

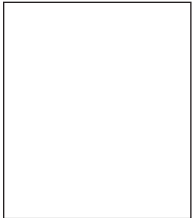
**Pollution is being discharged directly into Bigfork Bay.**

There is ongoing and regular discharge of pollutants including oils, grease, sediment, heavy metals and fecal coliform bacteria entering the Swan River, Bigfork Bay, and into Flathead Lake from the Village area of Bigfork. These pollutants enter through Bigfork's untreated stormwater system. There are also areas with inadequate stormwater containment, which carries nutrients and contaminants that are harmful to the ecosystem and the aquatic life of the lake. This discharge into Bigfork Bay, Swan River, and Flathead Lake threatens recreational activities and creates a potential hazard to human health and flood safety.



Go to [www.bigforksteering.org/bigfork-stormwater-advisory.html](http://www.bigforksteering.org/bigfork-stormwater-advisory.html)

220 Swan River Road, Bigfork, MT 59911



*The Bigfork Stormwater Advisory Committee Mission Statement: The Bigfork Stormwater Advisory Committee will provide timely recommendations to the Flathead County Commissioners on stormwater system improvements in the Bigfork area to protect the quality of local water resources.*

**The Bigfork Stormwater Advisory Committee Members:**  
 Sue Hanson, *Chairman* 837-5323  
 Elina Darrow, 837-6775  
*Vice Chairman* 837-4400  
 Lamont Kinkade 837-7050  
 Tom Lewis 837-6775  
 Paul Rana 837-1102  
 Mike Koopal 862-4327

**Bigfork's dirty little secrets.**



## Pollution Verified

The testing of water quality in 1996 by the Flathead Biological Station in Bigfork Bay revealed that stormwater runoff from Bigfork contains high concentrations of fecal coliform bacteria and other nutrients and pollutants that exceed EPA criteria for human contact and pose a public safety threat. In the subsequent ten-year period we can only surmise that it has become substantially worse.



## History

Neither Pacific Power nor Flathead County has installation records of the Bigfork stormwater system. Speaking with long time residents of the area, and the Bigfork Water and Sewer



District (BWS), it is apparent that the stormwater system was installed before 1964, when the sewer system was built. The assumption is that the storm water system was installed in the mid-fifties at the same time as the water system for the Bigfork Village area. Three Corrugated Metal Pipes (CMP) empty stormwater and the pollution it contains directly into Bigfork Bay. Three others are thought to exist but have not been located. Obvious drains, clean-outs, CMP's and catch basins in the streets surrounding the Bigfork Bay have been located and noted. It is not known whether all are functioning

nor where all these drains empty. However all ultimately do empty into the Swan River, Bigfork Bay and Flathead Lake.

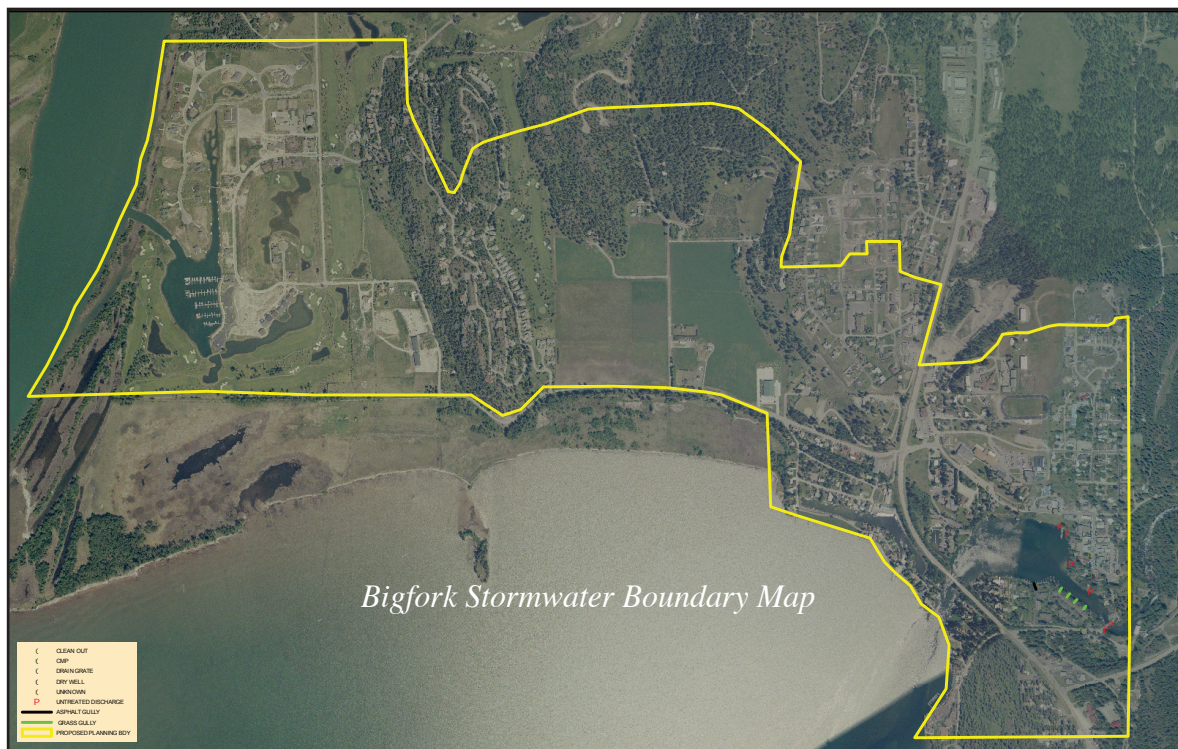
## Today

The Bigfork area, has experienced an explosion of growth that has resulted in increased building, pavement and traffic. Bigfork's current stormwater system is nearly fifty years old, constructed prior to 1964 before current standards were in force. This system has had no improvements and has suffered degradation from age and is in serious peril.

## What's Being Done To Solve This Problem?

Flooding of homes along Grand Avenue in the spring of 2007 led the Flathead County Board of Commissioners to seek grant funding for a Preliminary Engineering Report to determine the condition of the Bigfork stormwater system and to recommend a course of action and design basis for future improvements to the system. The Board of Commissioners established **The Bigfork Stormwater Advisory Committee (BSAC)**, in January 2008, to assist the Board of Commissioners by providing assistance and recommendations in overseeing the work related to the Bigfork Stormwater Project. The BSAC's work includes identifying the problems, evaluating suggested solutions, reviewing mitigation costs and assisting in funding strategies related to the Bigfork Stormwater Project.

*This project is strongly supported by the Bigfork community, Bigfork Steering Committee, Bigfork Land Use Advisory Committee, North Lake County Planning & Zoning Committee, Flathead Basin Commission, Flathead Conservation District, Flathead Lake Biological Station, Flathead National Forest, Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks, National Organization to Save Flathead Lake, Whitefish Lake Institute, Flathead Lakers, Senators Max Baucus and John Tester, and Representative Denny Rehberg.*



*Bigfork Stormwater Boundary Map*