



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MISSOULA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS DECIDE AGAINST ADDING TEMPORARY BERMS TO CLARK FORK RIVER

The Missoula Board of County Commissioners made a decision late yesterday to not construct further temporary flood structures. The County and the Army Corps of Engineers had lengthy discussions about building temporary flood control berms on either side of the Clark Fork River parallel to Kehrwald Drive and Schmidt Road. Missoula County Commissioners carefully considered the professional positions of County engineers and engineers from the Army Corps. Numerous alternatives outlining different positions, lengths, and alignments of each berm were discussed at length over the last several days.

Ultimately, the Commissioners could not advocate building the temporary flood mitigation measures. Missoula County officials and Army Corps staff could not guarantee that the berms would not redirect the water and significantly and adversely impact currently unaffected neighborhoods and homes.

Additionally, the Commissioners agreed with County engineers that the proposed mitigation measures could fall significantly short of offering the benefits the proposed alternatives were intended to provide.

“We looked at those proposals from every direction and we just can’t be certain the berms will provide the kind of solution everyone is hoping for,” said Commissioner Chair Jean Curtiss. “The river wants to get back to its old channel, and we’re not sure this proposed fix would change the rivers’ mind.”

Commissioners, County engineers, and Army Corps engineers continue to monitor the rock structure installed last week to assess its effectiveness. The structure was constructed to reduce the energy of the flowing water and limit the channelization of Kehrwald Drive. The structure has been successful in that regard and in reducing water levels for some residents; however other residents saw increases in water levels on their property.

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