

Park County Solid Waste Board

July 16th 2026

Park County Board of Commissioners

414 East Callender Street

Livingston, MT 59047

**Recommendation to Modify Operating Hours and Implement Bear Safety Improvements
at the Smith Creek Solid Waste Collection Site**

Dear Commissioners,

The Park County Solid Waste Board respectfully recommends that the Park County Commission modify the operating hours of the Smith Creek Solid Waste Collection Site and authorize the implementation of bear safety improvements to address increasing wildlife concerns while maintaining public access to essential solid waste services.

The Board recommends that the Smith Creek Collection Site operate continuously from **8:00 a.m. Monday through 2:00 p.m. Friday**, with the site remaining closed from Friday afternoon through Monday morning. This operating schedule would allow residents to continue utilizing the facility throughout the workweek while significantly reducing the potential for conflicts between the public and bears during periods when the site cannot be actively monitored.

The Board further recommends installing appropriate bear safety improvements at the site, including access controls and other measures necessary to discourage wildlife from entering the facility and accessing refuse. These improvements will enhance public safety, reduce the likelihood of bear habituation, and help protect both wildlife and county infrastructure.

This recommendation provides the most practical and cost-effective solution currently available. By utilizing existing Solid Waste Department staff to open the gates on Monday mornings and close them on Friday afternoons, the County can implement these changes without adding personnel or significantly increasing operating costs. As a result, the impact on user assessments can be minimized while still providing a safe and reliable collection site for area residents.

The Board believes this approach strikes an appropriate balance between maintaining public access to solid waste services, protecting public safety, minimizing impacts to wildlife, and exercising responsible stewardship of County resources.

We appreciate the Commission's consideration of this recommendation and look forward to working together to implement a solution that best serves the residents of Park County.

Sincerely,

Timothy A. Miller Chairman
Park County Solid Waste Board