CLASS III CULTURAL RESOURCE INVESTIGATIONS OF THE GLACIER RAIL PARK IN KALISPELL, MONTANA

PHASE I, PARCELS A & B

SUBMITTED TO
City of Kalispell
Community Development
201 First Ave. East
Kalispell, MT 59901

PREPARED BY
Dagny K. Krigbaum
Historical Discoveries
713 S. 5th W.
Missoula, MT 59801
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Submitted to:
Katharine Thompson, MPA, CEed
Community Development Manager
City of Kalispell
201 First Avenue East
Kalispell, MT 59901

Prepared by:

Historical Discoveries
Cultural Resource Management Services
713 S. Fifth W.
Missoula, MT 59801

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Project Summary ............................................................................................................1

1.0 Introduction .............................................................................................................2

2.0 Project Location & Description ................................................................................2

3.0 Area of Potential Effect ..........................................................................................3

4.0 Environmental Context ...........................................................................................4

5.0 Historic Context ......................................................................................................5

6.0 Methodology & Findings .........................................................................................9

7.0 Conclusions & Recommendations ........................................................................16

8.0 References Consulted .............................................................................................17

TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1. Development of Parcel A based on aerial photography ...................................11
Table 2. Development of Parcel B based on aerial photography ...................................12
Table 3. Cultural resources located within the APE .......................................................13

Figure 1. General project area ......................................................................................3
Figure 2. Location of the proposed rail park and APE Parcels A & B .................................4
Figure 3. 1947 Daily Interlake newspaper 1947 ...........................................................8
Figure 4. Aerial view and U.S.G.S topographic maps ....................................................14

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Photographic Documentation .................................................................A1
Project Summary

The City of Kalispell (City) was awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation to construct a new 40-acre industrial rail park on the former site of a gravel pit (the Project). The 40-acre industrial rail park is Phase I of the two-phased Glacier Industrial Rail Park project in Kalispell. The 40-acre rail park will be a new centralized site that will benefit the entire community, as the rail is an important asset that is expected to attract new manufactures to the area. The 40-acres will connect to an adjacent spur that runs from the mainline in Columbia Falls and is part of a larger network that runs from Seattle to Minneapolis and Chicago. The project is believed to be pivotal to the Core Area Revitalization Plan, and is a development strategy that intends to connect several disjointed streets and replace a two-mile section of railroad tracks with a pathway system through the city’s downtown. Ultimately, the project is expected to leverage the area’s access to the Burlington Northern Santa Fe rail line, which will create jobs, increase private investment, and aid in the diversification of the local and regional economy.

The grant, administered by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), is therefore an undertaking per Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and its implementing regulations (36 CFR 800). The City contracted Historical Discoveries (the Consultant) to conduct a Class III cultural resource investigation, in order to identify historic properties, make a recommendation regarding National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility, and assess potential effects (i.e., no historic properties affected, no adverse effect, adverse effect) if historic properties are present in the Area of Potential Effect (APE). The Class III investigation included a systematic and detailed field inspection of the industrial park site. This study includes an evaluation of the investigation’s findings. This study was preceded by an in-depth existing data review of previous cultural investigations and previously documented sites within a .5-mile radius of the industrial rail park site. This study resulted in a recommendation that no historic properties are located within the APE, and that the proposed construction of a rail park on the former site of a gravel pit would have no effect on historic properties.

1 The Phase II is the subject of the Section 106 Cultural Resources Inventory for the TIGER VII Glacier Rail Park and Trail Project, City of Kalispell, Flathead County, Montana prepared by Rabbitbrush Archaeological Services, LLC (November 2016).
1.0 Introduction

The City of Kalispell contracted with Historical Discoveries (the Consultant) to perform cultural resource investigations of a 40-acre parcel formerly known as the McElroy and Wilken gravel pit (Parcel A) and a non-contiguous .5-acre parcel (Parcel B). The purpose of the investigation was to identify historic properties, make a recommendation regarding National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility, and assess potential effects to any historic properties are present in the Area of Potential Effect (APE).

Cultural resource investigations for the Glacier Industrial Rail Park are being conducted in two phases that focus on two separate Areas of Potential Effect (APE). The Phase I APE, and subject of this study, consists of the 40-acres where the rail park (Parcel A) will be constructed and a .5-acre parcel (Parcel B) to the south that is proposed for road widening and the installation of a traffic light. The Phase II APE consists of a two-mile section of Burlington Northern railroad tracks that are slated for removal (Phase II). The second phase is meant to establish a pedestrian/bike trail along the former tracks, and will provide an overall benefit to transportation and public safety in the downtown area. It should be noted, that Burlington Northern railroad tracks are located within close proximity of Parcel A, but because they will not be directly affected by the construction of the rail park, they are not included in the Phase I APE. A full evaluation of the Burlington Railroad and a recommendation of effects were completed in the Phase II cultural study.

2.0 Project Location & Description

The proposed Glacier Rail Park will be constructed in Flathead County, just northeast of Kalispell’s central downtown district (Figure 1). The 40-acre site (Parcel A) is located to the north of Montana Secondary Highway 292, at 801 Whitefish Stage Road, and is currently owned by the Flathead County Economic Development Authority (FCEDA). The .5-acres (Parcel B) located to the south is privately owned, and FCEDA is negotiating the acquisition of the parcel in order to serve as an easement along Flathead Drive. Flathead Drive will serve as a point of entry to reach the rail park, and road widening and a traffic light are proposed at this location.

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2 The Phase II APE is the subject of the Section 106 Cultural Resources Inventory for the TIGER VII Glacier Rail Park and Trail Project, City of Kalispell, Flathead County, Montana prepared by Rabbitbrush Archaeological Services, LLC (November 2016).
Parcel A (see Figure 2) is a former gravel pit and is a relatively barren tract of land in a broad open basin that can be accessed by traveling north from U.S. Highway 2 along 7th Avenue EN and Whitefish Stage Road for approximately .5 miles, until reaching the main entrance on the right. It is located in the northwest and northeast quarter of Section 8, in Township 28 North, Range 21 West. Parcel A is a highly disturbed area that was mined for several decades and was remediated in 2011 and 2012, which included grading, capping and seeding. It is bordered by: roads and industry, including the site of the former Kalispell Pole & Timber Company, an active lumber yard and an old oil refinery site (formerly known as Reliance Oil site 24FH0219) to the north; roads and residential buildings to the south; East Oregon Lane, commercial and industrial businesses and Burlington Northern (a.k.a. Great Northern Railroad, site 24FH0350) railroad tracks to the east; a secondary highway to the west; and roads and undeveloped land located within the floodplain of the Stillwater River along the northwest corner (see Figure 2).

Parcel B (see Figure 2) is a .5 acre small graded, graveled and partially paved lot occupied by a commercial business selling prefabricated buildings at the intersection of Highway 2 and Flathead Drive. It is located in the southeast quarter of Section 8, in Township 28 North, Range 21 West. Parcel B is bordered by: Flathead Drive to the north and west; U.S. Highway 2 and utility infrastructure to the south; and commercial businesses to the east (see Figure 2).

3.0 Area of Potential Effect

The Area of Potential Effect (APE) is defined as the geographic area or areas within which an undertaking may directly or indirectly cause alterations in the character or use of historic properties, if any such properties exist. The APE established for this undertaking includes a 40-acre parcel that is relatively long and asymmetrical in shape (Parcel A), and a small, non-contiguous rectangular .5-acre parcel (Parcel B). Parcel A is zoned industrial in the City, and Parcel B is zoned B-2 or General Business Zoning in the County. The gravel pit used to be outside of city limits, but was annexed in 2015 (Morisaki, 2016).
Phase I cultural investigations considered only the direct effects of ground disturbances caused by construction within the 40.5-acres, and did not account for noise, vibration or visual effects to properties that may be adjacent to the rail park. The APE was established by the City, Consultant, and FRA and was based on site reconnaissance; the results of a state record search; a review of previous historic building surveys throughout Kalispell; a review of previously conducted environmental studies that included portions of the APE and surrounding areas; and a 2016 environmental assessment that included nearly all of the APE for Phase I. According to the Montana Antiquities Database, there is no indication that the entire APE was previously surveyed for cultural resources.

4.0 Environmental Context

The project area is located in the Northern Rocky Mountains at an elevation of 2,956 feet above sea level, in Flathead County, Montana. Kalispell is located in the Flathead Valley, which is a broad agricultural valley surrounded by foothills and mountains. The Flathead Valley is approximately 15 miles wide and 25 miles long, and gradually slopes from the north to the south. Some of the areas along the valley floor that are not already disturbed by development have native prairie habitats or grasslands, which include bluebunch wheat grass, Idaho fescue and balsamroot. Forested uplands and even higher elevations support shrubs and a mix of conifers including Ponderosa pine and Douglas fir or Western Larch. The largest river in the area is the Flathead, which drains into Flathead Lake. Other significant rivers include the Stillwater, Swan and Whitefish.

Local rock formations furnish the material for soils, and the physiography, drainage and glacial history have determined how the materials were deposited. Most of the County has been influenced by alpine glaciation and influenced by materials that were picked up and redeposited by ice or water. According to a recent environmental assessment of the Glacier Industrial Park, the mountainous perimeter of the Flathead Valley is
largely composed of metamorphosed sedimentary bedrock of the Belt Supergroup, and these rocks also underlie the valley. The depth to bedrock within the project area is between 1,500 and 2,000 feet, with Tertiary and Quaternary-age valley-fill sediments above bedrock. Tertiary-age sediments were deposited on bedrock surfaces. The upper 600 to 1,000 feet of valley fill sediments were deposited during the most recent glacial cycle (Quaternary Period) and consist of alluvium, glacial till, and glaciolacustrine deposits. Surficial deposits within the project area consist of Quaternary-age river terrace and glacial lake sediments. Throughout much of the valley, alluvial sand and gravel was deposited above the Tertiary-age sediments and below a fine-grained confining unit by glacial stream processes (AMEC Geomatrix, Inc., 2011: 4-5).

Parcel A reveals a land surface cover consisting of large expanses of exposed gravel, some of which has been covered with topsoil and clay and seeded. Soil at the Site is classified as Kalispell gravelly loam, with the USDA database indicating that the soil formed on stream terraces, and that the alluvium is the parent material. Dominant soil in the immediate study area is a light tan sandy loam with quartz and granite gravels. According to AMEC Geomatrix (AMEC), the soil is well drained and consists of gravelly loam from 0-30 inches, and stratified gravelly loamy fine sand, to gravelly silt loam below 30 inches (AMEC Geomatrix, Inc., 2011:5).

Due to the recent remediation in Parcel A, the topography is relatively flat. The original surface was removed during past mining operations and topographic contours from a 1962 topographical map indicate that a majority of the gravel pit was formerly a large hill. Aerial photographs indicate that as early as 1938 and as late as 1974, a portion of the north end of the site was treed. The highest land surfaces appear to have been located along the southwestern end, and the lowest elevations were located along the eastern end of the pit.

5.0 Historic Context

Evidence of prehistoric and historic land use exists throughout the general study area, but due to intensive commercial and industrial use of the immediate study area, no prehistoric sites are known to exist within close proximity of the APE, and none have been previously recorded within the search local. Evidence of pre-contact cultures and cultural resources associated with history outside of the area’s industrial economy was not located during this study. Therefore, the following includes only a brief contextual history of early inhabitants, Kalispell’s railroad history, and other industrial developments associated with findings in the APE. A majority of the following information was taken directly from the author’s 2009 Kalispell study (Krigbaum, 2009).

The first inhabitants of the Flathead Valley were Native Americans who occupied the land and utilized its resources. Primarily bands of Kootenai utilized the area during the historic period, but the Upper Pend d’Oreille (Kalispell), Salish (Flatheads), Spokane and Coeur d’ Alene were some of the other indigenous people who are known to have lived in and passed through the area. Because the valley is rich in natural resources and home to numerous lakes and rivers, these tribes often found themselves defending the territory against the Blackfeet, who were from the eastern side of the Rocky Mountains.

In July of 1855, the Flathead, Kootenai and Upper Pend d’Oreille negotiated the Hell Gate Treaty with the governor and superintendent of Indian affairs for the Territory of Washington. The treaty reduced the tribal aboriginal territory, which included parts of western Montana, Idaho, British Columbia and Wyoming, to a relatively small area located in Western Montana. The area defined in the treaty became the Flathead Reservation, and was set aside for the exclusive use and benefit of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai tribes. The treaty divided the Flathead Lake into two halves, with the southern portion set aside as part of the reservation.

The Flathead Agency in St. Ignatius, Montana, was established in 1854 principally for the Flathead, Upper Pend
d’Oreille, and Kootenai tribes, but the Lower Kalispell’s moved onto the Reservation in 1887, and the Spokane moved to the reservation in the 1890s. Before long, however, individual tribal distinctions were ignored by non-Indians, and all became known as the Flatheads.

Although the reservation was created for the exclusive use of the tribes, the land was coveted by non-Indians, and grazing and agricultural lands were especially desirable. As a result, under the General Allotment or Dawes Act, lands on the reservation that were not settled by Indians were opened to non-Indians in 1910. Under the act, the reservation was surveyed and individual tribal members were allotted a specific amount of acreage, which replaced communal tribal holdings. Today the Flathead Reservation is approximately 1.3 million acres. The tribes have over 7,700 enrolled members, with approximately two-thirds living on or near the reservation (Montana Governors Office of Indian Affairs, 2016).

The first non-native inhabitants of the area were trappers in the early 1800s, with Canadian explorer David Thompson believed to be the first white man to discover the Flathead. Because of its surrounding geography, which includes rugged mountains, historically dense forests and the largest natural lake west of the Mississippi River, the Kalispell area was relatively late in being settled by non-Indians. Politics regarding Native Americans in the area also played a part in its late settlement. Access through mountains and around the 30-mile long Flathead Lake made travel in the upper Flathead Valley relatively tough, and the establishment of the Flathead and Blackfeet Indian Reservations made the area less desirable to non-Indians for quite some time. The desirability changed when gold was discovered north of the Flathead Valley, enticing miners and freighters into the area. Some settlers began grazing cattle but many were unsuccessful and moved on. Some stayed and converted land for agricultural use, and established several small communities.

Kalispell began as a railroad town, serving as the division point for the Great Northern Railway when it was being constructed from St. Paul to Seattle. The extension of the railroad created a mass-transportation route over the continental divide, and this in turn fueled the timber industry and created an influx of settlers traveling to the West in search of farmland. One generally accepted story for the founding of Kalispell is that Charles E. Conrad, who represented Great Northern Railroad’s James J. Hill, was instructed to buy a townsite, and Hill then built a railroad to it.

The city prospered from lumber and milling, various retailing, and brewing as well. Kalispell served as the railroad division point between Cut Bank and Troy from 1892 to 1904, when the railroad route was resurveyed and the division point was moved to Whitefish. Up to that point, Kalispell had done well for itself regarding transportation, as it was not only a division point, but in 1900 the Great Northern Railroad built a spur line to John O’Brien’s tie plant and mill at Somers, Montana (south of Kalispell). This offered steamboat passengers at Demersville, who traveled across Flathead Lake, an option to access the railroad line rather than a boat that navigated the Flathead River between the lake and Demersville. When the Flathead Reservation was opened to non-Indians in 1910, north-south bound travel increased greatly, and led to establishing separate passenger trains that ran twice daily (McKay, 1993:9).

Like other western Montana towns, Kalispell generally prospered during the years that were centered around the construction of the railroad, but in 1904 it experienced a downturn when the Great Northern relocated the main line to the north. Many of the railroad employees left Kalispell and moved north as well, but because Kalispell had already established itself as a trade and financial center, it generally continued to prosper. The early 1900s was a time of population growth and economic development in Kalispell, and was aided by the anticipation of the opening of the Flathead Indian Reservation to non-Indian settlement and the creation of Glacier National Park, which both occurred in 1910.
Numerous downtown commercial buildings were constructed from 1891 to 1910 with a lull in commercial construction after 1910, and then starting up again around 1920 and increasing in the late 1920s. The boom in the late 1920s was due in part to the construction of the highway across the Continental Divide (Marias Pass), which opened in 1930. Another small wave of construction occurred in the 1930s after the initial recession of the Great Depression, and another noticeable boom occurred during the mid-1950s. In the 1950s and 1960s, agriculture and timber ranked high in the county’s industrial economic activities. Field crops, dairy products, livestock and fruit were the principal products of the valley’s farms.

Mining activity in the county had always been relatively minimal. Mining began around 1890 when copper was discovered within what is now Glacier National Park and the tributaries of the South Fork of the Flathead River, but ceased when it was found that the quantity was insufficient to be commercial. Gold prospecting occurred in the region, and some silver was mined as early as 1913 but soon petered out. Silver was mined again actively from the mid-1930s to the 1940s and again during the late 1950s and early 1960s, which accounts for most of the early mineral mining in Flathead County (State of Montana, 1965:30). Coal, oil and natural gas development have also been minimal, but in the 1950s the State Engineers Office reported that several companies in the Kalispell area were mining sand and gravel for road construction and other uses. The source was said to be plentiful, with mixtures of sand and gravel occurring in moraines within the valley, and as stream alluvium bordering the Flathead River (State of Montana, 1965:32).

The site of the Glacier Rail Park has had a long industrial history associated with open-pit sand and gravel extraction. The earliest records located during this study reveal that most of the land in the project area was quitclaimed to David McGinnis in 1891, shortly after the patent was recorded, and that McGinnis owned the property until his death, when it was distributed as part of his estate in 1954. There is a recorded lease referring to the “McGinnis Gravel Pit” as early as 1930. After 1954 there is continued reference to the site being utilized for the removal of gravel, including: a 1966 agreement with the state to remove gravel and other materials; a transfer of ownership to McElroy and Wilken gravel company in 1983; McElroy and Wilken’s merger with JTL construction in 2003; and JTL’s continued use of the area to extract gravel until 2011.

David McGinnis is considered to be one of Kalispell’s founding fathers. McGinnis was a land speculator and promoter, and worked as an emigration agent for the Great Northern Railroad. He first visited the Flathead Valley in 1890 and became a long-time Kalispell resident. He is credited not only as being a founding father of Kalispell, but also of several other communities in Montana and the west. According to a 1939 newspaper article, McGinnis was associated with development throughout the state, particularly in the northwest and north central portions of Montana. He is one of several that initiated a movement that resulted in the construction of Grand Coulee dam, and was the founder of the town of Sunnyside in the Yakima valley, and Galata, along the High Line in Montana (Daily Interlake, 1939:9).

With townsites being developed around the construction of the railroad, McGinnis’s job gave him a great advantage as a land prospector. McGinnis would find out the proposed location of the railroad and would then purchase or homestead land in those areas. When surveyors came into the Flathead Valley for the Great Northern in 1883, they had planned to survey the line to cross the Stillwater River north of the present site of Kalispell. Acting on the information obtained from the lead surveyor, McGinnis and his comrade, John B. Conner, took up homestead property at the river site. McGinnis reported that they had turned down a land agent who wanted to sell them property south of the river, but the two were adamant about homesteading their chosen location. When the Great Northern decided to build the line to the south of the property they had homesteaded, the property lost its importance. The change in route was not made public at the time, but the land agent suspected something when the two men came back to take up his earlier offer. The agent raised the price and sold the property to McGinnis and Conner, and that land became part of the original townsites of Kalispell. The original property that was purchased by McGinnis eventually became his sand, gravel and
concrete business. It isn’t known whether or not McGinnis received much of a return for the land that became part of Kalispell’s townsite, as it was said that he never discussed it (Daily Interlake, February 28, 1951:43).

McGinnis remained an important community member, especially in his later years. He was creative, loved to share the history of Kalispell with citizens and children, and was proud that part of the city grew up on his property. He was always generous to the community. In 1934 it was reported that in celebrating his 78th birthday he gave a right-of-way to the county, which became an addition to the county highway (Daily Interlake May 5, 1934:5). In 1938 McGinnis gave the city 50 cubic yards of gravel for the winter Works Progress Administration projects and other city work. He was nearly 83 at the time, and in a newspaper article recalling some of his significant contributions, McGinnis commented that he was pleased to donate the materials and was grateful for the long years of friendship and kindness received from the people of Kalispell (Daily Interlake Dec 9, 1938:4). In 1947 McGinnis took out an ad in the daily newspaper claiming that he been asked by many to tell them where the main materials had come from to construct some of the more significant structures in the area. In turn, he published the following list, promoting the materials from his pit.

Figure 3. 1947 Daily Interlake newspaper.

Dams - Bridges - Highways - Large Concrete Constructions

I have been asked by so many to tell them where the main materials have originated to construct the larger structures in the Flathead country, that I have taken this means to describe them:

- The Flathead County High School, Kalispell;
- The Columbia Falls Public and High Schools;
- The Whitefish Public Schools and High School;
- The concrete high everfast of the Great Northern Division Yards at Whitefish;
- The underpass on the Great Northern West of Whitefish;
- The concrete bridge over South Fork, Flathead river, near Hungry Horse site where it flows into the Flathead river;
- The splendid concrete Bridge over the Flathead river two miles east of Kalispell on Highway No. 2;
- The concrete underpass on Highway No. 2 at Kalispell;
- The largest moving picture building at Kalispell;
- Numerous of the large buildings and other constructions at Kalispell and in the territory surrounding Kalispell and other cities of the Flathead country.
- Washed material for construction paved Main Street North, the Great Northern at Kalispell and concrete for numerous foundations of business and residences at Kalispell and surrounding country.

The material at my pit is so perfect that in all the major constructions for many years has never developed cracks, blisters, discolorations, imperfections of any kind or degree. This either washed or unwashed. It is divided into sharp sand strips. Gravel strips like a flag, each perfect, for everlasting construction. Go over large structures built from my pit with a fine-tooth comb and any imperfection of any kind or degree cannot be found. It is everlasting for all the ages to come, either washed or in its natural state. Construction from this pit will endure permanently.

DAVID, ROBERT McGINNIS

McGinnis was a long time resident of Kalispell, but by the late 1930s he was spending his winters in California, and sometime prior to the mid-1940s it appears that McGinnis had either moved west or was spending at least part of the year in Seattle. Later in life he only returned to Kalispell about once a year (Daily Interlake, 1954:4).

Although the gravel pit was originally held by one of the founders of the City, the immediate study area is most commonly associated with McElroy and Wilken, a privately held ready mix, sand and gravel company that operated successfully in the APE for several decades, until it was transferred to MDU Resources in 2003. Floyd McElroy and Fred Wilken founded the gravel company in 1945. The company was passed down through three generations to Gary Wilken and Terry Keller, the grandchildren of Fred Wilken. Gary and Terry retired shortly after the acquisition, but the managers and employees were reported to have remained with the company when it transferred to MDU Resources in 2003. MDU Resources Group soon announced that Knife River
Corporation, a subsidiary of MDU, acquired McElroy and Wilken and that the gravel company would operate as a division of JTL Group, Inc., a subsidiary of Knife River (MDU Resources, 2003).

The former 40-acre gravel pit was recently purchased by the Flathead County Economic Development Authority. The mission of FCEDA is to enhance the economic base of Flathead County by identifying and supporting economic opportunities that provide job growth and retention, community wealth and an increased wage base (MT West Economic Development and Flathead County Economic Development Authority, 2016).

Historically, Kalispell began as a boomtown, but unlike many Montana boomtowns, Kalispell’s population did not rise and fall in great numbers but rather increased gradually. The city established itself early on as a regional trade and financial center. Its growing importance as a productive agricultural region and as a trade center for the Flathead Valley is reflected by the expansion of downtown commercial districts and industry along the city’s perimeter, like those found in the vicinity of the APE. Historically, Kalispell’s leading role in the Flathead Valley has been due to several factors, which include the railroad, tourism, agriculture and renewable resource production. Another very important factor was its designation as a county seat in 1893. Kalispell became and continues to be a regional government center that is home to local, county and federal agencies.

6.0 Methodology & Findings

6.1 Background Research Findings (Existing Data and Literature Review)

Potential historic properties were identified by: conducting a state record search to ascertain if previous studies have been conducted and if previously recorded sites exist in the immediate study area; by conducting background research of the study area; by conducting an archaeological pedestrian survey of the APE; and by revisiting previously documented sites that are located in and adjacent to the APE.

A record search with the State Historic Preservation Office performed in April 2016 indicates that seven sites have been previously recorded within the study area. Of those seven, one is located within the APE and another is located adjacent to the APE. The site in the APE is associated with the old Reliance Refinery (24FH0219) and its NRHP eligibility is listed as being “undetermined”. A majority of the oil refinery site is outside of the project area, but a small portion enters the northeast corner of the APE. The oil refinery site was originally made up of a structure and refuse, neither of which remain. The site was re-evaluated as part of this survey in order to determine its eligibility for the NRHP. The Great Northern Railroad (24FH0350) is an NRHP eligible site that runs parallel, but outside of the APE to the east. It is physically separated from the APE by a paved road (East Oregon Lane), an earthen berm and a couple of industrial businesses. The other five sites are eligible historic buildings, all of which are located outside of a .5-mile radius of the APE.

In addition to the records that were located in the file search, the Consultant reviewed the General Land Office Maps (GLO), which documented early developments in the area, the City’s Sanborn Fire Insurance maps (from 1892 through the 1950s), aerial views dating back to 1938 and a 1965 State Water Resource Survey. The GLO and water resource surveys did not map or document any early significant developments, and the Sanborn’s did not cover any building developments in the APE. The information gathered from the aerial photographs is discussed below.

The Consultant also reviewed an environmental site assessment by AMEC that was conducted five years ago for the McElroy and Wilken site. The study was helpful in that it documented previous land use in the APE and adjacent areas, and noted the types of structures that were located at the gravel pit at the time of the study. The study aided the Consultant in determining the few locations where there is a potential for locating cultural
resources, and discussed the oil refinery site that is located inside of the APE, which once included a structure and a historic dump or trash midden (AMEC Geomatrix, Inc., 2011).

The site form for 24FH0219 (the oil refinery) was reviewed prior to fieldwork. It was documented in 1985 and according to the author, the site was not considered to be eligible. However, the site is currently listed by the Montana SHPO as “undetermined.” Site 24FH0219 included two parcels totaling 6.62 acres that were owned and utilized by Reliance Refining Company until 1930, when they closed. The State of Montana then became the owner of the two parcels through foreclosure of a tax lien. After the oil refinery, the area was utilized by Kalispell Pole & Timber and later, the Kalispell Feed & Grain Company. The site form states that a contemporary barn was located on the property, but the only structure that was known to be associated with the historic refinery was an old metal shell that was slated for removal. There were no other surface indications of other historic structures, and it was noted that the lands around the refinery as well as under it, had been filled and leveled many times (Passman, 1985).

After the Reliance Refinery closed in 1930, the State of Montana leased the 6.62 acres to: Boris Aronow from December 1930 to November 29, 1935 (use of tract is unclear); Unity Petroleum Corporation from November 26, 1940 to May 16, 1968; and Kalispell Pole & Timber Company from August 1969 to at least 1985, and likely much later. (Passman, 1985).

The Consultant gathered some additional information regarding the use of the buildings and previous disturbances within the APE through an interview that was published by AMEC. In 2010 AMEC interviewed Mr. Alrick Hale, Vice President of Knife River Corporation, about his knowledge of the 40-acre gravel pit. Mr. Hale indicated that there is a well located at the western end of the batch plant that served the buildings, and that the concrete batch plant was inactive at the time of the interview. The onsite buildings had been used for maintenance and repair for the last few decades, and two of the buildings (the diesel shop and the Quonset hut) were leased to Butch Barber Trucking at the time of the interview. The westernmost structure that fronts Whitefish Stage Road served as an office building, and a weigh station was located immediately south of the office.

Mr. Hale discussed the adjacent Kalispell Pole and Timber Company site as a source of contamination in the area, and indicated that several monitoring wells had been installed on the site. He also indicated that various offsite sources have impacted the property. Concrete fill is known to have been placed on portions of the eastern end of the APE, and a release was documented in association with underground storage tanks at a fueling facility formerly located east of the diesel repair shop. Mr. Hale indicated that the fueling site had been remediated by 2010. Knife River representatives have indicated that fill has been placed on the site and more specifically, fill and some solid waste (concrete and some asphalt) have been placed on the eastern portion of the site (AMEC Geomatrix, Inc., 2011:16).

Overall, the AMEC study revealed that there were five buildings located in the northwestern portion of the old gravel company grounds (and within the APE) in 2011, which included: an inactive concrete batch plant; an office/weigh station; an older wood frame building; a steel-frame structure (used as a diesel engine repair shop); and a Quonset hut (used for storage). A general overview of how the 40-acre gravel pit developed over time, including the general age of the on-site buildings was determined in part by observing aerial photography provided in the AMEC study. These observations are located in the following table.

Table 1. Development of Parcel A based on aerial photography.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>OBSERVATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Investigations</td>
<td>Prepared by Historical Discoveries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glacier Industrial Park</td>
<td>March 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A 1938 aerial photograph shows evidence of small-scale mining within Parcel A, but no buildings are visible in the APE. There is a stand of trees located along the north end, running in an east/west direction, and there are several cylindrical containers that appear to be petroleum storage along the northeast corner of the site. The containers are in the general location of the former Reliance Refinery.

The 1946 aerial shows a small gravel pit located in the northwest corner that is expanding toward the southwest corner of the APE. There is also a small gravel pit visible on the south end of the site, and small buildings are visible in the vicinity of the pit. The stand of trees is still present along the northern border and the northeast corner now has several small buildings in addition to the petroleum containers.

By 1954 the buildings located in the northwest have expanded in size and the concrete batch plant is evident. The pit is expanding south into the hillside along the southwest corner. The small buildings are still visible in the immediate area of the gravel mine and the trees are still present. The northeast corner remains unchanged, but industrial development north of the APE has dramatically increased.

The 1961 aerial shows that the pit in the northwest corner is continuing to expand south and east, and the pit on the south end now has equipment at the site. Industrial development to the north of the APE continues to grow and more development is occurring east of the APE across the railroad tracks.

In 1974 the pit in the northwest is still expanding south and east, and is now into the tree stand along the northern portion of the site. Approximately one-quarter of the trees have been removed. The equipment in the pit on the south end has been removed and a new pit is operating on the east end of the site.

In 1998 the pit in the northwest corner is still evident and the pit has expanded even further east and south, nearing the southern end of the property. All of the trees were removed sometime between 1974 and 1998 due to mining.

By 2006 the pit has expanded to cover most of the APE and nearly all of the vegetation on site is gone. The only buildings that remain are located in the northwest corner. Based on the removal of numerous buildings and log decks to the north of the APE, industrial operations outside of the gravel pit have been scaled down considerably.

Historic references to the development of the APE’s Parcel B were not readily available, but the aerial photographs reveal that it is located in an area that has been highly disturbed over a period of many decades due to motorized vehicles and building construction in the 1970s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>OBSERVATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>The 1938 aerial reveals that there was no development on the parcel, but it does show two-track disturbances and bare ground (lacking in vegetation). There is also a dirt road or driveway that</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Development of Parcel B based on aerial photography.
accesses a small cluster of buildings (possibly residential). The access road or driveway is in the same location where the south end of Flathead Drive is currently located.

1946
By 1946 there are more buildings in the vicinity of Parcel B, possibly a mix of residential and commercial, and the dirt road or driveway appears to be wider, serving as an access to commercial buildings (where the very south end of Flathead Drive is today). The road still appears to be a two-track.

1961-1974
The 1961 and 1974 photographs indicate that by 1961 the dirt road is a driveway accessing a single large building (possibly commercial or industrial) and the road has been widened.

Sometime between 1961 and 1974 the south end of Flathead Drive changed from its former location, which ran in a southwesterly direction to intersect Highway 2, to its current location, running directly south and intersecting Highway 2. By 1974 one large commercial/industrial building had been constructed on either side of Flathead Drive, indicating that both sides of Flathead Drive had become commercial.

2006
By 2006 the strip of land that is Parcel B in the APE (located to the east of Flathead Drive) appears to be completely graveled over and is being utilized as a car sales lot.

Based on the background research, which includes a record of previous disturbances in the APE, the probability of locating archaeological resources found in situ is extremely low and the APE does not suggest the potential for archaeological sensitivity.

6.2 Field Methodology

The Consultant/Principal Investigator meets the Secretary of Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards in History, Archaeology and Architectural History. The APE was surveyed to identify previously recorded and newly discovered cultural resources and historic properties, and findings were evaluated using National Register of Historic Places criteria. No limited or formal shovel testing occurred, and no significant culturally/temporally diagnostic or unique artifacts were located or collected during this study.

The field survey was conducted February 24, 2016, in frost and snow free conditions. In order to ensure proper visual coverage in the field, the Consultant led an intensive pedestrian survey that was conducted with two surveyors employing zigzag directional transects that were no wider than 30 meters apart. Findings were fully documented, mapped and photographed in the field. In addition to completing a pedestrian survey, the oil refinery site (24FH0219) was revisited and photographed.

6.3 Field Survey Findings

The survey resulted in the documentation of one building associated with the McElroy and Wilken Gravel Company and the re-evaluation of site 24FH0219, which is no longer visible due to remediation. No prehistoric resources or isolated prehistoric artifacts were located and no contemporary artifacts associated with industry were located during the survey. Full site and feature descriptions and justifications for how eligibility determinations have been made are located below in Section 6.4.

Table 3. Cultural resources located within the APE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITE #</th>
<th>SITE LOCATION</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>NR ELIGIBILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural Investigations</td>
<td>Glacier Industrial Park</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prepared by Historical Discoveries
March 2016
**OR FEATURE #** | **RECOMMENDATION**
--- | ---
F1 | Quonset hut (c. 1960) Not eligible
24FH0219 | Originally recorded as a site being made up of a structure and trash midden. This site has been destroyed and is no longer evident. Not eligible

**Parcel A of the APE**

During the field survey, ground visibility in Parcel A was good, at about 75-100 percent. Much of the surface was exposed due to thin vegetation or no vegetation. Ground cover consisted of sparse grass and weeds that left the clay and sandy quartz gravels that cover a majority of the ground highly visible. Parcel A is an industrial area with gently rolling topography, and has recently been remediated. The remediation work included material backfill and capping the area with soil and clay. Areas that are not located along roads or around buildings have been seeded in native grass. The historic use of Parcel A is associated with mining/gravel extraction dating back to at least 1930, but evidence of the intense human activity that has occurred over many decades is no longer visible.

A gravel road and various two-tracks crisscross much of the northern half of Parcel A (in areas that are relatively flat), with the two buildings and associated infrastructure located at a slightly higher elevation along the west and northwest corner of the APE. A majority of the south end of the gravel pit is sloped hillside. Disturbances located in Parcel A of the APE include: two-track and gravel roads; grading; cut banks sloped for soil stabilization; the installation of monitoring wells; an overhead transmission line at the west end; underground gas lines at the northwest end; infill with soil and clay; and an eight-foot fence surrounding the north, west and south ends.

The only two of the five buildings that were reported by AMEC in 2011 that are still standing at the west end of Parcel A include: a contemporary metal sided industrial structure; and what appears to be a circa 1960s Quonset hut. The hut is 75’ x 40’ in length and 15’ tall, and is covered in corrugated steel. The building has nine, 6-pane windows on the east and west sides that are set in steel frames. A vinyl pedestrian and a steel garage door are located on the south end, and a tall centered steel garage door is located on the north end. The building is located on a poured concrete pad. No other structures or cultural findings were located on Parcel A.

**Parcel B of the APE**

The ground visibility in Parcel B was excellent, at 90-100 percent. The visible surface is either dirt, gravel or pavement, and the survey resulted in no findings. Disturbances located within the immediate area include: a paved highway and paved road, modern commercial buildings (c.1970s-present) and associated infrastructure. Parcel B is currently occupied by a business that sells prefabricated wood sheds and several semi-permanent structures are resting on 2x4 foundations throughout the lot.

Figure 4. *Aerial view and U.S.G.S. topographic map (Kalispell Quad) illustrating the location of cultural resources within the APE.*
6.4 Cultural Resources & Eligibility Determinations
The extant architectural properties and remains of historic-era properties located in the APE have been evaluated to determine if they meet the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The NRHP identifies significance and integrity as the two main concepts that are used to evaluate whether or not a cultural resource qualifies for listing. The significance, integrity and treatment of properties can be made when the resource is evaluated within its historic context. Historic significance is the importance of a resource to the history, architecture, archeology, engineering, or culture of a community, and significance may be determined on a local, state or national level. A resource can be significant for its association with important events or people, or for its distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. It may also be significant because it represents the work of a master, possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction. Additionally, a resource may be significant because it has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history (United States Department of the Interior, 2002).

If a resource meets one or more of the criteria for significance, it must also demonstrate integrity to be eligible for listing in the NRHP. Integrity has seven aspects, which are location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. In order to retain historic integrity, a property should possess several of the aspects, as the retention of integrity is paramount for a property to convey its significance.

6.4.1 **F1-Significance and integrity of the Quonset Hut**

The only building that may meet the NRHP 50-year age criteria is the Quonset hut located at the gravel pit in Parcel A. The building appears to be a circa 1960s structure, but aerial photographs do not clearly indicate that the Quonset hut was at its current location in the early 1960s or 1970s. A 1961 and 1974 aerial view shows a building in the same general location, but the building appears to be about half of the width of the Quonset hut, and is constructed at a slightly different angle. Because the window types and construction of the hut indicates that it is 50 years or older, it was fully documented during this study. However, it is believed to have been placed at its current location sometime after 1974. It is a temporary structure in the sense that it is a prefabricated building that is located on a poured pad and is not resting on a permanent concrete foundation. An exterior light that was popular for lighting entries to service stations in the 1970s is located on the west side of the hut.

Assuming that the Quonset hut was constructed at its current location after 1974, it does not meet the National Register criteria. Additionally, Parcel A as a whole has experienced a loss of integrity due to the removal of buildings and several disturbances, which include: dozing, leveling, backfill, and grading. The APE no longer serves its original purpose as a gravel pit and therefore, the Quonset hut is unable to convey its association with the businesses that once operated there. The building does not display any unique features compared to other Quonset huts, a common building type. The building has experienced a loss of integrity in regard to setting, feeling and association.

This property was not found to be associated with historically significant events or people, and the Quonset hut does not exhibit distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. For these reasons, and because the building appears to have been constructed at the site sometime after 1974, the Consultant recommends that the Quonset hut is not eligible for inclusion in the NRHP.

6.4.2 **Integrity of Site 24FH40217**

This previously documented site included a structure and a historic trash midden associated with an old oil refinery. The site was originally determined to be ineligible, but was revisited and re-evaluated in this study.
because it is currently listed by the SHPO as being “undetermined”. The site has since been completely destroyed, capped in soil and seeded over, and there is no longer any trace of a historic structure or refuse. The site is part of the area’s remediation and has been leveled, backfilled and seeded. Monitoring wells now cover the area. Because the site does not meet the NRHP criteria for significance and integrity, the Consultant recommends that no further work is warranted regarding this site.

7.0 Conclusions & Recommendations

The survey did not identify any properties in the 40.5-acre APE that are eligible for, or listed in, the National Register of Historic Places. Therefore, this study resulted in a recommendation that the construction of a rail park on the former site of a gravel pit will have no effect on historic properties. The consultant recommends that the City monitor ground disturbing activities to account for any unanticipated discoveries. If a post-review discovery is made, Part 800.13 of the Section 106 regulations would apply.

8.0 References Consulted

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2011  Phase I Environmental Site Assessment-Knife River Property (Former McElroy and Wilken Site), Kalispell, Montana. On file with the City of Kalispell, Montana.

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Krigbaum, Dagny
2009 National Register of Historic Places Registration Form-Kalispell Main Street Historic District (Adendum and Boundary Increase) for 24FH677. On file with the Montana State Historic Preservation Office, Helena, Montana.

McKay, Kathy

MDU Resources

Montana Governor’s Office of Indian Affairs.
2016 Confederated Salish-Kootenai Tribes. Published electronically at montana.gov.

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Morisaki, Kim
2016 Written communication to Dagny Krigbaum regarding zoning and remediation. March 1, 2016.

Passman, Dori

Sanborn Map Company

State Historic Preservation Office


State of Montana

United States Department of the Interior

United States Geological Survey.

APPENDIX A

Photographic Documentation
Looking west/northwest along Parcel A of the APE and F1 (Quonset hut).

Looking south across graveled and paved lot at west end of Parcel A.
Looking west/southwest at roads, monitoring wells and fence in Parcel A of the APE.

Looking east/southeast across Parcel A of the APE.
Looking along east/northeast corner of Parcel A and previous location of site 24FH0219 (top left).

Remediated site location of 24FH0219 looking north toward railroad spur.
Looking northwest at Quonset hut (F1) located in Parcel A.

Looking southwest at Quonset hut (F1).
North side of Quonset hut (F1).

Looking north along East Oregon Avenue and earthen berm that separates the historic railroad bed/tracks (24FH0350) from Parcel A.
Looking southwest along wide gravel road and fence separating Parcel A from the industry operating to the north of the APE.

Industry (lumber, post and pole) operating to the north of Parcel A, with remediation of oil refinery shown at right of mill.
Looking north along Parcel B of the APE at intersection of Highway 2 and Flathead Drive.

Looking south along Parcel B and Flathead Drive, toward Highway 2.
Looking east along Parcel B and Highway 2.