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**For Immediate Release**

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Morton County website: <http://www.co.morton.nd.us/>

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**Tornado Shelter to be installed at Harmon Lake Recreation Area**

Mandan, N.D. – A tornado shelter will be off-loaded and placed at the Harmon Lake Recreation Area at 8:30 a.m. on May 18, 2017. The Morton County Parks Department has prepared the area for placement and the Morton County Emergency Management Department along with the Morton County Highway Department will assist with connecting the sections of the shelter.

The tornado shelter is paid for by a competitive nation-wide Preliminary Disaster Mitigation Grant with 75 percent coming from federal resources and 25 percent paid by the Morton County Water Resources Board, which owns the Harmon Lake Recreation Area. The total cost of the project is \$47,600 with \$11,920 of the total paid by the Water Board.

Once the tornado shelter is placed, work will commence for trenching the area to accommodate electrical installations, caulking and backfilling. Morton County Emergency Manager Tom Doering says the shelter should be operational by June 1. The shelter is similar to the one Morton County placed at Graner Park last year, and that shelter was used several times during severe weather last summer.

“It is very important that campers have the confidence that they have a place to go during severe thunderstorms,” Doering says.

The campground averages about 50 campers per weekend, and the shelter will be designed to hold 50 occupants.

“Campers and recreational vehicles are vulnerable to summer storms, and Harmon Lake is out in the open, so this shelter will be a strong safety feature,” says Morton County Parks Director Tim Nilsen. “It’s just one of the steps we are taking to make our Morton County campgrounds premiere.”

North Dakota Emergency Services assisted the Morton County Emergency Manager with the grant process.

The location and images of the tornado shelter are attached.

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