOREST CREEK	3S	5E	11	5.81	UNDEVELOPED
GARDNER PARK	2S	6E	30	13.30	UNDEVELOPED
HODGEMAN CANYON	3S	5E	11	11.85	UNDEVELOPED
HYALITE HEIGHTS	2S	5E	36	11.20	UNDEVELOPED
KIRK FOOTHILLS PARK	3S	5E	1	40.00	DEVELOPED
LAKE #2	1S	5E	22	3.69	UNDEVELOPED
LAY #3	1S	5E	22	2.01	UNDEVELOPED
LEWIS PARK	2S	6E	18	0.37	UNDEVELOPED
LEWIS BEAR	3S	4E	36	15.00	UNDEVELOPED
MOUNTAIN MEADOWS	2S	6E	16	3.33	UNDEVELOPED
MOUNTAIN SHADOWS ESTATES #3	3S	5E	1	19.10	UNDEVELOPED
MOUNTAIN VIEW #4, #5	1S	5E	16	5.07	DEVELOPED
MOUNTAIN VIEW #7	1S	5E	16	4.19	UNDEVELOPED
PARKVIEW WEST	6S	4E	1	5.80	UNDEVELOPED
RANCH #'S 1,2,3	1S	5E	13	15.93	UNDEVELOPED
REA SUBDIVISION	2S	5E	16	1.20	UNDEVELOPED
RIVERSIDE MANOR	1S	5E	23	7.40	UNDEVELOPED
ROYAL VILLAGE	1S	4E	3	3.43	UNDEVELOPED
SOURDOUGH CREEK #10	2S	6E	30	4.56	UNDEVELOPED
SOURDOUGH CREEK #3	2S	6E	30	7.73	UNDEVELOPED
SOURDOUGH RIDGE #3	2S	6E	20	0.67	UNDEVELOPED
SOURDOUGH RIDGE #3	2S	6E	19	1.45	UNDEVELOPED
SPRINGHILL PARK	1S	5E	23	1.51	UNDEVELOPED
STEVENS	2S	5E	1	2.42	UNDEVELOPED
SUNSET HEIGHTS (JAMES)	1S	6E	16	1.91	UNDEVELOPED
SWEETGRASS HILLS	2S	3E		1.08	DEVELOPED
SYPES CANYON	1S	6E	17	5.12	DEVELOPED
VALLEY CENTER	1S	5E	27	6.40	UNDEVELOPED
VALLEY VISTA	1S	4E	14	2.38	UNDEVELOPED
WILDFLOWER	1S	5E	15	3.50	UNDEVELOPED
YELLOWSTONE HOLIDAY #3	1S	4E	10	6.53	UNDEVELOPED

245.58

TABLE 2  
PARKLANDS DEDICATED TO HOMEOWNERS  
ASSOCIATIONS

PARK NAME	TOWNSHIP	RANGE	SECTION	ACRES	DEVELOPMENT STATUS
MYSTIC HEIGHTS #3	3S	5E	12	6.84	UNDEVELOPED
BEAR CREEK PROPERTIES (PHASE 1)	3S	4E	22&26	12.45	UNDEVELOPED
BEAR CREEK PROPERTIES. (PHASE 2 & 3)	3S	4E	23	22.60	UNDEVELOPED
BEAVER CREEK SOUTH	7S	4E	17	7.80	UNDEVELOPED
BRIDGER HILLS	1S	7E	30	30.73	UNDEVELOPED
BRIDGER PINES	1N	7E	19	11.94	UNDEVELOPED
FISHERMAN'S VILLAGE	13S	4E	20	17.89	UNDEVELOPED
GRANDVIEW HEIGHTS	1S	6E	20	10.80	UNDEVELOPED
HEBGEN LAKE ESTATES	12S	4E	24	17.50	UNDEVELOPED
HYALITE FOOTHILLS #1	3S	5E	10	20.40	UNDEVELOPED
HYALITE FOOTHILLS #2	3S	5E	15	16.30	UNDEVELOPED
HYALITE MEADOWS	2S	5E	3	9.92	UNDEVELOPED
OUTLAW COUNTRY	1S	5E	10	19.53	UNDEVELOPED
SPRINGVALE	1S	5E	3	2.45	UNDEVELOPED
WESTFORK MEADOWS	7S	3E	2	9.30	UNDEVELOPED
WHEATLAND HILLS	1S	5E	14	30.48	UNDEVELOPED
* TOTAL***				246.93	

TABLE 3

STATE FISH, WILDLIFE, AND PARKS  
RECREATION SITES

SITE NAME	TWNSHP	RANGE	SEC	ACRES	SITE TYPE
KIRK WILDLIFE REFUGE	4S	4E	8	13.54	REC AREA
KIRK F.A.E.	4S	4E	8	3.01	REC AREA
EAST GALLATIN STATE PARK	1S	6E	31	82.00	STATE PARK/LAKE
AXTELL BIG ICE FISHING ACCESS	2S	4E	35	4.00	RECREATION AREA
BLACKBIRD FISHING ACCESS	2S	4E	35	22.00	RECREATION AREA
BOZEMAN PONDS FISHING ACCESS	2S	5E	11	24.00	RECREATION AREA
CAMERON BRIDGE FISHING ACCESS	1S	4E	22	142.00	RECREATION AREA
COBBLESTONE COVE FISHING ACCESS	1N	2E	32	190.00	RECREATION AREA
DROULLIARD FISHING ACCESS	2N	1E	27	41.00	RECREATION AREA
FAIRWEATHER FISHING ACCESS	3N	2E	1	625.00	RECREATION AREA
FOUR CORNERS FISHING ACCESS	1N	3E	12	9.00	RECREATION AREA
GALLATIN FORKS FISHING ACCESS	2N	6E	26	268.00	RECREATION AREA
GREYCLIFF FISHING ACCESS	2S	2E	6	487.00	RECREATION AREA
MADISON BUFFALO JUMP STATE MONUMENT	1N	2E	34	618.00	NATURAL-HISTORIC A
MISSOURI HEADWATERS STATE PARK	2N	2E	8	528.00	NATURAL-HISTORIC A
THREE FORKS GRAVEL PIT FISHING ACCESS	2N	1E	25	50.00	RECREATION AREA
WILLIAMS BRIDGE FISHING ACCESS	1N	1W	26	2.00	RECREATION AREA
ERWIN F.A.S.	1S	4E	9	80.00	RECREATION AREA
*** TOTAL ***				3092.00	



TABLE 4

## FEDERAL RECREATION SITES

SITE NAME	TOWNSHIP	RANGE	SECTION	ACRES	FACILITY TYPE
BAKERS HOLE	13S	5E	15	25.00	CAMPGROUND
BATTLE RIDGE	2N	7E	32	15.00	CAMPING/PICNIC AREA/HIKING
BEAVER CREEK	11S	3E	21	9.00	CAMPGROUND
BLACKMORE	4S	6E	15	2.00	CAMPGROUND/FISHING/BOATING
CABIN CREEK	11S	3E	15	5.00	CAMPGROUND
EARTHQUAKE LAKE VISITORS	11S	3E	22	1.00	PICNIC/FISHING AREA/BOATING
CENTER					
FAIRY LAKE	2N	6E	22	3.00	CAMPING/PICNIC/FISHING/HIKING
GREEK CREEK	5S	4E	24	5.00	CAMPING/FISHING
HOOD CREEK	4S	6E	15	14.00	CAMP/PICNIC/FISHING/BOATING/SWIMMING
HORSE BUTTE LOOKOUT	12S	4E	35	1.00	PICNIC AREA/HIKING
LANGHOR SPRINGS	3S	6E	32	8.00	CAMPING/PICNIC/FISHING
LONESOMEHUST	12S	4E	33	1.00	PICNIC/FISHING/BOATING
"H" PICNIC AREA	1S	6E	33	0.25	PICNIC AREA/HIKING
MOOSE CREEK FLAT	6S	5E	6	2.00	PICNIC/FISHING
PALISADE FALLS NAT. REC. TRAIL	4S	6E	24	0.00	PICNIC/FISHING/HIKING
RAINBOW POINT	12S	4E	24	5.00	CAMPING/FISHING/BOATING/SWIMMING
RAT LAKE	5S	4E	1	1.00	FISHING/HIKING
RED CLIFF	8S	4E	4	52.00	CAMPING/PICNIC/FISHING
SOUTH FORK	13S	4E	24	4.00	CAMPING/PICNIC/FISHING
SPANISH CREEK	4S	3E	32	1.00	CAMPING/PICNIC/FISHING/HIKING
SPIRE ROCK	5S	4E	2	5.00	CAMPING/PICNIC/FISHING
SWAN CREEK	5S	5E	30	6.00	CAMPING/FISHING
TOM MINER	8S	5E	24	3.00	CAMPING/FISHING/HIKING

## PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS TO DEVELOPMENT IN GALLATIN COUNTY

To be effective, this plan should consider current population densities and projected future concentrations. In this fashion, parks can be reserved and located appropriately. The plan should also consider lands that are unsuited for development by virtue of ownership or environmental constraints. Some of these lands may be better suited for parkland or conservation areas. (See Figures 4.1, 4.2, 13, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5). By observing the constraints of the physical setting in the County, much can be learned about where not to expect growth, and conversely where growth will necessarily be channeled.

### Public Land

One of the most noticeable deterrents to growth is the presence of public land. Approximately one-third of Gallatin County is public land, and most of this Forest Service. Obviously, this land is off limits to development. Figures 4.1 (A & B) show public lands in Gallatin County.

### Topography

Topography (slope) is another useful measure of the potential of a landscape for development. Figures 4.2 (A & B) show the slopes in Gallatin County divided into three general classes: steep slopes over 25 percent; moderate slopes from 15 to 25 percent; and rolling to flat slopes of less than 15 percent.

Areas having steep slopes are generally considered "off limits" to development. Building sites are hard to find and access is always a problem. Even though homesites can be found in areas with steep slopes, high population densities will never occur.

Moderate slopes dictate great care must be exercised in development. These areas can be developed to some extent, but cost more to build on than flatter ground. Some very attractive homesites are found in areas of moderate slopes, for the topography tends to be "broken" and rolling, offering scenic views in many directions. In general, areas with moderate slopes cannot be developed to high population densities unless there is no other choice for location of additional growth.

Flat ground offers the least resistance to development and will be the first to be developed unless other factors outweigh the advantages. Shown in Figures 4.2 (A & B) are the remaining portions of the county having level slopes. While flat areas are generally the most susceptible to development pressure, they

offer some disadvantages, too. They are generally the best agricultural lands, often have high water tables, can be located in floodplains, and can have soils ill-suited for construction. However, many of these problems can be overcome by good building practices or technology. For example, in areas where septic systems cannot be used for sewage disposal because of high groundwater, extension of a municipal sewage system would solve the problem. Although extending sewer and water lines to areas outside cities and towns is not always economically feasible as many taxpayers do not want to shoulder the burden of paying for these extensions.

### Groundwater

Groundwater concerns can place constraints on development. Many parts of Gallatin County face limitations for septic waste disposal (see Figure 13), especially Gallatin Valley, where most future growth will probably occur. (Data was collected from a sample of area wells and used to update this map, which displays areas in the Gallatin Valley where groundwater reaches to within 10 feet of the surface of the ground. The map can be used as a primary assessment for the suitability of septic tank drainfield installations. This map has been combined with another map which displays soil type suitability for septic tank installation (Figure 13, p. 45, Blue Ribbon).) The Blue Ribbon 208 Study (1979) found that individual septic tanks were not much of a threat to groundwater yet, but could be if open areas adjacent to large one acre lot subdivisions were developed in small tracts.

Because most future growth in the county is projected to occur in the Gallatin Valley, it is important from a groundwater perspective that a recreation plan be coordinated with future development patterns. Open space and recreation land adjacent to higher density subdivisions in the valley, in addition to their value as parkland, can also serve to protect the county's groundwater resource. Should growth occur as projected, the alternative to using open space to protect groundwater would be to provide central sewage collection to all the lots. Such an option would be very expensive, and would not serve the multiple purposes of open spaces and recreation areas.

Floodplains are also a disadvantage, or deterrent to development on land with level slopes. Within Gallatin County there are a number of defined "flood hazard" areas. Figure 4.3 shows the streams having identified "flood hazard" zones.

Although most of these flood hazard zones cannot legally be used for commercial and residential development, they can be used for certain recreational purposes. Such uses include, but are not limited to, parks, golf courses, driving ranges, picnic areas, boat launching ramps, swimming areas, wildlife and nature

preserves, fish hatcheries, target ranges, hunting and fishing areas, along with hiking and horseback trails.

Finally, a factor which is not a deterrent to development, but a very important inducement, is access and proximity to existing growth areas. Figure 4.4 gives an indication of areas in the County having reasonable access to recreational opportunities already, and within approximately 20 minutes driving time of Bozeman and Belgrade. The 20 minute figure was arbitrarily chosen as roughly the areas surrounding Bozeman and Belgrade which are likely to feel the pressures of residential growth.

When all these inducements and deterrents are put together, the result shown in Figure 4.5 illustrates the composite potential in Gallatin County for population growth in the near future. This represents the areas where residential development in the county will have the highest probability of occurring in the near future. The significance of this to the Outdoor Recreation-Open Space Plan is that it points out areas where parklands may be most needed in the future.

FIG. 4.1 (A)  
PUBLIC LANDS IN GALLATIN COUNTY

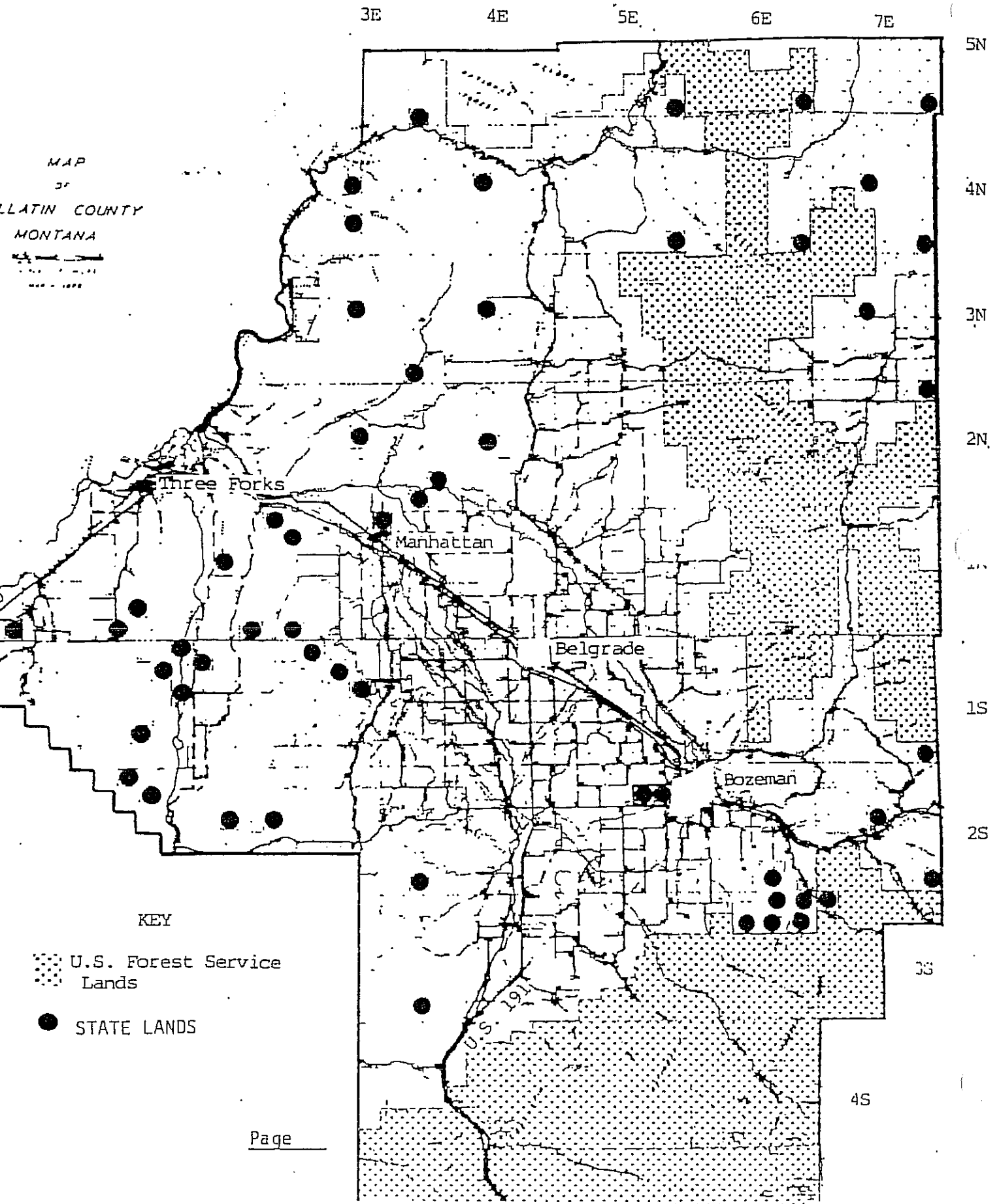


FIG. 4.1(B)  
PUBLIC LANDS  
IN GALLATIN COUNTY

KEY

U.S. Forest Service  
Lands

STATE LANDS

6S  
7S  
8S  
9S  
10S  
11S  
12S  
13S  
14S  
15S

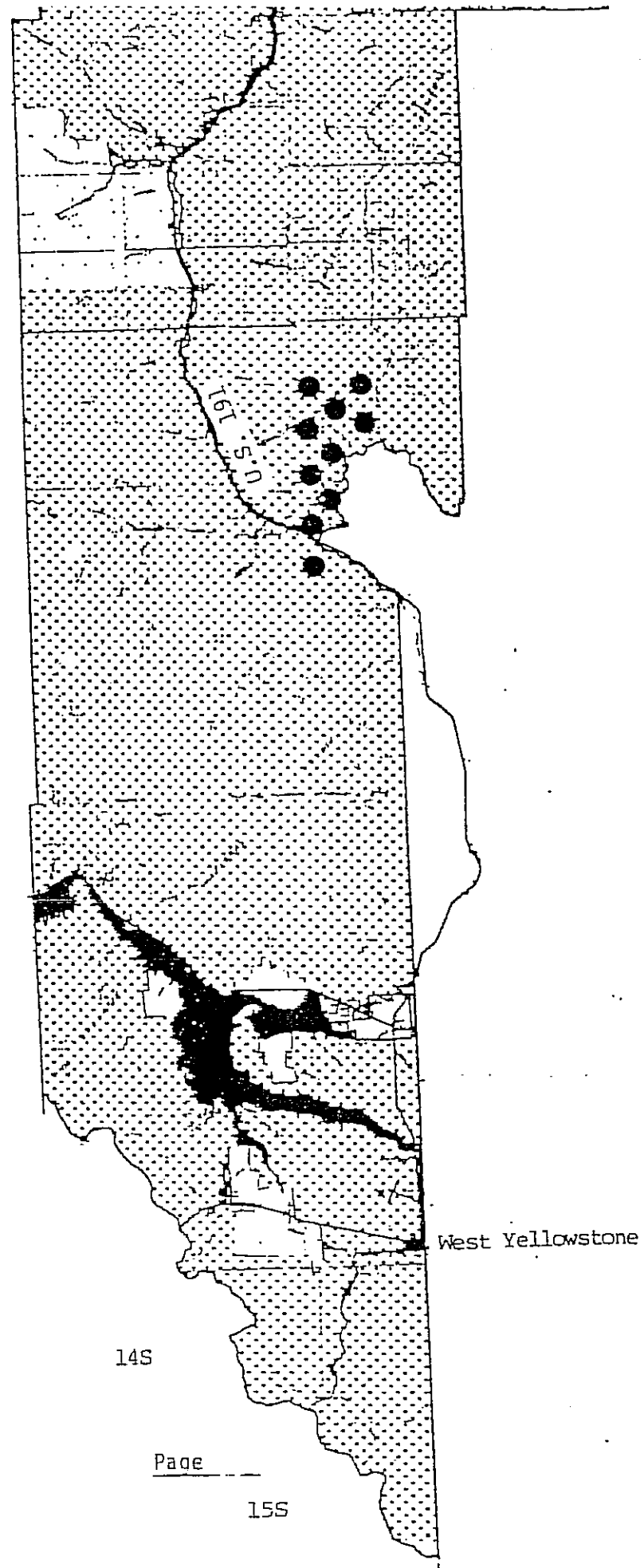


FIG. 4.2(A)  
TOPOGRAPHIC  
LIMITATIONS TO DEVELOPMENT

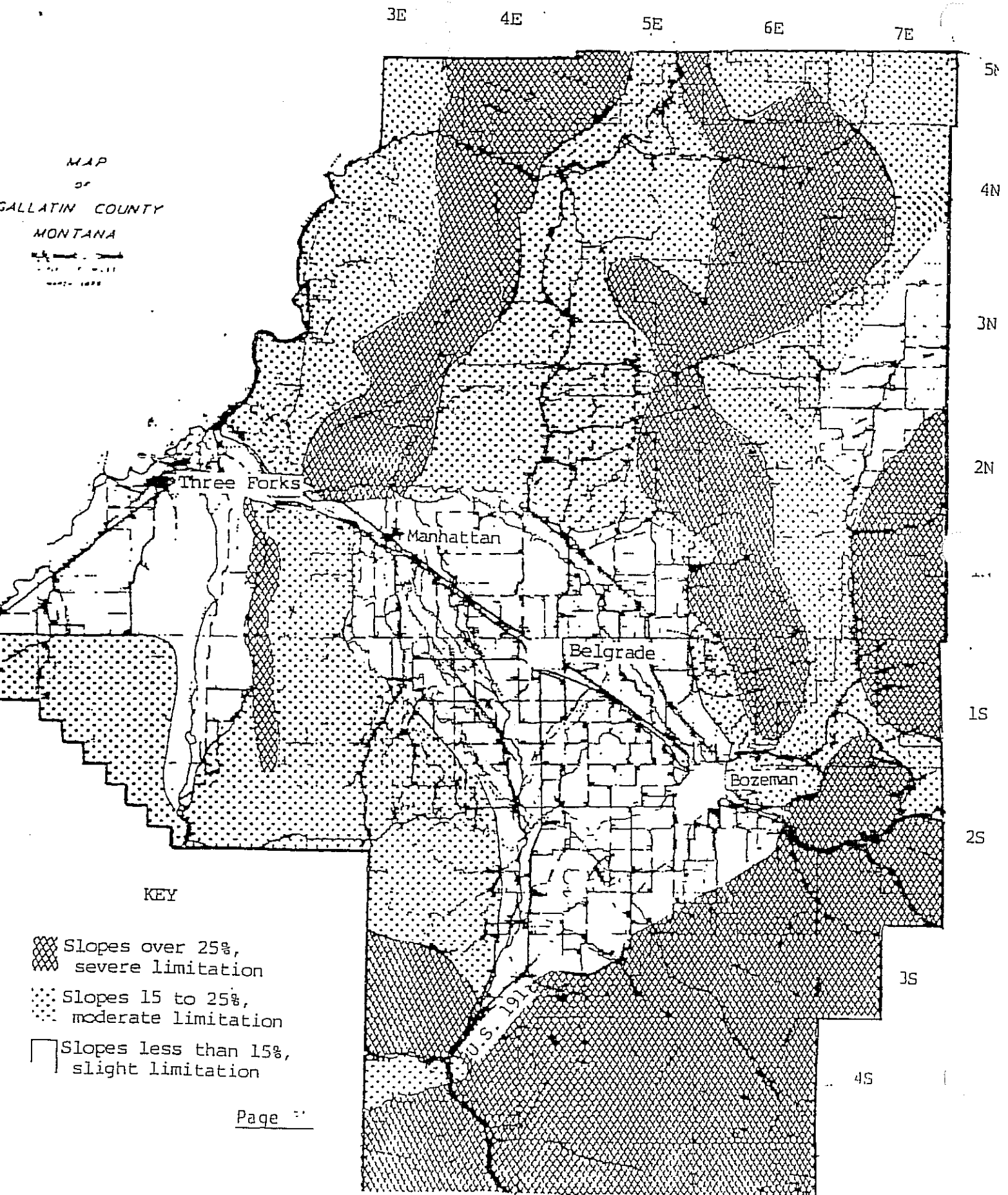



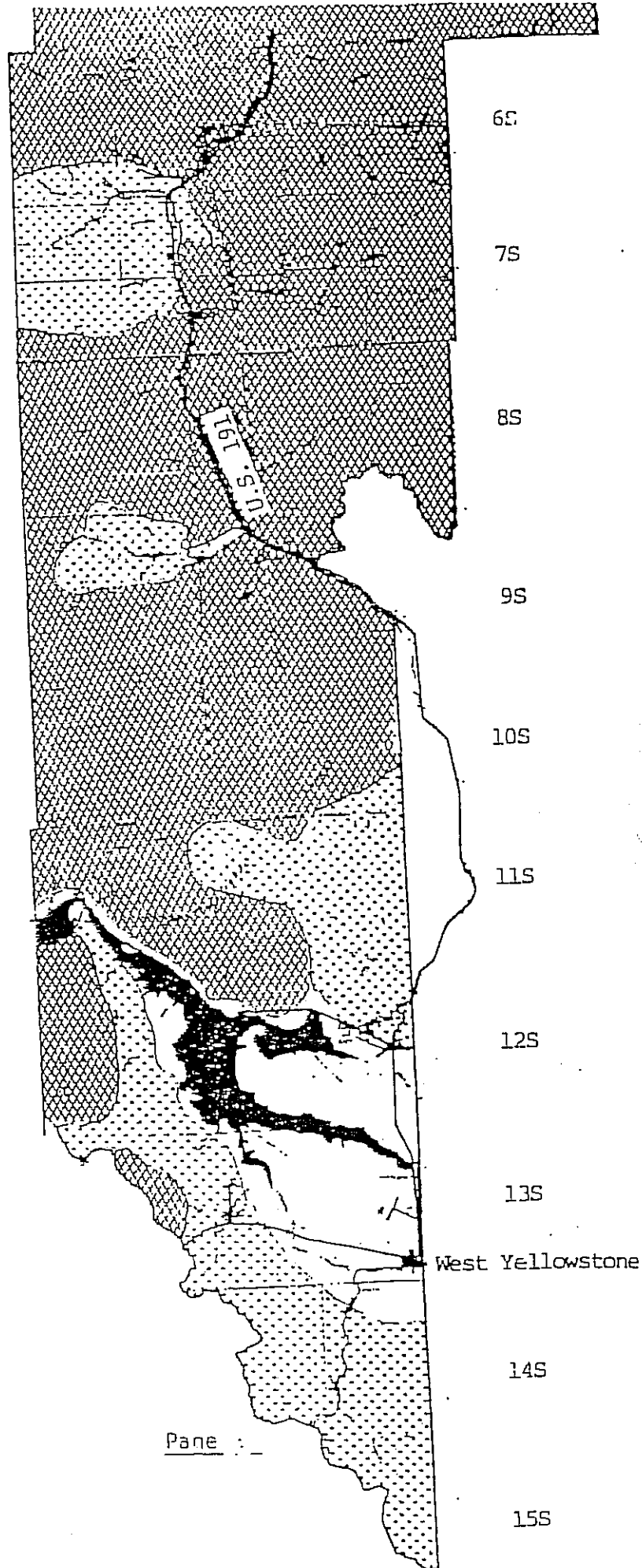


FIG. 4.2(B)  
TOPOGRAPHIC  
LIMITATIONS TO DEVELOPMENT

KEY

-  Slopes over 25%,  
severe limitation
-  Slopes 15 to 25%,  
moderate limitation
-  Slopes less than 15%,  
slight limitation





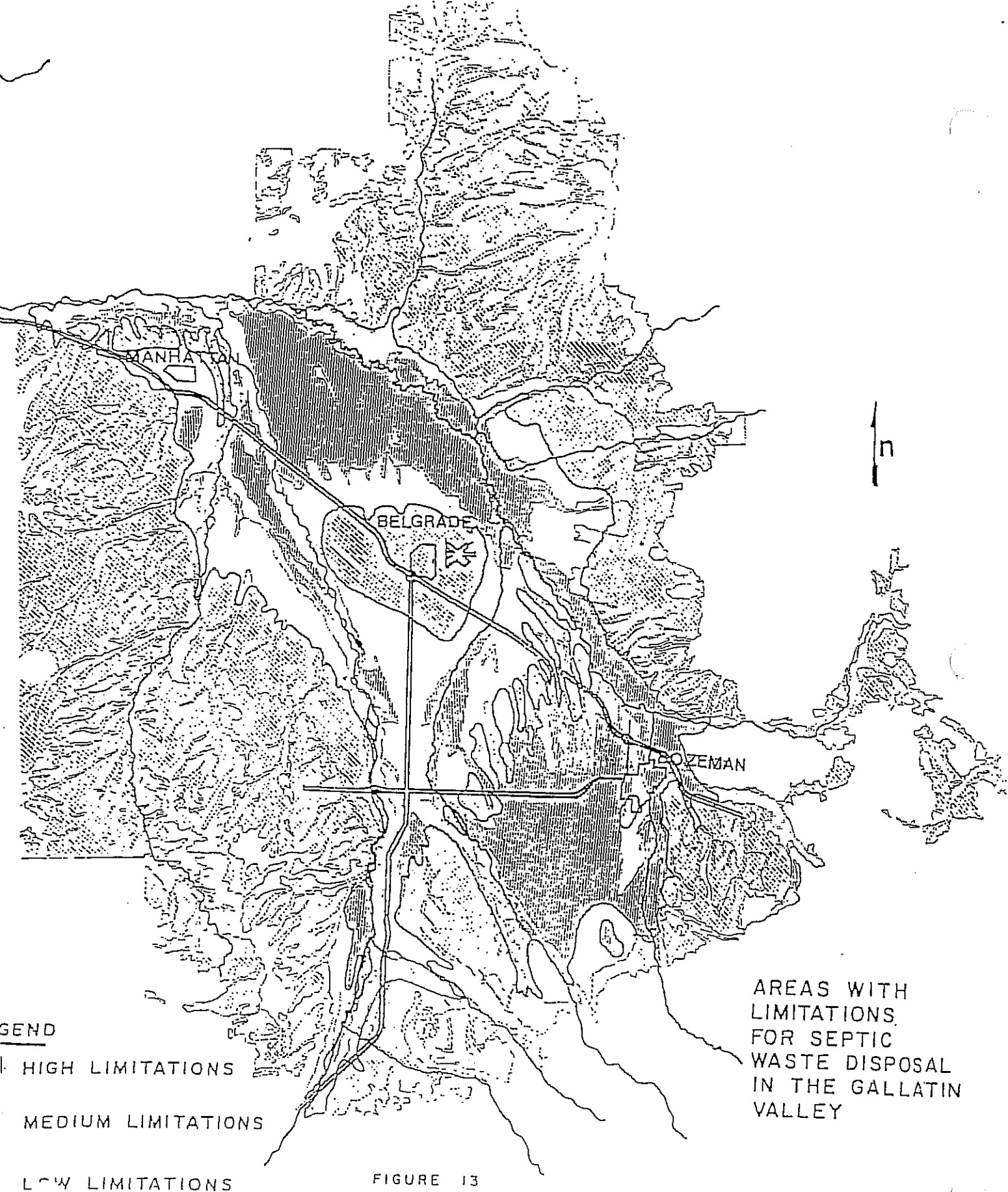


FIGURE 13

FIG. 4.3(A)  
STREAMS WITH DEFINED FLOOD HAZARD AREAS

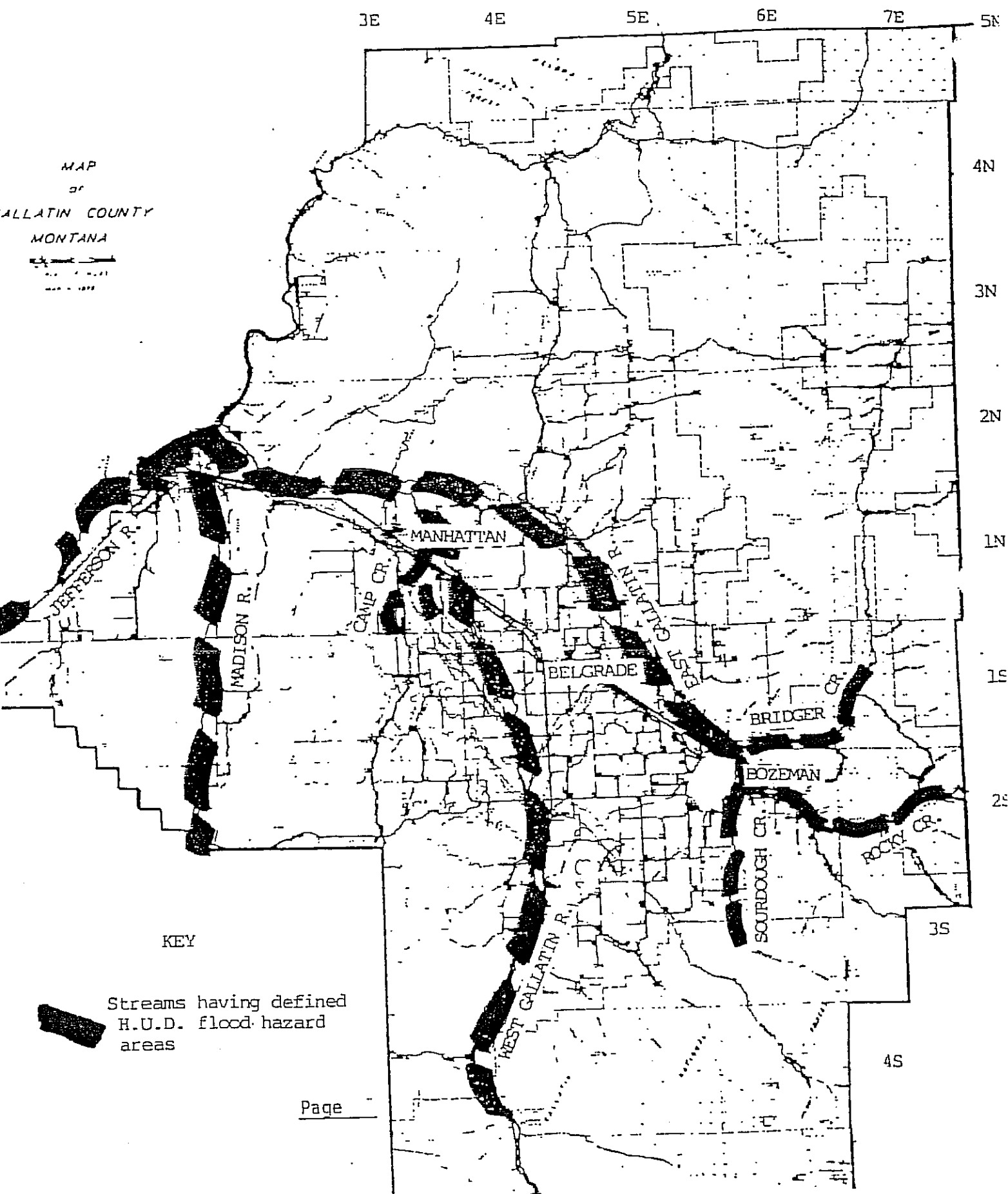


FIG. 4.3(B)  
STREAMS WITH DEFINED  
FLOOD HAZARD AREAS

KEY

Streams having defined  
H.U.D. flood hazard  
areas

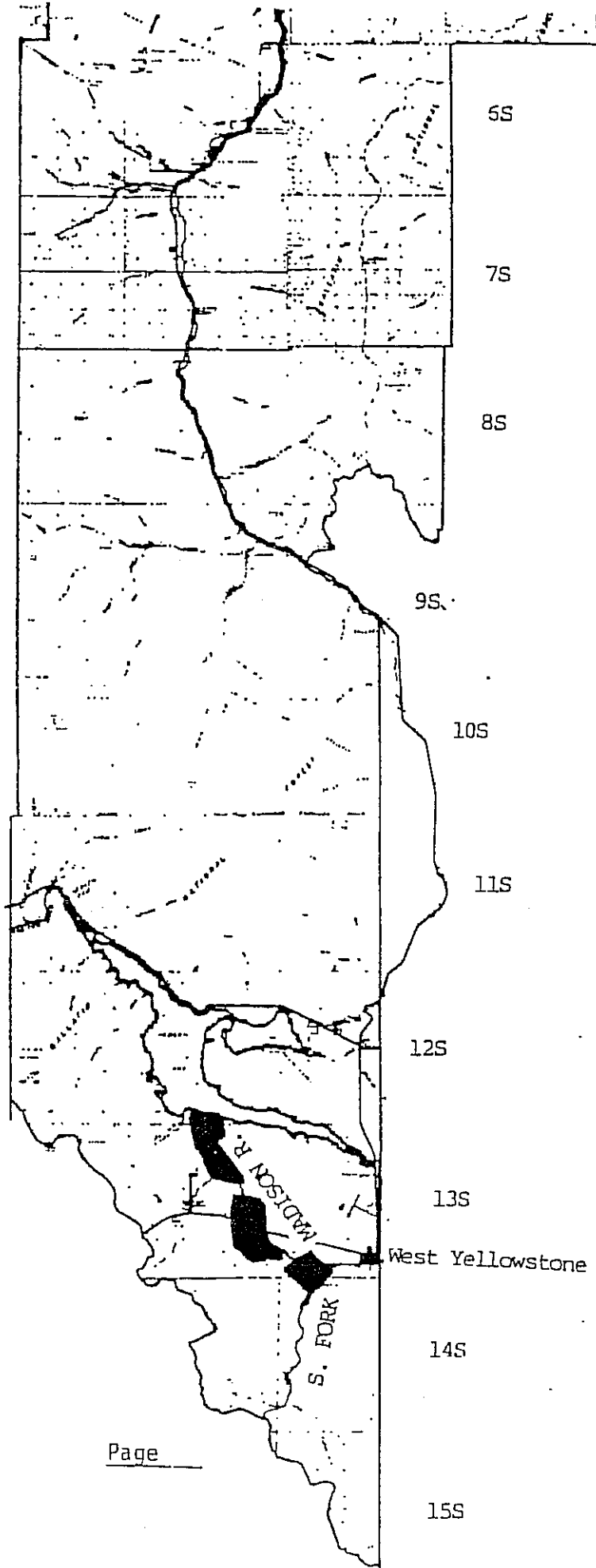
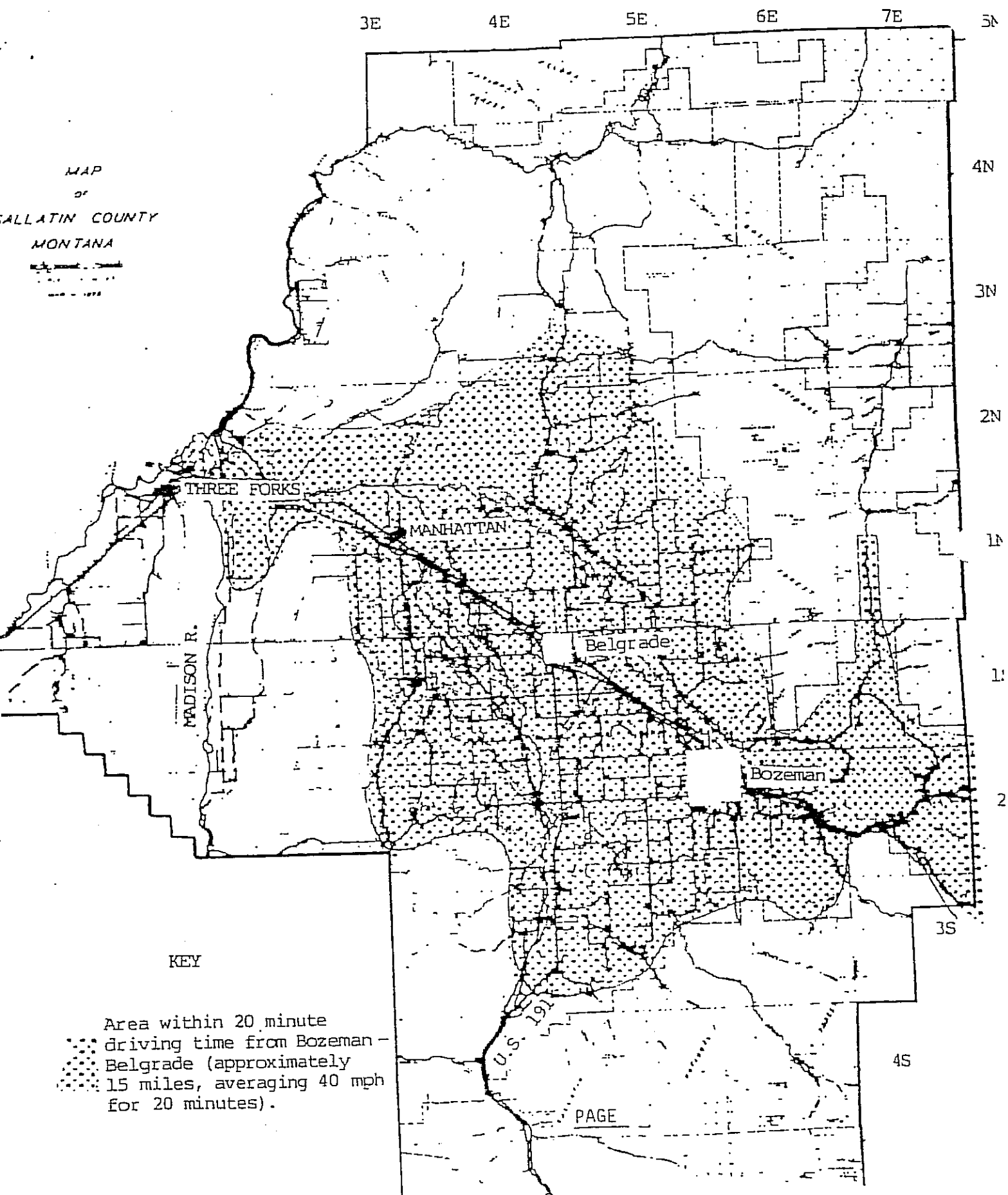
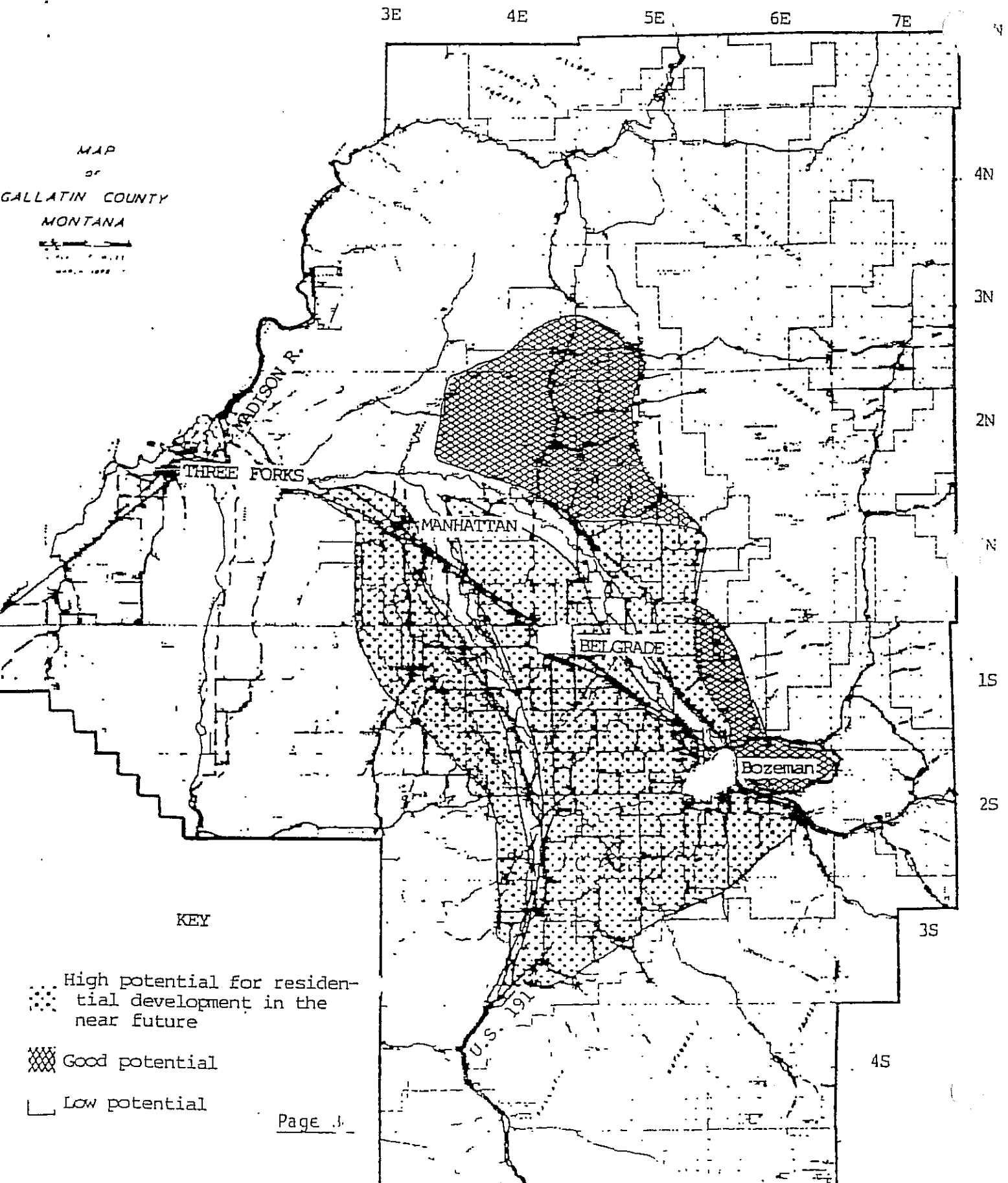


FIG. 4.4  
ACCESSIBLE AREAS  
FROM THE BOZEMAN - BELGRADE AREA



# POTENTIAL FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN GALLATIN COUNTY

FIG. 4.5



## OPEN SPACE

The term "open space" is a phrase which has some meaning for everyone. All around there are expressions of what open space is and means to county residents. For example, Montana is known as the "Big Sky Country", an expression for the feeling of open space. When a visitor picks up a Chamber of Commerce brochure from any city in Montana, invariably the image being promoted is one of spaciousness, recreational opportunity, room to grow, and striking natural beauty. All of these are directly related to the supply of "open space". Listing the types of organizations or clubs in Gallatin County which depend on open space further reveals its importance to County residents. Some of these organized open space activities include horseback riding, hunting, fishing, four-wheel driving, motorcycle riding (trail and touring), white-water canoeing, hiking, camping, bicycling, wildlife and environmental preservation, photography, preserving ghost towns, collecting rocks, mountain climbing, snowmobiling, cross country skiing and others.

Both the resident and organizational survey used for the development of this plan provided support for the contention that open space is important to residents of Gallatin County, especially for recreational uses. Of the top six favorite types of recreation noted in the resident survey, four were dependent on public open spaces (picnicking #2, fishing #3, camping #4, and hunting #6). One finding of the organizational survey was that organized recreational groups throughout the County are very dependent on undeveloped public lands, or open spaces. In Gallatin County, these consist primarily of U.S. Forest Service lands, shown on figures 4.1 A & B.

## DEFINING OPEN SPACE

Open space can be defined as any land which is provided or preserved for park or recreational purposes, conservation of land or other natural resources, historic or scenic purposes, or assisting in the shaping of the character, direction and time of community development. The definition includes agricultural land, parkland, floodways, streambeds, water-sheds, and hazardous building area, including slide areas, fault zones, and steep slopes. It also includes both private and public lands.

## THE FUNCTIONS OF OPEN SPACE

The functions, or products, of open space can, in turn, be broken down and considered more specifically as follows:

1. Open space on which resource management is practiced, including:

- A. Agriculture production
  - B. Timber production
  - C. Mineral production
  - D. Wildlife production
  - E. Water supply
2. Open space on which natural resource preservation is practiced, including:
- A. Wilderness areas
  - B. Fish and wildlife refuges or preserves
  - C. National, state, and local parklands
3. Open space which provides for public safety, including:
- A. Flood control reserves
    - 1) Flood control reservoirs
    - 2) designated floodplains
  - B. Unstable areas
    - 1) slide areas
    - 2) fault zones
    - 3) areas too steep for development
  - C. Fire breaks
  - D. Airport clear path zones
4. Open space which provides areas for recreation and parks, including:
- A. High intensity recreational areas
  - B. General outdoor recreation
  - C. Recreational travel
5. Open space which provides scenic resources.
6. Open space on which historic, cultural, scientific, and educational sites are found.
7. Open space which provides for public health, including:
- A. Areas for waste disposal

## B. Areas which will improve air quality

In short, open space is a catch-all term which describes the lands and waters which provide for physical and emotional needs as individuals and as communities. The functions of open space, in turn, further describe the dependence of people on open space resources.

### THE LOCAL PICTURE

In Gallatin County, the many functions of open space have been historically provided by a balance of both private and public lands; namely:

1. Crop lands
2. Grazing lands
3. Private lands unusable because of topographic or physiological problems

(Federal and State) lands and parks

To date, these lands have served the functions of open space. But times are changing. Economic pressures are altering the definition of "unusable" lands. Urban development has begun to consume the open space resources to which area residents have become accustomed while most of the private lands which compose the heart of Gallatin County have become susceptible to the pressures from development. Even granting that the vast Forest Service holdings surrounding the County will always exist as open space - this alone will not ensure that Gallatin County will continue to have an optimum supply of developed recreational facilities. It takes both types of land, public and private, to provide the full spectrum of recreational resources needed by a community.

### PUTTING OPEN SPACE TO GOOD USE

It is worthwhile to look more closely at some forms of open space. Crop and grazing lands in Gallatin County are still plentiful, but farming has fallen on hard times. Many farmers are splitting their farms into smaller parcels to subsidize agricultural operations or to get out of farming altogether. A depressed economy has slowed rural subdivision activity, but the parcels have been created, which means the potential for development now exists for all of these subdivided parcels.



Gallatin County has a rich agricultural heritage which began with the first settlers in the valley and its early growth as a farm trade center. The agricultural tradition is still prevalent throughout the county evidenced by extensive pasture and fields along with rustic barns and farmsteads. Thus, farmland adds significantly to that intangible "quality of life". Unfortunately, little thought has been given to the impact of the break-up and development of these farms on the area's open space and quality of life.

Although farmland preservation is not the focus of this plan, open space associated with agriculture is an important issue that deserves mention. Incentives to preserve farmland associated with open space can be offered through land use planning, farm support programs, tax incentives, and other land conservation programs. There are techniques now available which can increase a farmer's land value, decrease his development costs and preserve large tracts of open space farm land. Several of these techniques, including transfer of development rights (TDRs) and conservation easements will be discussed later in the plan.

Assuming Federal and State land holdings remain constant, (and farmland is beyond the scope of this plan), this leaves the following categories of land to provide additional open space and recreational land in Gallatin County: 1) land unsuitable for development because of physical limitations; and 2) county parklands.

Both of these types of land have potential for increasing recreation opportunities in the county. Extensive acreage in Gallatin County is faced with development restrictions because of floodplain hazards. Because these lands are privately owned, they presently offer little public recreation opportunity. But through tools such as conservation easements, transferable development rights, public easements, purchase of development rights, and outright acquisition, these lands could become public recreational areas. As it now stands, land in floodplains offers adjacent landowners views free of homesites and some private recreational opportunities but very few public recreational opportunities.

#### Open Space and Water Quality

Pristine streams and scenery are valuable assets to Montana and Gallatin County. Protecting these assets is one goal of this plan. Floodplains, of course, contain most of our surface waters, reinforcing their value as open space. By curtailing development in floodplains, costly damage from floods is not only prevented, but water quality is also protected in the following ways: 1) Impervious surfaces, such as roads, driveways, and

parking lots are limited, thereby reducing the potential for increased sediment-producing runoff which seriously degrades surface water quality; and 2) stream-bank vegetation is protected thus preserving a valuable buffer against runoff, good cover for wildlife, and increased food sources for the stream's fisheries. Since much of the county's soil is porous and subject to rapid infiltration, potential threats to water quality such as septic tank drainfields can be removed by requiring an open space buffer between them and stream courses.

Because of the importance of water quality to Gallatin County, floodplains should be incorporated in recreation site locations whenever possible. Most recreational activities have a minimal impact on water quality, and because of development restrictions already imposed on floodplains, potential recreation sites would not have to compete with development oriented land uses which drive up the price of available land.

#### COUNTY PARKS

County-owned parks are another potential source of public recreation land. The County owns 43 parks (see map) scattered throughout the county. They range in size from 1/2 acre to 15 acres, but most are in the 2-5 acre range. However, many of these parks, acquired through the subdivision approval process mandated by state law, have no provision for their development or maintenance. Some have been over-run with noxious weeds and thus contribute to weed problems on surrounding properties. The land dedicated for parks was generally not considered for its recreational potential. Little thought was given as to what the parks could be used for or what was needed. Many of the adjacent landowners claim these parks are theirs and their benefit as open space justifies their existence, even if not developed. However, the following reasons are offered to re-think this justification:

1. Space alone may, but does not necessarily constitute service or opportunity. The visual and functional aspects of space must be considered when determining the public benefits of parklands.
2. Open spaces that are not used in a visual or functional sense may not have a broad constituency and could be difficult to justify for public acquisition.
3. Open spaces that are used for several purposes, to include recreation, will have broad public support and are generally cost-effective expenditures of public funds.
4. Open spaces should be viewed as places to enjoy the basic qualities of living while also providing the potential for the positive interaction of people in a public environment.

5. People should identify with open spaces and be encouraged to participate in their design, development, and management.

In short, while some subdivision parks would be better left as undeveloped open space, most of the County's subdivision parks must be put to the best use for maximum public benefit. Determining this best use is one of the main objects of the recreation planning process and a driving force behind this plan.

The County, under state law, can sell or exchange parks, as long as the money generated or land received is used for recreation purposes identified in a recreation plan. These scattered county subdivision parks, therefore, represent a valuable resource to be used to meet identified county recreation needs.

In summary, lands in floodplains and undeveloped subdivision parks should be incorporated to provide the maximum recreation opportunities for County residents. The following steps are suggested to accomplish this:

1. Existing subdivision parks have been evaluated according to specific criteria (Appendix D - sale and exchange of parklands) and a specific action has been proposed for each based on the results of this evaluation. If the evaluation produced a numeric score less than the minimum, then that park was reviewed and considered for sale or exchange at a public hearing.
2. Future subdivision parks should be measured against similar criteria so that consistency is maintained for all county parks.
3. When applicable, parks will be either located in or adjacent to floodplain-designated land (this would assure contiguous open space to recreation areas). Also, tools such as conservation easements and TDR's should be developed and exercised to both preserve open space, and provide more recreation opportunities.

This section has pointed out that open space is a most valuable resource to residents of Gallatin County. There are indeed many formal and informal expressions of its importance all around. The recreation plan has described, defined and inventoried Gallatin County's open space resources. This information can now be used to determine policy options for the optimum use of the open space resources of the county.

## POLICY ALTERNATIVES AND PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

### Implementation Strategies

The plan provides us with many facts and general information about Gallatin County, especially those pertaining to recreation. It also explores various tools which could be used to meet outdoor recreation needs. An attempt is made here to combine the major facts and characteristics learned about Gallatin County with the major recreation needs identified in the survey, and match potential solutions to these needs and characteristics.

The most pressing needs identified in the Gallatin County Recreation Survey of 1986 included the following:

- 1) More open space in the form of linear and developed parks;
- 2) More general recreation areas;
- 3) More cross-country ski trails;
- 4) Additional accesses to public lands;
- 5) More fishing accesses;
- 6) More ball fields;

Examples of solutions that could meet these needs include:

- 1) Establishing a park district(s);
- 2) Establishing criteria for accepting and locating new county subdivision parks which could not only add new parkland but also create more public lands access;
- 3) Using cash-in-lieu of parkland funds for new ballfields and/or a new multi-purpose county park;
- 4) Selling some of the undeveloped subdivision parklands.

Because subdivision activity has declined in recent years, developing criteria for accepting new subdivision parks will help meet recreation and open space objectives, but will not be enough. More options need to be considered to meet the broad range of recreation and open space desires.

One method that has been used successfully in other communities to preserve open space resources is Transfer of Development Rights (TDR). TDR is a land preservation technique whereby

development rights for a parcel of land in a preservation district are conveyed by deed, easement, or other legal instrument authorized by local law, to another parcel of land in a receiving district or development district and the recordation of that conveyance among the land records of the county. The TDR concept shifts the potential for development from farmlands and open space lands to those lands more suited for development. This technique has been employed by Bridger Canyon residents in an attempt to preserve open space in that area of Gallatin County.

The value of a TDR program lies in the fact that it preserves environmentally and recreationally important open spaces while providing equitable compensation to the landowner. Another important feature of TDR is that the costs to the taxpayer are negligible because development rights are purchased by private sector developers and not the local government.

Although TDR's will not solve the most pressing recreational needs of the county, they should be investigated as solutions not only to preserve recreation and open spaces, but also as a means to preserve the agricultural and rural character of the Gallatin Valley.

Conservation Easements are another means of preserving open space and protecting environmentally sensitive lands. This land conservation technique is a politically attractive means of preserving open space resources because it involves no actual costs to the public. A conservation easement is a right given to a government agency or qualified private organization by a landowner, to prevent certain uses of the land without actually conveying the title or right of possession. All other rights of ownership except those granted by the easement are retained by the owner. Conservation easements are enforceable under Montana's Open Space Land and Conservation Easement Act. Preserving ecologically sensitive lands is not the only benefit of conservation easements, as they also afford the landowner tax advantages in the form of income tax deductions and low property assessments.

Recently in Gallatin County, a Bridger Canyon landowner entered a large parcel of land into a conservation easement to preserve it as open space and wildlife habitat. Nevertheless, it remains to be seen whether conservation easements will be a commonly used method of land preservation in Gallatin County, or for that matter, the State of Montana.

After considering open space and farmland preservation, this leaves the solutions of creating park districts, adopting park development criteria, and selling undeveloped subdivision parks as the most workable solutions given the county's situation.

Spending cash-in-lieu funds could work to meet some of the recreation needs under certain conditions. Expending all of the county's cash-in-lieu funds on the purchase of a site for a multi-purpose recreation complex is a possibility but this would likely exhaust the entire park fund and leave no funds for other recreation needs, such as developing subdivision parks.

A multi-purpose ballfield complex, judging from examples in Billings, Bozeman and Missoula, could cost anywhere from \$10,000 to \$20,000 per year in operation and maintenance expenses. Unless provisions were made to insure funding for these annual expenses, the multi-purpose complex may not be a viable option.

Assessing user groups would help fund operating costs for such a facility, but might not be enough. Therefore, expending county park funds on a multi-purpose site would appear to be a feasible option if provisions were made for maintenance costs.

#### County Park Districts

Regardless of what alternative means are chosen to solve Gallatin County's recreation needs, one thing is for certain--they all require some degree of financial commitment by the county. But with cutbacks in the county budget due to a depressed economy and the freezing of property taxes, new taxes to fund recreation are not likely to be imposed on taxpayers at this time by county officials.

Consequently, the formation of a county park district may provide a partial answer to the funding dilemma. A county park district would allow the registered voters in the county to decide if they wanted to tax themselves to fund their recreation needs.

In 1985, the Montana legislature passed a law enabling counties to create county park districts. The prevailing thought was that since many counties had no recreation departments or budgets, raising taxes county-wide for recreation purposes would be unacceptable. In many counties of the state only certain portions of the population in a concentrated area would use a park. Creation of a county park district enables park users in certain areas of a county to tax themselves, if they so desire, in order to support their recreation activities.

Any or all part(s) of a county, not necessarily contiguous parts, may be proposed for a park district either by resolution of the County Commissioners or by petition of 15% of the qualified electors of the proposed park district. If such a resolution or petition is adopted, it then goes to a vote of those residents within the proposed district's boundaries. The County Commission then sets a mill levy, which cannot exceed the maximum allowed by state law, which appears on the ballot. If

the district is created, the park district commissioners, who are elected by the qualified electors in the district, then determine on an annual basis how much money the park district must have based on a budget they must prepare. Then the local governing body assesses a mill levy, up to the maximum number of mills allowed by the voters, to fund the operation of the park district.

A county park district and its elected commissioners have several powers. The commissioners are authorized to issue bonds, assess a mill levy property tax, and borrow money. They can also operate, maintain and administer parkland in the district. They can charge user fees, contract for maintenance or repairs, and purchase land and equipment. They can hire people and adopt rules for parks and facilities in their jurisdiction. In sum, a county district has the authority to manage parks and facilities in their jurisdiction. Given the present lack of a county recreation program or budget, a park district would remove both funding and administration responsibilities from the County Commission.

The County's limited recreation budget and limited funds from other sources such as user fees, subdivision park sales and cash-in-lieu funds, does not allow many alternatives to fund recreation needs. A County-initiated Board of Park Commissioners with an across-the-board county tax increase would likely be unacceptable to county taxpayers. But the demand for increased recreation opportunities still persists. The creation of a self-taxing county park district, supplemented with other funding sources, is one potential way of satisfying recreational demands in a fiscally sound and fair manner.

Any or all subdivisions with county dedicated subdivision parks (or that made cash-in-lieu payments) could be included in a park district. These areas contain the county's current and projected population concentrations, and as revealed by the recreation survey, seem to have the greatest demand for more recreation facilities. It could be left up to the Park District's Commissioners on how to charge fees for recreation users. It must be remembered that the park would be for public benefit and would have to receive supplemental funding from other sources. Many county residents use Belgrade and Bozeman recreation services and those residents' use of a park district's facility could be considered a reciprocal arrangement.

If the County Commission adopted a resolution to create a county park district, it is suggested that the district's purpose be to:

    ) provide for the development and maintenance of recreation facilities;

2) provide funding for the development and maintenance of the county owned subdivision parks within the district. (See appendix D for suggested criteria to establish the eligibility for such funds).

### Recreation Policy Alternatives

In addition to the implementation strategies already described, there are other alternatives that should be considered. The following list summarizes these alternatives:

1. ADOPT CRITERIA FOR FUTURE SUBDIVISION PARKS. Such criteria would take into consideration the need for more public accesses to fishing spots, protection of environmentally sensitive areas such as streams, wetlands, groundwater resource areas, location on floodplains and other concepts brought out in this plan. The criteria would also provide for the exact location, development and maintenance of the park (see Appendix E on accepting dedicated parklands criteria).
2. ADOPT RULES FOR COUNTY PARK USE. Presently, there are no rules governing use of parklands dedicated to the public. In the absence of a development and management plan, the county should adopt rules governing park use until such time that specific plans are formulated. These rules should assure orderly park use and compatibility with surrounding land uses (see Appendix G). To assure that these rules are enforced, certain park uses should require permits.
3. CREATE A MULTI-PURPOSE COUNTY PARK. Based on the recreation survey and documented public requests the past few years, a multi-purpose park could go a long way toward meeting county recreation demands. Youth soccer and adult softball represent approximately 2000 people, and these activities need more playing space. In addition, many county residents have expressed a desire for more cross-country ski trails, fishing accesses, and picnic areas. A park site study committee determined that a 60 acre site would best satisfy these active and passive recreation needs. Cash-in-lieu funds, in combination with other sources such as county bonds and/or grants and loans, could be used to purchase the park site. (See Appendix F for criteria adopted 9/16/86 for site selection of county recreation facility.)
4. CREATE A COUNTY PARK DISTRICT. County recreation facilities would cost money to develop and operate. Many of the county's subdivision parks are weed-infested vacant lots. The formation of a county park district could help address



these concerns. Also, subdivisions containing parkland could be included in the district, and by satisfying established criteria could qualify for park district funds. Another portion of available funds could go toward future development and continued maintenance of county parks. County recreational facilities should not be purchased unless funds for operation and maintenance are assured. A park district that included the entire county, with commissioners representing both the incorporated and unincorporated areas, would serve to promote a coordinated recreation planning effort between the cities and rural jurisdictions of the county.

5. ADOPT CRITERIA FOR CASH-IN-LIEU OR PARKLAND DEDICATION. Any proposed subdivision park that scores lower than 70 points in total rating points based on evaluation guidelines adopted should not be accepted. (Appendix E). Cash-in-lieu of parkland funds should be required. Parks that score between 70 and 109 in total park rating points but score '5' in 'Proximity to Other Recreation Areas' and '2' or less in 'Need' should not be accepted. Cash-in-lieu of parkland funds should be required.

These criteria should be considered as additional guides to the parkland requirements listed in the Gallatin County Subdivision Regulations. They are based on findings in the recreation plan and are designed to assist in the plan's implementation.

6. ADOPT CRITERIA FOR DISBURSEMENT OF CASH-IN-LIEU OF PARKLAND FUNDS. If, in the opinion of the governing body, cash-in-lieu funds would be more desirable than parkland in satisfying the subdivision parkland requirement, a defensible method for disbursement of these funds should be developed. The criteria might include a portion for competitive subdivision park development projects, and a percentage for other recreation needs such as land acquisition, personnel, and equipment purchase. (See Appendix C)

7. ACTIVELY SEEK RECREATION GRANTS. Because the cash-in-lieu fund will probably not generate significant revenue due to the slowdown in subdivision activity, and other revenue sources will not be adequate, the county should pursue all available recreation grant possibilities. At this writing, there has been an active push to renew and increase the Land, Water and Conservation Fund (LWCF), which is a Federal grant program administered by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks. Montana Power, Mountain Bell and other private corporations also have foundation grant programs which make recreational grants. These sources

should be investigated fully. Recreation projects that serve the widest variety of county residents will receive the most favorable response from these programs.

8. SELL OR EXCHANGE CERTAIN COUNTY SUBDIVISION PARKS. (Criteria adopted September 9, 1986.) (See Appendix D) Although the suggested criteria for accepting new subdivision parks will help prevent the proliferation of weed problems, many existing subdivision parks have no provisions for development or maintenance. Residents of these subdivisions should be given an opportunity to assume responsibility for their parks. If they choose otherwise, or do not generate an acceptable plan, then these parklands should be reviewed for possible sale or exchange, and the funds generated applied to other recreational needs. The subdivisions which have been reviewed by the County for sale or exchange to this date are the Following:

~~Spring Hill~~  
← Valley Vista  
Ranch  
← Clover Meadows  
← Springhill Park  
← Cimarron No. 1 and No. 2  
Sunset Heights  
Elk  
← Hodgman Canyon  
Parkview West  
Davis  
← First Pine View  
Arrowleaf Hills #3

After having reviewed each of these parks for sale or exchange, and holding public hearings on the matter, the County Commissioners have decided to sell or exchange the following parks: Springhill, Valley Vista, and Clover Meadows. The homeowners associations in Hodgman Canyon, Davis, Parkview West and Ranch Subdivisions have pledged to submit development plans for their parks. If they adhere to their park plan and schedule, their parks will not be sold or exchanged. The remainder of those parks that were reviewed will remain in County ownership as decided by the Commission.

9. HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION PARKS There are presently 13 subdivision parks in Gallatin County dedicated to various homeowners associations. These parklands total 193 acres but remain almost totally undeveloped. The County should encourage these associations to plan, develop, and maintain their respective parks. County park fund money should be made available to those associations based on the

development criteria established in this plan. (see Appendix E)

10. ESTABLISH POLICY FOR BIKE PATHS/PURSUE ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT OF LINEAR PARKS. The need for more bike paths has been well documented in the Gallatin County Recreation Survey. New secondary road projects and any federal or state highway projects should contain bike lanes. This project could be coordinated with any bike trails or routes that the cities of Bozeman and Belgrade might develop. Also, the abandoned Milwaukee Railroad Right of Way, which runs the width of Gallatin Valley and south of Bozeman, could be investigated as a possible linear park or bike route. The same could be done for the "Sourdough Trail", which could connect Bozeman with the public lands (Gallatin National Forest) to the south.

11. ACQUIRE AND DEVELOP NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS IN FOUR CORNERS

The population growth in the Four Corners area has created a new demand for developed park facilities there. The 1979 Gallatin County Recreation Plan initially identified this area as being in need of more parks and it appears that the area's demand for park facilities still persists.

12. ACQUIRE AND DEVELOP PARKS SOUTHWEST OF BELGRADE.

This is another area that was identified in the 1979 plan as being in need of more park facilities. This area should also be examined for potential park sites and facilities.

13. ACQUIRE AND PRESERVE LANDS, ESPECIALLY DURING THE SUB-DIVISION REVIEW PROCESS, WHICH:

1. are naturally sensitive to environmental disturbances (such as streams, wetlands, ridge-lines, slide areas, wildlife habitat, groundwater recharge areas, etc.,) and are important to the scenic character of the area, could be used for linear parks, or are essential to preservation of any local natural resource;

2. could be used as natural study areas;

3. are important to the cultural or historic heritage of the County. The Bozeman Area Park Work Plan (Bozeman City-County Planning Dept., 1975) identified six sites in Gallatin County as having historic significance:

1. Madison Buffalo Jump
2. Three Forks of the Missouri
3. Crows and Coulter Battle the Blackfeet
4. Fort Ellis

5. Gallatin City
6. Henry's Fort

The first two sites are on the National Register of Historic Places, while the remaining four have not been developed as yet.

4. ENCOURAGE PARKLAND DEDICATIONS THAT ARE ADJACENT TO PUBLIC LANDS. Lands that are adjacent to public lands are well suited for public parks mainly because these areas would allow increased access to the many public lands in the County. Increased access to public lands was identified by county residents in the Gallatin County Recreation Survey as one of the most pressing recreation needs facing the county at the present time.
5. ASSIST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MANHATTAN/BELGRADE SWIMMING FACILITY. The recreation survey revealed that residents in these areas desired more swimming opportunities. This finding should be verified with more intensive investigation and, if accurate, a portion of County Park District Funds should be used for this purpose.
16. USE A PORTION OF THE COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS FOR MULTI-PURPOSE PLAYING FIELDS (adopted January 31, 1989). Based on the recreation survey and documented public requests the past few years, the supply of additional multi-purpose ballfields would satisfy many recreation demands. Youth soccer and the Bozeman baseball organization represent approximately 1500 people, and these activities need playing space. The County Fairgrounds contains adequate acreage for additional ballfields and several user groups have expressed interest in this site. Cash-in-lieu funds, in combination with other sources such as grants and user group contributions, could be used to develop the fields.
17. ADOPT A POLICY FOR LEASING COUNTY PARKLANDS. Gallatin County has leased parks in the past and should adhere to state law on future leases of these lands. Appendix H outlines a suggested procedure and policy for these leases.
18. IDENTIFY COUNTY OWNED PARKS. Prepare a directory of all county owned parks, including a locational map. For starters, sign each park and mark its boundaries to identify and delineate it. Once identified, the parks will more likely be used and may lead to further development by adjacent citizens.

## Alternative Funding Sources

Since Gallatin County has a limited amount of money available in the Park Fund (\$43,000), it stands to reason that alternate sources of funding must be explored to provide for the acquisition, expansion, development and maintenance of County recreation facilities. The following is a list of recommended funding options which should be explored:

1. Foundations and Trusts. One form of providing the needed monies for recreation development is the formation of a trust or foundation. A trust or foundation is a public non-profit organization which is not publicly funded and has been formed to maintain or aid activities which benefit the general public. Such foundations or trusts can play a role in the acquisition and development of recreation facilities. The County may want to encourage the formation of an organization along the lines of a Gallatin County Park and Recreation Foundation which could be one way to stimulate community participation in the planning and development of County recreation projects and defray costs to the taxpayers.

2. Coordination with State and Federal Park and Recreation Programs. Coordinating local (County) efforts with State and Federal programs to provide for recreation needs can be mutually beneficial for all levels of government and the general public. For example, the Federal Recreation and Purposes Act allows some public lands to be conveyed to the County or other authorized agency to be used for public purposes such as public parks. In addition, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act allows the County to acquire specific public lands if "they will serve important public objectives." These lands potentially could be sold or exchanged to obtain more desirable lands for recreation.

3. Cash-in-lieu dedications. Section 6 F.(4) of the Gallatin County Subdivision Regulations allows the County to accept cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication equal to the fair market value of the amount of land that would have been dedicated. This is essentially the way money has accumulated in the County Park Fund. However, since major activity has slowed almost to a standstill in the County, this is presently not a dependable source of revenue and other funding sources should be emphasized.

4. Conservation Bonds and Districts. The County has the authority to initiate bond issues to raise capital for purchasing conservation and park lands. However, such bonds must first be approved by a majority of County electors. The County can also

create park and open space districts to administer and raise revenues for recreation facilities in their district.

5. User Fees. User fees are becoming increasingly popular as a means to fund recreation needs mainly due to cutbacks in budgets at all levels of government. They appear to be a fairly equitable solution to partial recreation funding because they assess the direct users of a particular recreation facility and not the public at large.

6. Volunteers. The County should do everything they can to encourage and promote the use of volunteer time, labor and money to assist in developing new recreation resources. A recent example of a large volunteer effort from county residents is the new East Gallatin State Park which is owned by the State, but is being developed through donated money and volunteer labor. Volunteers not only help defray costs to the public, but they also help improve the attractiveness and beauty of the community by creating new parks and facilities that can be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

7. Grants. Grants have been a traditional source of funding for public recreation projects but they are becoming more and more competitive all the time. Grant sources include the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) administered by the State Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department, State Conservation District Revenue Funds and Water Development and Renewable Resources grants. Since many grant sources such as the LWCF, the National Park Service, and the Federal Highway Administration are falling to the budget axe, it behooves the County to seek more grants from private foundations and individuals. These could include such corporate foundations as Mountain Bell, Burlington Northern, and possibly, U.S. West.

APPENDIX A  
COMPARISON OF RECOMMENDED PARK STANDARDS

## APPENDIX B



# APPENDIX A

## COMPARISON OF RECOMMENDED PARK STANDARDS

SOURCE	RECOMMENDED SIZE*		RECOMMENDED ACRES/1000 population*		SERVICE AREA	
	Neighborhood	Community	Neighborhood	Community	Neighborhood	Community
	parks	parks	parks	parks	parks	parks
Extension Service of Mississippi State University, Info. sheet #659	7	25 to 40	3.5	1.0	N.A.	N.A.
Park & Recreation Element, City of San Mateo, Calif. 1973	1-12	10 to 30	4.0	2.0	1/2 mi.	1 mi.
Village of Little Chute, Park & Recreation Plan, Fox Valley Council of Govt's, Wisc. 1973	3-5	25 to 50	N.A.	N.A.	1/2 mi.	1 1/2 mi.
Open Space and Conservation Element of the Menlo Park General Plan, Calif., 1973	5-20	N.A.	2.5	N.A.	1/2 to 1 mi.	N.A.
Flathead County Public Parks & Outdoor Recreation, Montana, 1975	5-12	20 to 100	2.5	2.5	1/2 mi.	1 1/2 to 3 mi.
Bozeman Park & Recreation Inventory & Work Plan, Bozeman, MT, 1975	2.5-10	10+acres	2.0	3.5	1/2 mi.	N.A.
Gallatin County Outdoor Recreation & Open Space Plan, Montana, 1979	7+ ac.	20-30	3.5	1.5	1/2 mi.	1 1/2 to 2 mi.
AVERAGE	3.6-10.4	18.3-50	3.0	2.2	1/2 mi.	1 1/2 to 2 mi.

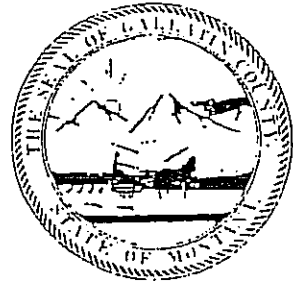
NOTE: A commonly seen and nationally accepted standard for total developed parkland area in a community is 10 acres/1000 population.

\* In Acres

State of Montana

# County of Gallatin

Bozeman



## APPENDIX B

TO: GALLATIN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FROM: BILL MURDOCK, SUBDIVISION REVIEW OFFICE  
DATE: APRIL 21, 1987  
RE: LAND, WATER, CONSERVATION FUND SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY

Attached is a copy of the completed survey I conducted for the purpose of applying for funds for a county multi-purpose park. The survey consists of two hundred (200) responses from heads of households chosen randomly in the phonebook throughout Gallatin County. The survey method is accurate to within ten percent (10%) of the responses of every county resident, if they were all tabulated.

I have summarized the results with a brief narrative of the response to each question in the survey:

QUESTION 1. Walking for pleasure, picnicking, fishing and camping were the activities with the highest county participation rates, in that order. 63% said that they or members of their household played football, soccer, baseball or softball.

QUESTION 2. Most respondents were satisfied with the supply of outdoor recreation opportunities in Gallatin County. Those who were not satisfied gave swimming and softball as the two (2) activities in shortest supply.

QUESTION 3. When asked which ONE outdoor recreation activity they felt was in the greatest need, 140 people gave 33 different answers. 60 respondents could not think of an answer. Softball fields, bicycle trails, swimming facilities, access to public lands, cross country ski trails and parks, in that order, were given as the one activity in greatest need of more facilities or opportunities.

QUESTION 4. 88% of those surveyed either didn't know or felt that additional parks should be evenly distributed between active and passive recreation.

QUESTION 5. When asked what ONE kind of outdoor recreation area their household would prefer, if the county had the funds, 21 didn't know and the remaining 179 gave 47 requests. Swimming pools were the most requested, with most requesting this from Belgrade and Manhattan. Linear parks and parks, fishing

accesses, open space, and soccer and softball fields, in that order, were the remaining most requested areas.

QUESTION 6. This was the optional Gallatin County question regarding the sale or exchange of county parks. 74.5% of the respondents favored selling or exchanging undeveloped parks provided that any funds generated would be used for recreation purposes. 21% opposed selling subdivision parks and 4.5% were undecided. Most respondents were unaware that the county had the authority to sell parks.

QUESTION 7. 39% of those surveyed felt that adequate opportunities existed in the county for children, elderly and handicapped. 30% felt these opportunities were inadequate. Most of the elderly respondents felt recreational opportunities plentiful for their group. 23% felt that opportunities for the handicapped are inadequate.

QUESTION 8a. When asked what they perceived as the single greatest outdoor recreation concern or problem facing Gallatin County today, respondents gave a wide range of responses. Lack of funding (15%) was given most often. A group of concerns (see survey results) that could be addressed by a multi-purpose park was the next largest category at 10%.

QUESTION 8b. Lack of money and access to public lands were given as the two (2) greatest outdoor recreation concerns facing the state of Montana by the most respondents.

QUESTION 9. The average household size of those surveyed was 3.56 people per household, and the average age of the head of the house was 37.8. 60% of the respondents were female. The survey calls were made during the day; this would account for the large percentage of female respondents and the larger than-average household size.

#### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

The phone number prefixes gave a clue as to where in the county those surveyed lived. "388" (Belgrade) and "284" (Manhattan) numbers generally wanted swimming pools and ballfields. "763" (Gateway) folks were generally satisfied with recreation opportunities. "995" (Big Sky) people desired more golf and fishing access. "285" (Three Forks) and "646" (West Yellowstone) respondents were generally satisfied and "587-6" (Bozeman) numbers gave a whole range of desires for more recreational

opportunities. Almost all older people throughout the county declined to participate.

Of the activities given as those in greatest need or identified on a "wish list" for more facilities or opportunities, several are beyond the capabilities of the county; i.e. more hunting on private lands, motorized vehicle issues on federal land, better maintained trails on federal land, more downhill ski facilities, and other similar concerns. Activities that are within the scope of county authority and listed most often are:

- \*more fishing spots;
- \*better access to public lands;
- \*more swimming facilities;
- \*more cross country ski trails;
- \*more soccer, baseball and softball fields; and,
- \*more open space, parks and linear parks.

## APPENDIX C

### POLICY FOR DISBURSING PARK FUNDS

#### I. POLICY

The county park fund has a balance of \$60,255 as of October 31, 1989. The balance derives from subdivision cash contributions as required by Montana law and accumulated interest, which accrues at approximately 8% annually.

Gallatin County has the authority to expend park funds for the initial development of parks and playgrounds (76-3-606(2) and 7-16-4101 et seq. M.C.A.). This authority also allows it to set policy for how these funds are expended.

The cash-in-lieu of parklands fund should be kept at a minimum balance of \$50,000. Surplus funds above this amount should be distributed twice a year in March and September, according to the criteria listed below. Public notice to disburse the funds will be given two months prior to the two annual distribution dates, and applications must be submitted in acceptable form one month prior to those dates to the Gallatin County Subdivision Review Office. The park and recreation proposals will be evaluated based on the listed criteria, and proposals scoring highest will qualify first for county park funds. Disbursement of parkfund monies will be limited to county property or dedicated parklands.

The County reserves the right to otherwise expend park funds in a manner consistent with the goals and identified needs in this plan. Under circumstances deemed special by the County Commission, the fund balance could be reduced below \$50,000. Any expenditure of cash-in-lieu funds will follow the above disbursement dates and notice procedure.

## A. EVALUATION GUIDELINES FOR PARK DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

### 1. FINANCIAL FACTORS

- a. Cost of Proposal. The total dollar cost of the project is important. The percentage of the proposal's request of the total recreation funds to be disbursed is also important.
- b. Availability of Matching Funds. It is required that area residents demonstrate their commitment with at least some matching funds. It is also important that other sources be contacted about possible funding, including grants.
- c. Maintenance. The cost of annual maintenance needed by the project and provisions for its funding need to be considered.
- d. User Fees. Some park developments could require user fees. The range of these fees and their impact on use is very important.

### 2. USE FACTORS

- a. Estimated Number of Users. The development should not unduly exclude large percentages of potential users. The more people it is designed to serve and the more who use it, the better.
- b. Recreation Plan Needs. Ideally, the development should satisfy a need identified in the master plan. If it does not, then sufficient documentation should be provided to assure its need and use.
- c. Proximity to Other Parks. The project should compliment other adjacent park uses; duplication would be undesirable unless the need for duplication has been established.
- d. Proximity to Public Lands and/or Riparian Areas. More public lands access has been identified as a recreation need in the county. Also, it is important to give priority to preserving riparian areas such as rivers, lakes, wetlands and important groundwater recharge areas.

- e. Conflict with Other Park Uses. It is preferred that the project will not detract from, or create conflicts with, activities or uses already in place at the park.

3. ORGANIZATION FACTORS

- a. Homeowners Organized. It is essential that the subdivision homeowners have an active, viable association with written covenants to ensure the project's success including funding and maintenance. An indication that many homeowners would personally assist the park development project is strongly desirable.
- b. Park Development Plan. It is also highly desirable that a park project be part of a park plan. The plan should be written and include a site plan and map which shows the location and design of proposed park facilities and developments.
- c. Weed Control Plan. Any development must assure that noxious weeds will be controlled and that the development will not contribute to the county's weed problem.
- d. Previous Submittal. Development proposals that have met minimum rating requirements in previous years should be weighed favorably if they were turned down because of insufficient funding and have been resubmitted.
- e. County Property. The development proposal should be located on either county owned property, dedicated to the public, or dedicated homeowners association property.

B. GUIDELINES FOR AWARDING POINTS FOR SUBDIVISION PARK DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

5 points	Excellent
4 points	Above Average
3 points	Average
2 points	Below Average
1 point	Poor

1. FINANCIAL FACTOR

- a. Cost of Proposal 5 points - Low cost to county and asking for a low percentage of total dollars

available. 1 point - High cost to county and high percentage of total dollars available.

- b. Availability of Matching Funds 5 points - Greater than 75% of project funding provided by homeowners association or other non-county sources. 4 points - 65-75% of funding provided by non-county sources. 3 points - 50-65% of funding provided by non-county sources. 2 points - 25-50% of funding provided by non-county sources. 1 point - less than 25% of funding supplied by non-county sources.
- c. Maintenance 5 points - Very minimal annual maintenance costs. 1 point - High or significant annual maintenance costs where the ability to fund them is questionable.
- d. User Fees 5 points - No user fees. 1 point - Substantial user fees that would exclude a significant portion of the area residents.

## 2. USE FACTORS

- a. Number of Users 5 points - Project serves most of the area residents. 1 point - Project excludes current users and only serves a small fraction of area residents.
- b. Recreation Plan Needs 5 points - Project satisfies a need given high priority in the recreation plan. 1 point - Little documentation available to demonstrate need for the project.
- c. Proximity to Other Parks 5 points - Project is close to other complementary recreation developments. 1 point - Complementary recreation developments too far away to be helpful.
- d. Proximity to Public Lands and/or Riparian Areas. 5 points - Project is adjacent to public land which is capable of providing for recreational use or is adjacent to or within close proximity of a riparian area. 1 point - Project is too distant from these areas to be of any practical value.
- e. Conflict With Other Park Uses 5 points - Project adds to other park uses. 1 point - Project would eliminate already existing park uses.



### 3. ORGANIZATION FACTORS

- a. Homeowners Organized 5 points - Active homeowner's association with high percentage of membership committed to seeing the project through; 1 point - Homeowners disorganized or not in agreement on park project.
- b. Park Development and Maintenance Plan 5 points - Clear, concise development and maintenance plan including a timetable, annual maintenance costs and well designed site plan with graphics. 1 point - No plan, no drawings available.
- c. Weed Control Plan 5 points - Concise, clear weed control strategy. 1 point - Little attention given to weed control.
- d. Previous Submittal 5 points - Previous submittal scored very high but not enough money in the fund. 1 point - Previous submittal scored poorly on ratings points, or not previously submitted.
- e. County Property 5 points - Proposed submittal is located on county property, or dedicated to homeowner's association. 1 point - Submittal located on private property not dedicated to homeowners association.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ACRES \_\_\_\_\_ SECTION \_\_\_\_\_

T \_\_\_\_\_ R \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ EVALUATED \_\_\_\_\_  
BY \_\_\_\_\_

GENERAL  
COMMENTS \_\_\_\_\_

SUBDIVISION      PARK      DEVELOPMENT      PROPOSAL      RATING      (TOTAL  
POINTS) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ FINANCIAL FACTOR TOTAL

\_\_\_\_\_ USE FACTOR TOTAL

\_\_\_\_\_ ORGANIZATION TOTAL

DEVELOPMENT RATING POINTS:

5 POINTS	EXCELLENT
4 POINTS	ABOVE AVERAGE
3 POINTS	AVERAGE
2 POINTS	BELOW AVERAGE
1 POINT	POOR

FINANCIAL FACTORS

\_\_\_\_\_ COST OF PROPOSAL

\_\_\_\_\_ AVAILABILITY MATCHING FUNDS

\_\_\_\_\_ MAINTENANCE

\_\_\_\_\_ USER FEES

\_\_\_\_\_ T O T A L

The following categories  
will determine the rough  
value of the subdivision  
park development proposal:

Below 25	Poor
26 - 30	Below Average
31 - 40	Average
41 - 50	Good
51 - 59	Very Good
60 and above	Excellent

USE FACTORS

\_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF USERS

\_\_\_\_\_ RECREATION PLAN NEEDS

\_\_\_\_\_ PROXIMITY TO OTHER PARKS

\_\_\_\_\_ PROXIMITY TO PUBLIC LANDS AND/OR RIPARIAN AREAS

\_\_\_\_\_ CONFLICT WITH OTHER PARK USES

\_\_\_\_\_ T O T A L

Proposals must score 31  
points or more to be  
eligible for County park  
funds.

ORGANIZATION FACTORS

\_\_\_\_\_ HOMEOWNERS ORGANIZED

\_\_\_\_\_ PARK DEVELOPMENT PLAN

\_\_\_\_\_ WEED CONTROL PLAN

\_\_\_\_\_ PREVIOUS SUBMITTAL

\_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY PROPERTY

\_\_\_\_\_ T O T A L

- d. Suitable Building Site 5 points - park contains at least one level building site large enough for residential/commercial construction with no problems associated with high ground water. Must also be suitable for septic installation, if city sewer is not available. 1 point - Absolutely no suitable site for residential or commercial construction.

- b. Park Development Plan 5 points - A detailed, professional, drawn plan with a schedule for developments. 1 point - no semblance of a plan.
- c. Commitment of Funds 5 points - Evidence of a substantial commitment of funds that would finance a significant portion of park development and maintenance. 1 point - No funds available from homeowners for park development or maintenance.
- d. Degree of Park Development 5 points - Evidence of either full development or adherence to phased development plan. 1 point - No development, no evidence of any plans to do so.

## 2. USE FACTORS

- a. New Subdivisions 5 points - Subdivision less than two years old with a plan or subdivision with viable developed park. 1 point - Subdivision ten years or older with no park development.
- b. Subdivision Park Use 5 points - Strong indication that park is used regularly by a majority of subdivision residents. 1 point - No evidence that park is used regularly by subdivision residents.
- c. Noxious Weed Presence 5 points - No noxious weeds present, park vegetated by desirable grasses, and adjacent land is weed-free. 1 point - Noxious weeds well established, or the potential to become established in near future.

## 3. SITE FACTORS

- a. Subdivision Size 5 points - Subdivision lots 1 acre or less per dwelling unit. 1 point - Subdivision lots larger than five acres per dwelling unit.
- b. Proximity of Other Parks 5 points - A recognized need for a park in the area and complementary parks close by. 1 point - Other parks nearby serving the same need.
- c. Topography 5 points - Varied terrain with excellent scenic and recreational use or potential. 1 point - Terrain unsuited for aesthetic or recreational purposes.

### 3. SITE FACTORS

- a. The size of a subdivision's lots and covenants pertaining to the size and type of dwelling, and will contribute to the type of use and development a subdivision park will receive. Large lot subdivisions generally do not require the open space in a park that smaller lot subdivisions do.
- b. The proximity of other recreation facilities will also determine the extent of a subdivision park's use. Close complementary parks are desirable, but too many parks in close proximity serving the same need will lead to a park's disuse.
- c. The topography of a given subdivision park will play a large part in its use pattern. Often developers dedicate parkland which is unsuitable for other types of development. In some cases this parkland functions as stream buffers zones to protect surface water resources, or serves as wildlife habitat. Sometimes however, land with steep slopes, exposed ridges, wet ground with marsh or high water table is offered as parkland but is ill-suited for most park uses.
- d. Presence of suitable building site is important in the decision to sell or exchange of parkland. The presence of a suitable building site adds value to the parkland and makes it more marketable if it were offered for sale. On the other hand, if no building site is available, the park is less likely to be sold or exchanged and more suitable for parkland use.

### B. GUIDELINES FOR AWARDING POINTS TO PARK RATINGS POTENTIAL

5 points	Excellent Potential
4 points	Above Average Potential
3 points	Average Potential
2 points	Below Average Potential
1 point	Poor or Non-Usable

#### 1. Organization Factors

- a. Homeowner's Association 5 points - Homeowners are active, organized and have demonstrated a commitment to maintaining and developing a park. 1 point - No evidence of an active, organized, committed homeowner's group.

## APPENDIX D

### A. EVALUATION GUIDELINES FOR SALE OR EXCHANGE OF SUBDIVISION PARKLANDS

#### 1. ORGANIZATION FACTORS

- a. Homeowners Associations that are active in developing and maintaining a subdivision park, or developers, in the case of new subdivisions with few residents, are very important to ensure a park's development.
- b. A park development plan is needed as a guideline for homeowners to follow when developing their park.
- c. A commitment of funds and effort by homeowners is very important in a park's use and development; without these a park would probably not be used.
- d. Parks that are developed, all at once or in phases are more likely to be used by a greater number of people in the subdivision. Developed parks are also less of a weed problem than undeveloped parks.

#### 2. USE FACTORS

- a. New subdivisions usually have a high percentage of vacant lots and therefore few residents to develop, use or maintain the subdivision's park. If a park is undeveloped in a new subdivision, it should be determined what plans, if any, the developer has for maintenance and development.
- b. The use of a subdivision park, developed or not, must be determined. An on-site inspection and a survey of adjacent landowners will establish a subdivision park's past and present use patterns. The more use a park site receives, the more chance it has to be a successful developed park.
- c. The degree of noxious weeds present in a subdivision park can be related to its use, development and maintenance. Noxious weeds are undesirable and should be controlled. The causes for these weeds, non use and no maintenance, should be eliminated wherever possible.

## APPENDIX E

### IV. CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A COUNTY SUBDIVISION PARK LAND LOCATION AND RECREATIONAL RATING SYSTEM

Any new subdivision parklands must meet the following requirements before they are accepted by the county. Subdivision parks must be protected by legal arrangements, satisfactory to the County Commission, sufficient to assure their maintenance and preservation for whatever purpose they are intended. Covenants or other legal arrangements shall specify ownership of the cluster open space, method of maintenance, responsibility for maintenance, maintenance taxes and insurance, compulsory membership and compulsory assessment provisions, guarantees that any association formed to own and maintain a subdivision park will not be dissolved without the consent of the County Commission, and any other specifications deemed necessary by the Commissioners.

#### A. EVALUATION GUIDELINES FOR PARK LAND RECREATION POTENTIAL

##### 1. Site Factors:

- a. Need - Before consideration of a site for a subdivision park, an indication of need for a park must be determined. The target market for the subdivision should be considered, including income levels, size of lots, type of dwelling units proposed, covenants (horses, etc.) and family size. These and other variables will help establish the need for a park as well as its location. Currently accepted standards call for playgrounds spaced about 0.5 miles apart, playfields 0.85 miles apart, and large parks 2.6 miles apart. Because of the County's gridiron system of roads, parks should be located within the same square mile section they serve in order for park users to avoid crossing major traffic thoroughfares.
- b. Accessibility of Parcel - Legal access of the parcel must be considered in the park land evaluation. Also, public access by automobile and parking must also be considered in park and recreational evaluation. Public access should be designed to minimize impacts on adjacent landowners.
- c. Proximity to Other Recreational Areas - To avoid over-use and over-crowding, and to provide alternative recreational opportunities, proximity of a potential recreation area to an existing site is