

July 15, 2009 in City

# White-water park faces trout hurdle

Official requires fish study before permit allowed

[Jonathan Brunt](#) / [jonathanb@spokesman.com](mailto:jonathanb@spokesman.com), (509) 459-5442

Tags: [Whitewater park](#)

Supporters of a white-water park in the Spokane River must determine if the project would hurt trout populations before moving ahead, a city official has ruled.

Planning Director Leroy Eadie said Tuesday he will require the Spokane Parks and Recreation Department to further study the proposal's environmental impact before the project can receive a shoreline permit, which is required for construction.

The park department and Friends of the Falls, a nonprofit group leading the effort to create the park, hope to start construction next year. The park is expected to cost about \$1 million, most of which has been raised through grants.

Some fishing enthusiasts and environmentalists have argued that further study is needed to determine if the project will hurt the

river's native redband trout population. Plans call for removing old bridge abutments and placing large boulders in the river.

During construction, the river's flow would be diverted around the site.

Proponents of the idea say the project has been designed with fish in mind and should help them.

Steve Faust, executive director of Friends of the Falls, said he will work with Eadie to determine the ruling's impact on the project.

It was not expected by us, Faust said. We are trying to learn more about it.

Eadie said it's unclear if redband trout spawn where the white-water park is planned.

The park is proposed to be built near the Sandifer Memorial Bridge and High Bridge Park.

The only study we have is on rainbow trout, Eadie said.

Lacking that information, we couldn't determine that there wasn't going to be a significant environmental impact.