

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, December 26, 2023 3:32:17 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, December 26, 2023 3:33:41 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:24
IP Address: 71.15.205.207

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Paul Burns
City/Town: Bozeman
State/Province: MT
Email Address: bzn paul@yahoo.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I think black bears are a special animal and hunting this great creature should be extremely limited. The more restrictions, the better.

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, December 28, 2023 3:45:21 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, December 28, 2023 3:53:19 AM
Time Spent: 00:07:57
IP Address: 174.45.138.166

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Morris Miles
City/Town:	Billings
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	morris_miles@msn.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Please someone WAKE UP.

Montana has to many black and GRIZZLY bears.

Count how many Grizzly bear attach there were for the year 2023 on humans. WAKE UP someone. How would you like to have been one of those poor people that had been attached??

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, December 29, 2023 8:12:53 AM
Last Modified: Friday, December 29, 2023 9:17:08 AM
Time Spent: 01:04:14
IP Address: 161.7.39.7

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Greg Alves
City/Town:	Livingston
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	alves.greg3@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Fully support final actions of extending season lengths in the R1 BMUs and requirement of extracting two premolar teeth. Extended seasons in those BMUs will allow hunters more opportunity for harvest but also more opportunity to explore the Wilderness area and its natural beauty. Having extracted premolar teeth with tools made for extraction, I understand how difficult this process could be without the proper tools. Requiring hunters to take a second tooth adds only minutes but greatly benefits the collection success in the long run.

#4

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Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, January 03, 2024 6:25:09 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, January 03, 2024 6:30:42 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:33
IP Address: 174.212.224.72

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Randy Brockman
City/Town: Malta
State/Province: MT
Email Address: coldpeakmasonry@hotmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Adding two weeks to the end of the spring season would greatly improve bear hunting success. Save countless ungulates and bring more out of state hunters \$\$\$ to montana
Current hunting dates are too early. Most bears are still sleeping in the south fork, spotted bear, middle and north fork of flathead river drainage. Where our deer and elk really need the help. They are almost extinct.

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 04, 2024 11:46:08 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 04, 2024 11:48:39 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:31
IP Address: 69.146.110.146

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Cody Voermans
City/Town: Kalispell
State/Province: MT
Email Address: c.voermans@yahoo.com

Black Bear Season Setting

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I support the proposed extension of the spring black bear season to June 15 in HD's 140, 141, 150 & 170 and encourage the Commission to look at extending black bear season to June 15 in all of Region 1 or Statewide.

Black Bear Hunting Districts 140, 141 & 150 are extremely difficult to access until later in the year and many roads do not even open until May 15th. The historic May 31 closing date in these districts has led to low harvest rates relative to the number of black bears on the landscape. The decision to extend the hunt in these areas to June 15 is an excellent idea and will provide additional hunting opportunity and more importantly the extension will help combat the extremely low calf and fawn recruitment experienced in these areas. Ungulate populations in these hunting districts are at a documented 100 year low. Since 1970 FWP has conducted aerial elk counts in HD's 140 & 150 (South Fork River Drainage) at one time the elk count in these 2 districts exceeded 1,450 elk. In 2023 this count recorded 273 elk total and over the last 15 years the average calf recruitment has dropped to 13.8 calves per 100 cows (~25 calves per 100 cows is required to maintain a stable elk population). There is extensive research that shows calves and fawns are extremely susceptible to black bear predation, so extending black bear season by 2 weeks will help reduce black bear populations and boost the critically low recruitment that is being experienced.

I would encourage the Commission to look at extending black bear season to June 15th in all of Region 1 consistent with the rest of the state. R1 has the highest black bear densities out of any Region in Montana yet with the May 31 closure date in much of the region has some of the shortest seasons in the state which seems to be counter intuitive. For context, In 2021 FWP reported that 718 black bears harvested in Region 1, that same year there were only 889 elk harvested in Region 1. With the popularity of elk hunting far exceeding that of black bear hunting it would seem to indicate that there is nearly a 1:1 ratio of black bears to elk present on the landscape in Region 1. Region 1 has the habitat to support an ample population of black bears, but black bear populations need to be kept in check relative to the available prey base. Extending the spring black bear season to June 15th in Region 1 will help to promote sustainable predator to prey ratios and lead to more abundant ungulate populations.

Additionally, applying the June 15th closure date across all of Region 1 or better yet across the state will lead to simplification of regulations and minimize confusion on closure dates. Also, a consistent closure date would lead to uniform hunting pressure across the Region or State and would minimize preferential selection of an individual hunting district that has a longer season length.

#6

COMPLETE

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Started: Thursday, January 04, 2024 12:07:37 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 04, 2024 12:10:01 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:24
IP Address: 65.131.201.19

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	DJ Rankosky
City/Town:	Kalispell
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	d_drahthaar@hotmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I fully support extending the black bear spring season date to June 15 in ALL of region 1.
Especially HD 140, 150, 170.

#7

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 04, 2024 12:11:32 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 04, 2024 12:23:23 PM
Time Spent: 00:11:50
IP Address: 98.97.118.178

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Colton Bagnoli
City/Town:	Kalispell
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	Colton@theflyrifleman.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I'd like to see the season extended to June 15th across the state to help offer more hunter opportunities as many years the snowpack reduces how many days we can actually hunt in NW Montana.. in addition to helping fawns and calving populations for ungulates I thinks it a great opportunity for Montana hunters and wildlife

#8

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Last Modified: Thursday, January 04, 2024 12:31:19 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:14
IP Address: 172.56.201.201

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: **Garrett McNeil**
City/Town: **Trego**
State/Province: **MT**
Email Address: **garrettmcneil16@gmail.com**

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I think setting back the day to June 15th will allow for better population management. It will allow more areas to be hunted as well do to late snow melt that happens in the northwest region.

#9

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 04, 2024 12:49:52 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 04, 2024 12:50:38 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:45
IP Address: 104.28.116.192

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Garrett Webb
City/Town:	Kalispell
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	garrettjwebb35@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Boring Bear season should extend until June 15th

#10

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 04, 2024 1:26:13 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 04, 2024 1:29:08 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:55
IP Address: 67.44.160.51

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Dale Evans
City/Town:	Billings
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	jd.evans@yahoo.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I believe the proposal to extend the spring black bear season to June 15 would be the best thing to do throughout the state.

#11

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 04, 2024 2:06:45 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 04, 2024 2:11:11 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:25
IP Address: 174.204.1.146

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Cory Hart
City/Town:	Idaho Falls
State/Province:	ID
Email Address:	cory400exquader@hotmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Extend the season to June 15th to increase hunting opportunities

#12

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 04, 2024 2:33:13 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 04, 2024 2:35:07 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:54
IP Address: 104.28.48.73

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Jacob goldsberry
City/Town: Eureka
State/Province: MT
Email Address: goldsberryjmg@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Would like to extend the season because they always come out late in the spring.

#13

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 04, 2024 2:58:54 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 04, 2024 3:01:10 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:15
IP Address: 174.234.17.44

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Anthony wright
City/Town:	Helena
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	anthony.wright406@yahoo.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Extend the season to June 15 for general areas

#14

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 04, 2024 3:43:01 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 04, 2024 3:56:13 PM
Time Spent: 00:13:12
IP Address: 71.36.58.104

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: **Terry Zink**
City/Town: **Marion**
State/Province: **MT**
Email Address: **zinksbigskyarcherytargets@gmail.com**

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I would like to see the state spring bear season be extended throughout the whole state till June 15 for our harvest. I would also like to see our Houndsmen season for harvesting Black Bears be extended from May 25 to June 15 also. We as Houndmen Are in our successful season, improving that we are a viable management tool for hunting black bears. There have been no problems with this new hunt in hunting with Hounds for black bears. I would also ask if there are any other hunting districts that we could be approved for that would be a great benefit to hunting with Hounds for Black Bears.

Sincerely
Terry L. Zink

#15

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 04, 2024 4:36:15 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 04, 2024 4:37:42 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:27
IP Address: 174.231.84.39

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Chris Gowe
City/Town:	Helena
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	liarsynic@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Yes for extending spring black bear season in NW MT till June 15

#16

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 04, 2024 4:39:47 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 04, 2024 4:41:16 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:29
IP Address: 69.146.110.146

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Tony Woods
City/Town: Kalispell
State/Province: MT
Email Address: twoods@rpa-kal.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I support the proposed extension of the spring black bear season to June 15 in HD's 140, 141, 150 & 170 and encourage the Commission to look at extending black bear season to June 15 in all of Region 1 or Statewide

#17

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 04, 2024 6:44:59 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 04, 2024 6:52:42 PM
Time Spent: 00:07:43
IP Address: 97.139.156.191

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: **Jack Naleway**
City/Town: **Kalispell**
State/Province: **MT**
Email Address: **naleway1@gmail.com**

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

As an avid spring bear hunter for many years, I fully support extending the season in region 1 units 140, 141, 150, and 170 as much of those units are rarely accessible until the very end of May to early June. And extending those dates would allow possible harvest in an area that has very high bear numbers.

There are proposals of submitting TWO premolar teeth, while I understand the biology research of such not everyone who hunts bear are capable of properly extracting the teeth and will still need to be physically checked in I believe.

Thank you for your time,
Jack Naleway

#18

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Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 04, 2024 6:36:02 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 04, 2024 7:00:06 PM
Time Spent: 00:24:03
IP Address: 98.97.116.6

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Jesse Foster
City/Town:	Kalispell
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	huntinmt09@yahoo.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I support the FWPs decision to extend the black bear season to increase hunter opportunities and harvest as long as the decision made was based on sound science. And helps mitigate human bear conflict as always I feel that access to trouble populations of bears is paramount

#19

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Thursday, January 04, 2024 7:01:13 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:55
IP Address: 98.97.116.6

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Jesse Foster
City/Town: Kalispell
State/Province: MT
Email Address: huntinmt09@yahoo.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I support the FWPs decision to extend the black bear season to increase hunter opportunities and harvest as long as the decision made was based on sound science. And helps mitigate human bear conflict as always I feel that access to trouble populations of bears is paramount for balanced harvests of bears across the landscape

#20

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Last Modified: Thursday, January 04, 2024 7:40:30 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:11
IP Address: 174.215.24.24

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Eric Hoover
City/Town:	Columbia falls
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	hondarc5102@yahoo.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

The proposal to extend the season in my eyes is needed. The last few years the snow pack has been so late that it cuts down on the amount of bear that is being seen up in Northwest Montana around Columbia Falls where I live. I would totally be in favor for an extended spring season.

#21

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Last Modified: Thursday, January 04, 2024 8:23:01 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:23
IP Address: 150.195.186.138

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Zach Heidbrier
City/Town:	Troy
State/Province:	MO
Email Address:	zheidbrier@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I am in favor of the proposed plan. Black bear hunting season in parts of the state SHOULD be extended.

#22

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 04, 2024 8:24:33 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 04, 2024 8:33:59 PM
Time Spent: 00:09:25
IP Address: 98.97.33.100

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Kerry Kennedy
City/Town: Columbia Falls
State/Province: MT
Email Address: kk@kerrykennedyarchery.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I am in favor of extending the spring black bear season in ALL of region 1.

This will help the ungulate population tremendously, especially the elk calves. Late snow/snow melt can make it difficult to access prime spring season bear hunting areas and the season is closed by the time much of it is accessible. Extended spring bear season will help improve the access and improve the bear management efforts. It is critical to better manage the predator population in region 1 as it is very noticeable the decline in ungulate numbers year after year.

#23

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Last Modified: Friday, January 05, 2024 1:44:30 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:03
IP Address: 184.166.168.157

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Lance Heuscher
City/Town:	Kalispell
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	tubbifriend@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I am in support of the proposed date changes for region 1. I would also recommend adapting all of region 1 to a state wide closing date of June 15 in conjunction with the rest of the state

#24

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, January 05, 2024 2:15:14 PM
Last Modified: Friday, January 05, 2024 2:32:44 PM
Time Spent: 00:17:29
IP Address: 96.31.110.139

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Dan Pickar
City/Town: Powell
State/Province: WY
Email Address: dpickar@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

"Extend spring black bear season closing dates in BMUs 140, 141, 150, and 170 to June 15."

This is a very very good thing for the ecosystem in Region1! Please extend the bear seasons in these Region 1 areas to June 15th!!

#25

COMPLETE

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Last Modified: Friday, January 05, 2024 2:42:37 PM
Time Spent: 00:47:29
IP Address: 208.123.203.60

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Levi Bowler
City/Town:	COLUMBIA FALLS
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	levibowler@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I support the proposed extension of the spring black bear season for all areas proposed and all of Region 1 for that matter. If projected numbers are not being met its necessary to find ways to manage the numbers. The late weather, dense timber and a short spring season don't seem to be a winning combination up here in Region 1. There was a management report that came out in 2011, I believe, that had some crazy density unbalance for Montana pertaining to our region (1). The state wide average was around the 13 bears/100km2 mark where the Swan (130) was around 22-23/100km2. If 10 years later projections are still not being met, and the populations are still that dense up here, I'm glad to see we aren't just doing the same thing over and over and that FWP is proposing an option to help move the needle. A lot more work to be done in Region 1, but I fully support extending the season dates. If MT FWP can use this to fine tune their management strategies to best get species to optimal numbers, I think its a start and our ungulate populations will love us for it too in this case. -LB

#26

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Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Friday, January 05, 2024 4:09:25 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:38
IP Address: 174.215.22.246

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	John Pickar
City/Town:	Roundup
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	sherwood1957@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I'm in favor of extending the black bear season to June 15th in the sought and middle forks unit.

#27

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, January 06, 2024 2:22:32 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, January 06, 2024 2:42:43 PM
Time Spent: 00:20:11
IP Address: 72.175.33.153

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Bennie Rossetto
City/Town: KALISPELL
State/Province: MT
Email Address: bjrossetto@yahoo.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I am in favor of extending the black bear season in all of R1 into the first 2 weeks of June for following reasons:

1. Black bears are inaccessible until the end of May in many parts of R1, and are therefore under hunted.
 2. In some units, particularly 101 (mule deer), and the South and Middle Fork units (mule deer and elk) they are significantly contributing to fawn and calf predation and contributing to a predator pit situation when combined with the predation from lions and wolves.
 3. Increasing harvest in these underhunted areas would be very unlikely to have a harmful effect on the population, and would likely attract nonresident and out of area hunters to contribute to local economies.
 4. Overlap with grizzlies already exists, but I would make the bear identification course mandatory annually.
-

#28

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, January 06, 2024 11:33:38 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, January 06, 2024 11:38:43 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:04
IP Address: 174.215.19.93

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Justin Pickar
City/Town: Cody
State/Province: WY
Email Address: jspickar@live.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I grew up in the Flathead Valley and lived there from 1990 to 2008. I live in Lincoln County from 2008 to 2022. Over those years I returned to the Flathead to hunt. Primarily thr southfork drainage. Due to the high black bear population and heavy vegetation cover I support the proposed extension of the spring black bear season to June 15 in HD's 140, 141, 150 & 170 and encourage the Commission to look at extending black bear season to June 15 in all of Region 1 or Statewide. Thank you!

#29

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 08, 2024 6:39:24 AM
Last Modified: Monday, January 08, 2024 6:47:50 AM
Time Spent: 00:08:25
IP Address: 98.97.32.163

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Michael Reavis
City/Town: Essex
State/Province: MT
Email Address: michael.reavis@hotmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I am writing to support the extension of the black bear hunting season in Region 1 from May 31st to June 15th for a variety of reasons, the most important being the difficult access to quality hunting areas because of seasonal snowpack and road closures. Also, this extension gives local outfitters 2 additional weeks to harvest bears and economically benefit their businesses. NW MT has a high concentration of black bears in areas that are geographically challenging to hunt and I don't believe extending the season is going to hurt anything. Thanks for considering this comment.

#30

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 08, 2024 11:37:43 AM
Last Modified: Monday, January 08, 2024 11:44:19 AM
Time Spent: 00:06:36
IP Address: 174.215.24.129

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Sal Scrano
City/Town:	Forsyth
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	sscrano@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I feel that a June 15th season closing would be appropriate for much of Montana as spring snow storms tend to hinder hunters' ability to access many areas. I don't feel that this would lead to over harvest in quota controlled areas as those seasons tend to close long before even the current season end date.

#31

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 08, 2024 4:02:49 PM
Last Modified: Monday, January 08, 2024 4:06:32 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:43
IP Address: 69.146.25.17

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Josh Fields
City/Town:	Columbia Falls
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	josh@rockymountainhuntingcalls.com

Black Bear Season Setting

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I support the proposed extension of the spring black bear season to June 15 in HD's 140, 141, 150 & 170 and encourage the Commission to look at extending black bear season to June 15 in all of Region 1 or Statewide. Black Bear Hunting Districts 140, 141 & 150 are extremely difficult to access until later in the year and many roads do not even open until May 15th. The historic May 31 closing date in these districts has led to low harvest rates relative to the number of black bears on the landscape. The decision to extend the hunt in these areas to June 15 is an excellent idea and will provide additional hunting opportunity and more importantly the extension will help combat the extremely low calf and fawn recruitment experienced in these areas. Ungulate populations in these hunting districts are at a documented 100 year low. Since 1970 FWP has conducted aerial elk counts in HD's 140 & 150 (South Fork River Drainage) at one time the elk count in these 2 districts exceeded 1,450 elk. In 2023 this count recorded 273 elk total and over the last 15 years the average calf recruitment has dropped to 13.8 calves per 100 cows (~25 calves per 100 cows is required to maintain a stable elk population). There is extensive research that shows calves and fawns are extremely susceptible to black bear predation, so extending black bear season by 2 weeks will help reduce black bear populations and boost the critically low recruitment that is being experienced.

I would encourage the Commission to look at extending black bear season to June 15th in all of Region 1 consistent with the rest of the state. R1 has the highest black bear densities out of any Region in Montana yet with the May 31 closure date in much of the region has some of the shortest seasons in the state which seems to be counter intuitive. For context, In 2021 FWP reported that 718 black bears harvested in Region 1, that same year there were only 889 elk harvested in Region 1. With the popularity of elk hunting far exceeding that of black bear hunting it would seem to indicate that there is nearly a 1:1 ratio of black bears to elk present on the landscape in Region 1. Region 1 has the habitat to support an ample population of black bears, but black bear populations need to be kept in check relative to the available prey base. Extending the spring black bear season to June 15th in Region 1 will help to promote sustainable predator to prey ratios and lead to more abundant ungulate populations.

Additionally, applying the June 15th closure date across all of Region 1 or better yet across the state will lead to simplification of regulations and minimize confusion on closure dates. Also, a consistent closure date would lead to uniform hunting pressure across the Region or State and would minimize preferential selection of an individual hunting district that has a longer season length.

Sincerely Josh Fields

#32

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, January 10, 2024 12:06:33 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, January 10, 2024 12:15:14 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:41
IP Address: 72.174.41.142

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	David Slack
City/Town:	Kalispell
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	dslackin@hotmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

All region 1 hunting districts should end June 15. The whole state should end June 15.

#33

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, January 10, 2024 9:12:36 PM
Last Modified: Wednesday, January 10, 2024 9:39:13 PM
Time Spent: 00:26:36
IP Address: 98.97.32.6

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Nathan Danz
City/Town: Polson
State/Province: MT
Email Address: ndanz.nd@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I am and have been in full support to extend spring black bear hunting season for the proposed districts in Region 1 to June 15. Truly, I would be in support to extend ALL black bear districts in Region 1 to June 15. For the region of the state that is statistically known to support the most robust populations of black bear, and has some of the most inaccessible areas due to terrain and seasonal elements, extending all districts in Region 1 should have been done a long time ago. Provided the type of environments and habitats in Region 1, black bears will continue to have a healthy and manageable population, even if the spring season is extended to June 15. Provided FWP has caved to the environmental groups demands and politics concerning predator protection every year, the ungulate populations statewide and specifically in Region 1 need protection too! Having the ability to harvest more black bears in Region 1, would also mean the ability to harvest more mature bears that target ungulate fawns born in the late spring season.

Thanks for your time.

#34

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 15, 2024 1:36:41 PM
Last Modified: Monday, January 15, 2024 1:38:06 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:24
IP Address: 71.36.63.164

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Howard Mee
City/Town:	Columbia Falls
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	eye_fly99@yahoo.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Please extend the bear season. I would like to see the season extended in ALL of Region 1. Thank you

#35

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 15, 2024 9:35:59 PM
Last Modified: Monday, January 15, 2024 9:37:16 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:16
IP Address: 65.131.205.93

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Aaron Scofield
City/Town: Kalispell
State/Province: MT
Email Address: aaronmscofield@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I support the proposed extension of the spring black bear season to June 15 for all of Region 1

#36

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 7:19:14 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 7:22:29 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:14
IP Address: 172.56.201.26

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: George paine
City/Town: Eureka
State/Province: MT
Email Address: gpaine87@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I am in favor of extending the spring season to June 15, preferably throughout the entire state or at least region 1.

#37

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 12:11:06 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 12:18:24 PM
Time Spent: 00:07:18
IP Address: 174.231.81.2

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Logan J O'Neil
City/Town: Kalispell
State/Province: MT
Email Address: loganoneil75@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Extending our spring black bear season to June 15th is a great idea. I think it would be a huge improvement to managing bears in Montana. The deer and elk numbers have been declining for years. Reducing black bears so there isn't so much predation on the deer and elk fawns every year. It's a way to start bringing some deer and elk numbers back to a healthy population.

#38

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 15, 2024 8:48:31 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 5:02:40 PM
Time Spent: Over a day
IP Address: 69.146.110.146

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Ian Wargo
City/Town: KALISPELL
State/Province: MT
Email Address: iwargo@rpa-kal.com

Black Bear Season Setting

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I would like to express my support for the extension of the Black Bear Spring Season in HD's 140, 141, 150 & 170 from May 31st to June 15th. Black Bear Hunting Districts 140, 141 & 150 are extremely difficult to access until later in the year and many roads do not even open until May 15th. The historic May 31 closing date in these districts has led to low harvest rates relative to the number of black bears on the landscape. The decision to extend the hunt in these areas to June 15 is an excellent idea and will provide additional hunting opportunity and more importantly the extension will help combat the extremely low calf and fawn recruitment experienced in these areas. Ungulate populations in these hunting districts are at a documented 100 year low. Since 1970 FWP has conducted aerial elk counts in HD's 140 & 150 (South Fork River Drainage) at one time the elk count in these 2 districts exceeded 1,450 elk. In 2023 this count recorded 273 elk total and over the last 15 years the average calf recruitment has dropped to 13.8 calves per 100 cows (calculations performed on data per Southfork Flathead HD 150 and HD 140 Elk Survey Memo) (~25 calves per 100 cows is required to maintain a stable elk population). There is extensive research that shows calves and fawns are extremely susceptible to black bear predation, so extending black bear season by 2 weeks will help reduce black bear populations and boost the critically low recruitment that is being experienced.

I would encourage the Commission to look at extending black bear season to June 15th in all of Region 1 consistent with the rest of the state. R1 has the highest black bear densities out of any Region in Montana. Yet with the May 31 closure date in much of the region we have some of the shortest seasons in the state which seems to be counter intuitive. Similar to HD's 140, 141, & 150, Region 1 in totality has also experienced a significant decline in calf recruitment. From 1971 to 2007 the Average calf recruitment was 29 calves per 100 cows. From 2008 to 2020 the average calf recruitment has dropped to 20 calves per 100 cows (calculations performed on data per Region One Elk Annual Report July 2019-June 2020, Prepared by Bruce Sterling). Region 1 has the habitat to support an ample population of black bears, but black bear populations need to be kept in check relative to the available prey base. Extending the spring black bear season to June 15th in Region 1 will help to promote sustainable predator to prey ratios and lead to more abundant ungulate populations.

Additionally, applying the June 15th closure date across all of Region 1 or better yet across the state will lead to simplification of regulations and minimize confusion on closure dates. Also, a consistent closure date would lead to uniform hunting pressure across the Region or State and would minimize preferential selection of an individual hunting district that has a longer season length.

#39

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 5:00:15 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 6:16:31 PM
Time Spent: 01:16:16
IP Address: 192.161.70.105

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: **james r harmonay**
City/Town: **Livingston**
State/Province: **MT**
Email Address: **james.harmonay@yahoo.com**

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I would like to start with stating that I am in favor of helping FWP more accurately age bears and have no issues with submitting two teeth, additionally I support FWP taking the time and funds to study black bear harvests more thoroughly. I think giving Region 1 more opportunities to harvest spring bears is a positive for hunters as well as wildlife.

One proposal that I would like to make is a change in the western boundary of unit 520 with unit 314 in the Shell mountain area. It has been my experience that this area has a high density of black bears, however, do to the size of 520 and it's quota status, the spring season can close quickly in that area. Access can be limited in the early season due to mud and snow, often before Shell Mountain and the East side of Livingston peak can be accessed. I have also observed this area to be calving grounds for deer, elk and moose. It is my belief that the high bear density is having an impact on calf survival. I would be happy to speak directly with someone at FWP about this if need be.

In closing I would like to say that I am highly supportive of the Spring bear season as it is an excellent opportunity for the hunting public and it is my belief that it helps balance the pressure put on the ungulate herds during the fall. Spring bear season for most is a time when hunters can be selective about the bears they take due to their more patternable nature during the spring vs the more opportunistic taking of bears that happens during the fall season.

#40

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 7:27:37 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 7:30:44 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:06
IP Address: 216.24.58.68

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Scott Kinniburgh
City/Town: Kalispell
State/Province: MT
Email Address: scootsy23@hotmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I would 100% support extending the spring bear season for two weeks in to June. I spend a lot of time in the spring hunting bears and would love to see the season extended to allow more bears to be harvested which would hopefully help more calves and farms survive in the the spring summer months.

#41

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 10:44:14 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 10:51:26 AM
Time Spent: 00:07:11
IP Address: 174.215.26.138

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Laurie Lohrer
City/Town: Lewistown
State/Province: MT
Email Address: laurielohrer@hotmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I'm a big game hunter. Close down black bear hunting period.

I'm totally opposed to any hunting of bear, mountain lions. It's cruel and unnecessary.

MT Fish, wildlife & Parks needs to limit animal hunting to what humans harvest for meat. Killing bears, mountain lions, beavers, bobcats for sport? That's not recreation, it's thoughtless and unethical slaughter.

#42

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 10:59:45 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 11:03:17 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:32
IP Address: 174.234.13.140

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Cameron mayo
City/Town: Big timber
State/Province: MT
Email Address: csmayo82@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Area 520 needs to go to a June 15th deadline. It has a large amount of alpine country that is underutilized due to the snow not allowing sound management for mature bears. Lengthening the season will allow more opportunity for mature bears allowing younger bears more opportunity to thrive.

#43

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 11:33:21 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 11:40:29 AM
Time Spent: 00:07:07
IP Address: 174.234.145.154

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Jim Taylor
City/Town:	Culbertson
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	jimtaylor62276@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Why not do away with ALL harvest check-ins.

Not hardly one station is open on Sunday - and that's generally "drive home day"

So because of FWP's lack of stations we are ALWAYS inconvenienced trying to get bears to a check in station.

#44

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 11:40:28 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 11:43:39 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:11
IP Address: 185.243.57.246

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Cody Carestia
City/Town: Townsend
State/Province: MT
Email Address: spurin48@yahoo.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I do not feel the black bears across entire state can be regulated by the same blanket regulations. Concerning the proposal that "any BMU without a quota or sub-quota ... would close with regular public notice after May 31 if the cumulative spring harvest to that point exceeds 37 percent of female bears". Bear habits are not the same statewide. For example, Southwestern Montana has bears emerging from hibernation much later than other parts of the state. Also, statewide, some years the bears are out later than others. Given that the harvest is dependent on availability there is a flaw in this proposal. If it's a late year for the bears to come out such as it was in 2023 and the bears have only been out for 2 weeks prior to May 31, it wouldn't take much to have a skewed harvest percentage between one sex or the other when not many bears have been harvested. If only ten bears have been killed and 4 of them were females season closes, that harvest isn't based off of the entire huntable population. 37% after a certain harvest number has been met might be more appropriate. If 37% of 100 bears are females your accomplishing the goal by closing things at that point. I just used 100 as an example, I don't know how we pick the number since we don't have the information on populations to do so accurately. I think the proposal is a good direction, just not detailed or studied enough to do things right.

#45

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 11:59:23 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:01:07 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:43
IP Address: 174.198.146.44

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: **Alan Balavage**
City/Town: **Fishtail**
State/Province: **MT**

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I support bmu 520 to go to June 15th

#46

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:03:55 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:08:40 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:45
IP Address: 174.234.30.226

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Justin Hash
City/Town:	Roscoe
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	justinohash@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I am a big proponent for pushing the bear season to June 15th in bear district 520. I also think the quota should be changed or none existent.

#47

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:11:00 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:13:48 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:47
IP Address: 162.213.184.99

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Troy Michael Wilcox
City/Town:	absarokee
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	zlazyy1@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

By doing this I believe that it would allow some bears in higher elevations to be harvested. More mature bears that stay in the den a little longer.

#48

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:28:03 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:30:11 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:08
IP Address: 98.97.119.88

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Stryker Anderson
City/Town:	Clyde Park
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	sbanderson100@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

It is important that we set the season dates for back bear to the 15th of June.

#49

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:33:15 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:35:21 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:06
IP Address: 72.255.187.54

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Lonny Mayo
City/Town: Big Timber
State/Province: MT
Email Address: blondemntgirl@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I support extending bmu 520 to the June 15th deadline

#50

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 1:16:48 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 1:18:40 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:51
IP Address: 69.144.59.132

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Jeremy Reese
City/Town: Red lodge
State/Province: MT
Email Address: jeremyreese92@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I fully support extending bmu 520 to a June 15th deadline with no quota. There is a over abundance of black bears in 520 and to small of a quota and a very short season

#51

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 3:22:23 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 3:28:34 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:10
IP Address: 174.62.123.165

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Kristin Womack
City/Town:	San Anselmo
State/Province:	CA
Email Address:	kristinwomack@yahoo.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I request the Commission deny extending the spring black bear season in Region 1 BMUs (Bear Management Units) 140, 141, 150, 170 to April 15 - June 15.

Commissioner Tabor and his family directly profit from this proposal!

There is a blatant conflict-of-interest when commissioners profit from their own decisions. Specifically, Pat Tabor's family runs Swan Mountain Outfitters, which offers spring bear hunts. They offer four five-day trips to hunt and kill black bears in the spring, each trip at \$4,200, which amounts to a total of \$16,800. The BMUs proposed for extension are in Swan Mountain Outfitter's area. Passing this proposal is corrupt self-enrichment at the expense of Montana's wildlife. When Tabor lost his outfitting permit for multiple violations, he transferred ownership of the business to his son.

2. The FWP proposal violates federal law by allowing hound hunting in occupied grizzly habitat. This proposal purposefully excludes the Ninemile watershed north of I-90 from grizzly bear habitat in which hound hunting and hound training of black bears are prohibited. The Ninemile is occupied grizzly bear habitat and has had numerous confirmed observations of females with cubs. It is a designated Demographic Connectivity Area. This is a crucial linkage corridor for grizzlies to get to the Bitterroot mountains and connect between grizzly protection zones. Allowing hound hunting in the Ninemile watershed is in direct conflict with grizzly bear recovery.

3. There is no updated study of black bear habitat and population on which to base hunting seasons. There is no limit or quota for black bear killing.

Why is there an extension of the black bear spring hunting season being proposed before a study of black bear habitat? This study is necessary to update 2011 estimates of the black bear population in Montana, and to counteract the uncertainties in current estimation of population trends through the use of age-and-sex metrics, data gathered from hunters. As FWP Molly Parks noted, before this study is completed, "There may be a lag if we're seeing a population decline or increase." In other words, FWP does not know how many black bears there are yet wants to increase their slaughter anyway. Human development and overhunting/poaching threaten the black bears' future. Yet inexplicably, there is no quota for black bears.

4. The Hound Hunting and Hound Training Seasons have no legitimate purpose and should be ended altogether. These activities allow hounds to chase, tree and kill black bears from May 26-June 15. This amounts to nothing more than willful mutilation and deadly harassment of bears for recreation. This 'training' is simply an extension of hound hunting bears at their most vulnerable time. All kinds of wildlife with newborns are at risk when hounds tear up the forest from April 15 through June 15, terrorizing any animals they come upon. The carnage is an abandonment of reason that ignores Montana's hunting ethics. It's simply reckless destruction and gives Montana's wildlife management a black eye.

5. Killing black bears does not increase elk populations. If the reason for excessive, wanton killing of black bears is to produce more elk, a 2002-2006 study conducted by FWP and the University of Montana, Cause-Specific Mortality of Rocky Mountain Elk Calves in Westcentral Montana, notes that predation is often compensatory and not additive. This means that poor nutrition predisposes young to predation. It's reasonable to assume that elk calves the bears prey on are already suffering from malnutrition and likely would not reach maturity. The study also recommended "to investigate mortalities promptly and to assess the nutritional condition of individuals killed". FWP has not conducted such investigations.

6. Spring Bear Hunts Should End!!

A. Spring bear hunts threaten public safety, dogs. People do not expect hunters and hunting hounds in the spring, which puts the public and their dogs in unnecessary danger. Hound hunters use packs of radio-collared dogs to pursue a bear until the exhausted, terrified animal climbs a tree or fights the hounds. Hound dogs are often injured or even killed.

B. Spring bear hunts kill an unknown number of cubs. It is impossible to know from a distance if a bear is a female and has cubs. The likelihood of a female bear with cubs being killed is high. Because it is illegal to kill bears with cubs, it stands to reason that most bear killers do not report cubs. Black bear cubs are dependent on their mothers for at least 1.5 years after birth. Cubs orphaned and left to

Black Bear Season Setting

starve to death, or killed, are not recorded. All wildlife killed in Montana should be recorded. Otherwise, there is no baseline knowledge to inform management, especially needed now with accelerating habitat loss from multiple factors and an overall decline in the populations of many species. Spring bear hunting is a glaring example of lack of management at best, and willful mismanagement at worst.

C. Spring bear hunts defy the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation (NAM). FWP is pledged to follow the NAM. A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service statement claims the NAM's purpose is wildlife for everyone. "The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation has seven basic tenets that support the notion that wildlife is a public trust, an American birthright, and that wildlife species need to be managed in a way that their populations will be sustained forever." The Commission must consider all Montanans in decisions, not just special interests.

D. Black bears are classified as game animals and should be hunted in the fall only, like other game animals. Commissioners have a responsibility to uphold the public trust and the proper management of publicly owned wildlife. Spring bear hunts undermine both these mandates. Added to the fall bear hunt, spring bear hunts make almost six months of bear killing per year. Montana cannot sustain this extended killing. Black bears are classified as game animals. Like other game animals, they should be hunted in the fall. The legislature does not require spring bear hunts. The Commission is charged with enacting reasonable hunting season times and lengths.

#52

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 3:31:52 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 3:33:14 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:22
IP Address: 184.166.97.25

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	John Oetinger
City/Town:	Missoula
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	johnoetinger@outlook.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

trapping and hunting with hounds, should be outlawed, for all animals!

#53

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 3:42:16 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 3:43:07 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:51
IP Address: 161.7.39.7

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Kelly Little
City/Town:	Helena
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	kelly.aughney@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Commissioner Tabor and his family directly profit from this proposal.

There is a blatant conflict-of-interest when commissioners profit from their own decisions. Specifically, Pat Tabor's family runs Swan Mountain Outfitters, which offers spring bear hunts. They offer four five-day trips to hunt and kill black bears in the spring, each trip at \$4,200, which amounts to a total of \$16,800. The BMUs proposed for extension are in Swan Mountain Outfitter's area. Passing this proposal is corrupt self-enrichment at the expense of Montana's wildlife. When Tabor lost his outfitting permit for multiple violations, he transferred ownership of the business to his son.

#54

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 3:53:33 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 3:59:31 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:58
IP Address: 72.255.190.108

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Cliff notskog
City/Town:	Big timber
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	anorskog6@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Would love to see the black bear season extended until June 15

#55

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 4:18:41 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 4:21:18 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:37
IP Address: 98.231.53.154

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: KC York
City/Town: Hamilton
State/Province: MT
Email Address: info@trapfreemt.org

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

We have several concerns. Firstly, black bears are caught in traps and snares and injured and killed. They need to come off the quotas. Secondly, we have grave concerns about the use of hounds on black bears in training and hunting and the threats it poses to grizzlies. We object to the lack of adjustment for black bear quotas in poor crop years which is believed to have resulted in numerous orphaned cubs. Black bears only get a 2-3 month reprieve from being killed in our state. Why? In a recent year, over 300 female bears were killed in the spring bear hunt. How many actually had cubs? Black bears are not prolific, and cubs remain with Mom for about 18 months. We do not need to lengthen the black bear season anywhere in Montana. They are hunted up until hibernation and shortly after they emerge. NW Montana, Region 1, reports killing over 700 black bears a year. They certainly do not need a longer season in any units. Instead of requiring now 2 teeth, the black bear should be presented in all regions. Really this war declared on large predators and through unethical unfair chase practices is putting Montana to shame. It's up to you to change this disturbing narrative.

Thank you,
KC York
President/Founder
Trap Free Montana

#56

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 4:51:02 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 4:51:22 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:19
IP Address: 72.255.190.108

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Cliff notskog
City/Town:	Big timber
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	anorskog6@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Would love to see the black bear season extended until June 15

#57

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 5:53:27 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 5:57:57 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:29
IP Address: 71.15.193.160

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Ana Ayala
City/Town:	BOZEMAN
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	anabrown8@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

1. Please deny extending the spring black bear season in Region 1 BMUs. There is a blatant conflict-of-interest when commissioners profit from their own decisions. Specifically, Pat Tabor's family runs Swan Mountain Outfitters, which offers spring bear hunts. They offer four five-day trips to hunt and kill black bears in the spring, each trip at \$4,200, which amounts to a total of \$16,800. The BMUs proposed for extension are in Swan Mountain Outfitter's area. Passing this proposal is corrupt self-enrichment at the expense of Montana's wildlife. When Tabor lost his outfitting permit for multiple violations, he transferred ownership of the business to his son.
2. The FWP proposal violates federal law by allowing hound hunting in occupied grizzly habitat. This proposal purposefully excludes the Ninemile watershed north of I-90 from grizzly bear habitat in which hound hunting and hound training of black bears are prohibited. The Ninemile is occupied grizzly bear habitat and has had numerous confirmed observations of females with cubs. It is a designated Demographic Connectivity Area. This is a crucial linkage corridor for grizzlies to get to the Bitterroot mountains and connect between grizzly protection zones. Allowing hound hunting in the Ninemile watershed is in direct conflict with grizzly bear recovery.
3. There is no updated study of black bear habitat and population on which to base hunting seasons. There is no limit or quota for black bear killing. Why is there an extension of the black bear spring hunting season being proposed before a study of black bear habitat? This study is necessary to update 2011 estimates of the black bear population in Montana, and to counteract the uncertainties in current estimation of population trends through the use of age-and-sex metrics, data gathered from hunters. As FWP Molly Parks noted, before this study is completed, "There may be a lag if we're seeing a population decline or increase." In other words, FWP does not know how many black bears there are yet wants to increase their slaughter anyway. Human development and overhunting/poaching threaten the black bears' future. Yet inexplicably, there is no quota for black bears.
4. The Hound Hunting and Hound Training Seasons have no legitimate purpose and should be ended altogether. These activities allow hounds to chase, tree and kill black bears from May 26-June 15. This amounts to nothing more than willful mutilation and deadly harassment of bears for recreation. This 'training' is simply an extension of hound hunting bears at their most vulnerable time. All kinds of wildlife with newborns are at risk when hounds tear up the forest from April 15 through June 15, terrorizing any animals they come upon. The carnage is an abandonment of reason that ignores Montana's hunting ethics. It's simply reckless destruction and gives Montana's wildlife management a black eye.
5. Killing black bears does not increase elk populations.

If the reason for excessive, wanton killing of black bears is to produce more elk, a 2002-2006 study conducted by FWP and the University of Montana, Cause-Specific Mortality of Rocky Mountain Elk Calves in Westcentral Montana, notes that predation is often compensatory and not additive. This means that poor nutrition predisposes young to predation. It's reasonable to assume that elk calves the bears prey on are already suffering from malnutrition and likely would not reach maturity. The study also recommended "to investigate mortalities promptly and to assess the nutritional condition of individuals killed". FWP has not conducted such investigations.

6. Spring Bear Hunts Should End

- A. Spring bear hunts threaten public safety, dogs. People do not expect hunters and hunting hounds in the spring, which puts the public and their dogs in unnecessary danger. Hound hunters use packs of radio-collared dogs to pursue a bear until the exhausted, terrified animal climbs a tree or fights the hounds. Hound dogs are often injured or even killed.
- B. Spring bear hunts kill an unknown number of cubs. It is impossible to know from a distance if a bear is a female and has cubs. The likelihood of a female bear with cubs being killed is high. Because it is illegal to kill bears with cubs, it stands to reason that most bear killers do not report cubs. Black bear cubs are dependent on their mothers for at least 1.5 years after birth. Cubs orphaned and left to starve to death, or killed, are not recorded. All wildlife killed in Montana should be recorded. Otherwise, there is no baseline knowledge to inform management, especially needed now with accelerating habitat loss from multiple factors and an overall decline in the populations of many species. Spring bear hunting is a glaring example of lack of management at best, and willful mismanagement at worst.

Black Bear Season Setting

C. Spring bear hunts defy the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation (NAM). FWP is pledged to follow the NAM. A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service statement claims the NAM's purpose is wildlife for everyone. "The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation has seven basic tenets that support the notion that wildlife is a public trust, an American birthright, and that wildlife species need to be managed in a way that their populations will be sustained forever." The Commission must consider all Montanans in decisions, not just special interests.

D. Black bears are classified as game animals and should be hunted in the fall only, like other game animals. Commissioners have a responsibility to uphold the public trust and the proper management of publicly owned wildlife. Spring bear hunts undermine both these mandates. Added to the fall bear hunt, spring bear hunts make almost six months of bear killing per year. Montana cannot sustain this extended killing. Black bears are classified as game animals. Like other game animals, they should be hunted in the fall. The legislature does not require spring bear hunts. The Commission is charged with enacting reasonable hunting season times and lengths.

#58

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 6:03:52 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 6:05:59 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:07
IP Address: 192.161.70.161

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Justin Hash
City/Town:	Roscoe
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	justinohash@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I am a big proponent for pushing the bear season to June 15th in bear district 520. I also think the quota should be changed or none existent.

#59

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 8:44:27 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 8:49:48 PM
Time Spent: 00:05:21
IP Address: 184.166.67.216

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Carol L Marsh
City/Town:	Missoula
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	carolnhero@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Please stop slaughtering Montana's surviving wildlife! Please don't extend the black bear hunting season. Please do note Commissioner Taber's conflict of interest! Stop hunting with hounds. Your bloodthirsty policies are going to wipe out the surviving wildlife in one of the few places they still exist. Value them, don't kill them! Treasure bears, wolves, mountain lions, all the survivors.

#60

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, January 18, 2024 9:18:01 PM
Last Modified: Thursday, January 18, 2024 9:27:03 PM
Time Spent: 00:09:01
IP Address: 98.127.47.37

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: **Anne Millbrooke**
City/Town: **Bozeman, MT**
State/Province: **MT**
Email Address: **anne27m@gmail.com**

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Killing animals in breeding season of spring and early summer is not sporting, not humane, not ecologically sound. Hunting has an honorable past and a dishonorably past too. Continue the former and end the latter. Ban black bear hunting in the spring and early summer. Also, hound hunting is not fair to wildlife. Motorized vehicles, high-powered rifles, scientifically engineered scopes, and hounds, even GPS tracking, all this implies the hunter has ZERO skill, knowledge, capabilities. Stop hound hunting bears! Stop hunting bears when the species is breeding and rearing young and thus unable to flee. Support responsible hunting. Kick the political ideology out of the discussion. Look at the science. Consider the animals. Remember the public owns the wildlife, not just the wealthy or arrogant.

#61

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, January 19, 2024 7:59:18 AM
Last Modified: Friday, January 19, 2024 8:01:40 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:22
IP Address: 72.133.74.94

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Mason Roberts
City/Town:	Melville
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	roberts_mason@hotmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Let's get that 520 bear unit to a June 15 deadline!!!

#62

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, January 19, 2024 8:54:11 AM
Last Modified: Friday, January 19, 2024 8:58:51 AM
Time Spent: 00:04:39
IP Address: 71.36.53.217

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Keith Hammer
City/Town: KALISPELL
State/Province: MT
Email Address: keith@swanview.org

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I urge you to not extend the black bear hunting season as proposed, nor to allow the use of hounds in hunting black bear. These proposed measures will not only increase black bear mortality, it will also unlawfully increase the risk of harm to threatened grizzly bears. It is not uncommon for black bear hunters to mistakenly kill grizzly bears, in spite of the bear identification test intended to mitigate such mistakes. Black bear hunting should be disallowed altogether in grizzly bear habitat.

#63

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, January 19, 2024 9:21:51 AM
Last Modified: Friday, January 19, 2024 9:25:45 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:53
IP Address: 154.27.106.63

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Joshua Koffler
City/Town: Helena
State/Province: MT
Email Address: joshuak@cbmountainside.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Yes, please consider amending the requirement to present the pelt and head to only having to remove and present 2 extracted teeth.

#64

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, January 19, 2024 9:52:24 AM
Last Modified: Friday, January 19, 2024 10:06:18 AM
Time Spent: 00:13:53
IP Address: 216.47.63.64

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Kristen Holland
City/Town: Saint Regis
State/Province: MT
Email Address: kris.williams66@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I come from a long line of hunters. I'm not a hunter and most of my family has stopped hunting for many reasons. I live on the river so we see an abundance of wildlife. I see the request to extend hunting season, proposed by Mr. Tabor who runs an outfitting business and it makes my hair stand up. It's just wrong. If you can't see this, then I believe the wrong people are in place to protect Montana and its wildlife. Where are the studies to show, good or bad, that this is not going to harm our ecosystem ? It's not going to increase the elk population and to eradicate the predators in the name of protecting game, is pure ignorance. I hope you reconsider any proposal for extending the hunting season for bears . So much potential for collateral damage by hound hunting. Stop the hunting with hounds. It's not a sport. It's lazy, irresponsible. It's not hunting. It's cruel . Thank you for your time.

#65

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, January 19, 2024 3:21:13 PM
Last Modified: Friday, January 19, 2024 3:26:06 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:53
IP Address: 216.47.57.31

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Roy O'Connor
City/Town: Missoula
State/Province: MT
Email Address: rsoc2001@yahoo.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

There should be no extension of the Black Bear Spring Season in Region 1 BMU's. There is plenty of opportunity for hunters during the spring season, and plenty of bears are harvested. Science should dictate any increases and I see none of that. Black Bears are valuable for a healthy ecosystem, and past seasons have protected that. Plus it seems to me there is a serious conflict of interest by a Commissioner, and he should certain refrain from this discussion and vote.

#66

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, January 19, 2024 11:03:22 PM
Last Modified: Friday, January 19, 2024 11:04:58 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:36
IP Address: 205.233.44.240

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: **Adam Smith**
City/Town: **Augusta**
State/Province: **MT**
Email Address: **smithjosephadam@gmail.com**

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I support the proposed extension of the spring black bear season to June 15 in HD's 140, 141, 150 & 170

#67

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, January 19, 2024 11:31:54 PM
Last Modified: Friday, January 19, 2024 11:59:03 PM
Time Spent: 00:27:09
IP Address: 184.167.223.20

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Sutter W. Stolte
City/Town: Columbia Falls
State/Province: MT
Email Address: sstolte@mtech.edu

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I fully support the season extension in units 140,141,150, and 170. These units are difficult to access early-to-mid season, with hard winters making access even more difficult. As a results, harvest numbers in these units are lower than other R1 units, and the data supports the notion that additional hunting pressure later in the season can be sustained. In addition, I believe FWP should prioritize consumptive users, as Pittman-Robertson funds contribute a significant amount of funding to the organization.

#68

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, January 20, 2024 7:04:17 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, January 20, 2024 7:06:18 AM
Time Spent: 00:02:01
IP Address: 107.122.173.86

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Shonn Roberts
City/Town: Kalispell
State/Province: MT
Email Address: robertsshonn@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I support the proposal of extending the spring bear season in 150. Most of the bears I see are not out and hunt-able until late May.

#69

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, January 20, 2024 8:23:46 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, January 20, 2024 8:26:52 AM
Time Spent: 00:03:06
IP Address: 107.191.165.3

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Mike Bradeen
City/Town:	Libby
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	mbradeen@libby.org

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I would like to see baiting be legal. Most other states do this and manage predators much better than MT. Being able to make safer shots, be able to see if the bear has cubs of not.

#70

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, January 20, 2024 9:30:42 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, January 20, 2024 9:31:02 AM
Time Spent: 00:00:19
IP Address: 71.209.186.184

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Joseph Yannuzzi
City/Town: Phoenix
State/Province: AZ
Email Address: j.yannuzzi5423@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I strongly oppose extending the black bear hunting season. The FWP proposal violates federal law by allowing hound hunting in occupied grizzly habitat. No study of black bear habitat has been taken or produced to verify such a need for a hunt. The killing of any predator be it wolves, lions, or bear has not and never will increase ungulate populations and killing these predators under the guise of sport, recreation or conservation is contradictory to real conservation and violates every sound principle of ecology.

#71

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, January 20, 2024 10:09:34 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, January 20, 2024 10:15:32 AM
Time Spent: 00:05:58
IP Address: 65.131.193.8

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Arlene Montgomery
City/Town: Swan Lake
State/Province: MT
Email Address: arlene@wildswan.org

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Do not expand the black bear hunting spring season and do not allow hound hunting for black bears. Both of these are a threat to grizzly bears who are still a threatened species and protected under the Endangered Species Act. Spring is a vulnerable time for both black and grizzly bears as they have just emerged from their dens and are looking for food.

In addition, there is a conflict of interest with Commissioner Tabor as Swan Mountain Outfitters would benefit financially from this expanded season.

Overall this is a bad proposal, I urge the commissioners to vote against it.

#72

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, January 20, 2024 11:39:46 AM
Last Modified: Saturday, January 20, 2024 11:47:59 AM
Time Spent: 00:08:12
IP Address: 108.174.127.150

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: **william rideg**
City/Town: **Husson**
State/Province: **MT**
Email Address: **william@rideglaw.com**

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

STRONG OBJECTION BY RESIDENT OF THE NINE MILE DRAINAGE:

Strong objection to removing the Nine Mile drainage from protection of hound hunting black bears. We all know that the Nine Mile valley is a critical habitat linkage for grizzlies to the Bitterroot ecosystem; I have had the pleasure of seeing 3 griz on my land over the past 24 years living here. FWP KNOWS that griz are here, do not violate federal law by permitting hound hunting in a known are of griz occupation. There is no legitimate reason to remove the Nine Mile drainage from the list of protected areas for hound hunting black bears.

#73

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, January 20, 2024 2:58:58 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, January 20, 2024 3:00:52 PM
Time Spent: 00:01:54
IP Address: 50.220.95.38

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Peter Guynn
City/Town:	condon
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	peter.guynn51@gmail.com

Black Bear Season Setting

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

1868 Buerger Road

Condon Mt 59826

Montana Wildlife Commissioners
Black Bear Season Setting
Dear Commissioners,

We stand against extending the Spring Black Bear hunting season in Region 1, let alone the Spring Bear Hunt as well. We live just to the south of the Swan Mountain Outfitters the offers Spring Bear Hunts, whose hunting allotements lies just to the north of our preoperty. We are those of the Public who enjoy observing wildlife for its own stake, the rights of which we are being denied by the Montna FWP commissioners. It is only fair and just the our wildlife is there for all, not just for the few. The commissions consistantly have supported wanton killing of predators as well as being blind to losses by incidental or collateral kolling of other species. This comes as no surprise as the commissioners are there at the behest of the hunting and trapper industry. Indeed the family of the Commissioner of our Region 1, owns the aformentioned outfitting business. This is corrupt; this Extension of the Bear Season directly benefits his spring Bear hunting business. This commissioner must recuse himself from the decision you are about to make, let alone any to do with Region 1.

There is already Bear hunting in the regular hunting season. There are no current population surveys but there is no limit or quota for Black Bear killing. The collateral damage to leaving cubs stranded is cruel. The use of hunting dogs startles and can kill other species as well and destroy pets and animals on private property (my property, my dog for instance), There should be no use of hunting dogs period, it is just a cruel, unfair and cowardly, unsportsmanlike et al.

Then there is aanother dimension to realize, you are killing animals for which people have grown to know. Thru last Spring and Summer we got to see the same Black Bear yearling on multiple occassions; we had visitors there from Rhode Island who were so exitied to see this bear on a short stroll. I tried to install fear of humans chasing after the bear; I am afraid there is no hope for this bear being hunted even into June by this proposal.

Put an end to the Spring Bear hunt and clean up your act for the good of all.

Peter C Gynn

Caaroline Gynn

#74

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Sunday, January 21, 2024 5:00:51 AM
Last Modified: Sunday, January 21, 2024 5:07:53 AM
Time Spent: 00:07:02
IP Address: 172.221.102.253

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Jane Jarrett
City/Town: Livingston
State/Province: MT
Email Address: zubie40@hotmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I totally oppose to lengthening blk Bear hunting season especially with hounds. Bears are just coming out of hibernation weak & many with cubs. To hunt at that time is inhumane at the peak of their weak season. This is not hunting its profit for a few. I strongly urge you to vote against this measure especially being hunted by digs

#75

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Sunday, January 21, 2024 2:11:01 PM
Last Modified: Sunday, January 21, 2024 2:22:34 PM
Time Spent: 00:11:32
IP Address: 174.215.17.140

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Jane Jarrett
City/Town: Livingston
State/Province: MT
Email Address: zubie40@hotmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I totally oppose to extending Black Bear season. Not only are the bears trying to recuperate from a long winter but females are attending to their cubs. Why anyone wants to hunt black bears at their most vulnerable time is not fair but hunting with hounds is an archaic method. I've lived in MT since 1978 & the states population explosion since Covid has already decrease their habitat & been force to live with humans. This extended season only puts more stress on animals but hunting with hounds is despicable. Jane Jarrett

#76

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Sunday, January 21, 2024 5:04:15 PM
Last Modified: Sunday, January 21, 2024 5:18:31 PM
Time Spent: 00:14:16
IP Address: 73.45.200.7

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: **Scott Anderson**
City/Town: **Homer Glen**
State/Province: **IL**
Email Address: **railest@comcast.net**

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

As a devoted, accomplished outdoorsman, I frequently enjoy the great outdoors to escape the daily corruption in the business and political world. Now it seems even my walk thru the woods will be influenced by a corrupt commissioner (Pat Tabor) and the Swan Mountain Outfitters unscrupulous practices. Why would a commissioner who has a financial gain have a vote in something as important as this Black Bear season setting issue? I'll be hiking the northern part of Montana early summer. I'll pay close attention to how and where I spend my \$\$.

#77

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Sunday, January 21, 2024 6:09:56 PM
Last Modified: Sunday, January 21, 2024 6:10:33 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:36
IP Address: 146.115.190.237

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Sarah Stewart
City/Town:	Gardiner
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	sarahbstewart@yahoo.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Our main comment is to request the Commission deny extending the spring black bear season in Region 1 BMUs (Bear Management Units) 140, 141, 150, 170 to April 15 - June 15

In addition, we have the following comments-

1. There should not be spring bear hunts. They are just in opposition to our general American model of wildlife treatment. FWP is pledged to follow the NAM. A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service statement claims the NAM's purpose is wildlife for everyone. "The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation has seven basic tenets that support the notion that wildlife is a public trust, an American birthright, and that wildlife species need to be managed in a way that their populations will be sustained forever." This means that the Commission is bound to consideration of all Montanans in decisions, not just special interests like hunters and people who shoot for pleasure. In addition to this, black bears are classified as game animals and should be treated as other game animals and only hunted in the Fall. It is very, very wrong that so many cubs are killed either directly or indirectly. It is against good animal stewardship, with an obvious point being that one does not know if a black bear is male or female from a distance and cubs need their mothers for at least 18 months.
2. The FWP proposal violates federal law by allowing hound hunting in occupied grizzly habitat.
3. We also believe that The Hound Hunting and Hound Training Seasons have no reasonable and legitimate purpose and should be ended altogether.
4. Killing black bears does not increase elk populations. There is simple no real evidence of this except for sickly calves and further studies have not taken place. Removing sickly elk calves is not a reason to hunt black bears.
5. Furthermore, there is no updated study of black bear habitat and population on which to base hunting seasons. There is no limit or quota for black bear killing.

Finally, we remain very concerned that Commissioner Tabor and his family directly profit from the expanded hunting bear hunting proposal. This is unethical and wrong.

For the reasons above we strongly recommend that the Commission deny extending the spring black bear season in Region 1 BMUs (Bear Management Units) 140, 141, 150, 170 to April 15 - June 15.

#78

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 22, 2024 8:18:24 AM
Last Modified: Monday, January 22, 2024 8:23:37 AM
Time Spent: 00:05:12
IP Address: 47.37.9.149

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Caleb Koffler
City/Town: Dillon
State/Province: MT
Email Address: cjkoffler@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Please move to activate the proposed change of requiring only two molars to be brought in for inspection, rather than a full head and pelt for black bear. Thanks!

#79

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 22, 2024 2:43:50 PM
Last Modified: Monday, January 22, 2024 2:52:57 PM
Time Spent: 00:09:07
IP Address: 65.131.198.223

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: McGregor Rhodes
City/Town: Kalispell
State/Province: MT
Email Address: mrhodes50@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

As a lifelong hunter I oppose hunting bears with dogs. Sows with cubs are harassed, stressed and sometimes killed. The season should not be extended. If you want a bear go out with a rifle and kill one. Hunting bears with dogs is unethical in 2024 with all the technology. Dogs are not fair to the bears and the bears death can be very cruel. If you do not believe me then just watch some videos of bear hunters, dogs and their cruel attitude towards the bears they wound and the way the bears die. I am a conservative voter, think wolves should be killed and trapping for furbearers should be stopped. When animals are commercialized they are doomed. Thank you for listening to me. McGregor Rhodes- Kalispell

#80

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 22, 2024 2:58:22 PM
Last Modified: Monday, January 22, 2024 3:02:59 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:36
IP Address: 69.51.103.82

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Elizabeth Pfaff
City/Town: Bozeman
State/Province: MT

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I am especially upset about the proposal- Black Bears should only be hunted in the Fall, like other game animals. Why are you targeting young animals? this makes no sense. Bears need to be able raise their young. The following reasons are common sense and should be applied to this decision. Do the right thing!

1. Request the Commission deny extending the spring black bear season in Region 1 BMUs (Bear Management Units) 140, 141, 150, 170 to April 15 - June 15.

Commissioner Tabor and his family directly profit from this proposal.

There is a blatant conflict-of-interest when commissioners profit from their own decisions. Specifically, Pat Tabor's family runs Swan Mountain Outfitters, which offers spring bear hunts. They offer four five-day trips to hunt and kill black bears in the spring, each trip at \$4,200, which amounts to a total of \$16,800. The BMUs proposed for extension are in Swan Mountain Outfitter's area. Passing this proposal is corrupt self-enrichment at the expense of Montana's wildlife. When Tabor lost his outfitting permit for multiple violations, he transferred ownership of the business to his son.

Clients of Swan Mountain Outfitters

Pat Tabor, third from left

2. The FWP proposal violates federal law by allowing hound hunting in occupied grizzly habitat.

This proposal purposefully excludes the Ninemile watershed north of I-90 from grizzly bear habitat in which hound hunting and hound training of black bears are prohibited. The Ninemile is occupied grizzly bear habitat and has had numerous confirmed observations of females with cubs. It is a designated Demographic Connectivity Area. This is a crucial linkage corridor for grizzlies to get to the Bitterroot mountains and connect between grizzly protection zones. Allowing hound hunting in the Ninemile watershed is in direct conflict with grizzly bear recovery.

3. There is no updated study of black bear habitat and population on which to base hunting seasons. There is no limit or quota for black bear killing.

Why is there an extension of the black bear spring hunting season being proposed before a study of black bear habitat? This study is necessary to update 2011 estimates of the black bear population in Montana, and to counteract the uncertainties in current estimation of population trends through the use of age-and-sex metrics, data gathered from hunters. As FWP Molly Parks noted, before this study is completed, "There may be a lag if we're seeing a population decline or increase." In other words, FWP does not know how many black bears there are yet wants to increase their slaughter anyway. Human development and overhunting/poaching threaten the black bears' future. Yet inexplicably, there is no quota for black bears.

4. The Hound Hunting and Hound Training Seasons have no legitimate purpose and should be ended altogether.

These activities allow hounds to chase, tree and kill black bears from May 26-June 15. This amounts to nothing more than willful mutilation and deadly harassment of bears for recreation. This 'training' is simply an extension of hound hunting bears at their most vulnerable time. All kinds of wildlife with newborns are at risk when hounds tear up the forest from April 15 through June 15, terrorizing any animals they come upon. The carnage is an abandonment of reason that ignores Montana's hunting ethics. It's simply reckless destruction and gives Montana's wildlife management a black eye.

5. Killing black bears does not increase elk populations.

If the reason for excessive, wanton killing of black bears is to produce more elk, a 2002-2006 study conducted by FWP and the

Black Bear Season Setting

University of Montana, Cause-Specific Mortality of Rocky Mountain Elk Calves in Westcentral Montana, notes that predation is often compensatory and not additive. This means that poor nutrition predisposes young to predation. It's reasonable to assume that elk calves the bears prey on are already suffering from malnutrition and likely would not reach maturity. The study also recommended "to investigate mortalities promptly and to assess the nutritional condition of individuals killed". FWP has not conducted such investigations.

6. Spring Bear Hunts Should End

A. Spring bear hunts threaten public safety, dogs. People do not expect hunters and hunting hounds in the spring, which puts the public and their dogs in unnecessary danger. Hound hunters use packs of radio-collared dogs to pursue a bear until the exhausted, terrified animal climbs a tree or fights the hounds. Hound dogs are often injured or even killed.

B. Spring bear hunts kill an unknown number of cubs. It is impossible to know from a distance if a bear is a female and has cubs. The likelihood of a female bear with cubs being killed is high. Because it is illegal to kill bears with cubs, it stands to reason that most bear killers do not report cubs. Black bear cubs are dependent on their mothers for at least 1.5 years after birth. Cubs orphaned and left to starve to death, or killed, are not recorded. All wildlife killed in Montana should be recorded. Otherwise, there is no baseline knowledge to inform management, especially needed now with accelerating habitat loss from multiple factors and an overall decline in the populations of many species. Spring bear hunting is a glaring example of lack of management at best, and willful mismanagement at worst.

C. Spring bear hunts defy the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation (NAM). FWP is pledged to follow the NAM. A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service statement claims the NAM's purpose is wildlife for everyone. "The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation has seven basic tenets that support the notion that wildlife is a public trust, an American birthright, and that wildlife species need to be managed in a way that their populations will be sustained forever." The Commission must consider all Montanans in decisions, not just special interests.

D. Black bears are classified as game animals and should be hunted in the fall only, like other game animals. Commissioners have a responsibility to uphold the public trust and the proper management of publicly owned wildlife. Spring bear hunts undermine both these mandates. Added to the fall bear hunt, spring bear hunts make almost six months of bear killing per year. Montana cannot sustain this extended killing. Black bears are classified as game animals. Like other game animals, they should be hunted in the fall. The legislature does not require spring bear hunts. The Commission is charged with enacting reasonable hunting season times and lengths.

#81

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 22, 2024 3:28:19 PM
Last Modified: Monday, January 22, 2024 3:31:09 PM
Time Spent: 00:02:50
IP Address: 216.47.52.59

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Dr. Kari Gunderson
City/Town: Swan Valley
State/Province: MT
Email Address: cnd2543@blackfoot.net

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Black Bear Season Setting

Dear Fish & Wildlife Commissioners,

I am a 3rd generation Montanan and have lived in the Swan Valley for 45 years.

I am an avid outdoor recreationist faced with more and more barriers

to safely recreate on state and federal lands due to misguided actions of the politically appointed Fish & Game Commission. I am submitting written comments because my past experience of signing up to testify via ZOOM has not been fair to the majority of people who care enough to show up to testify. My prior experience includes FW Commissioner tactics to schedule contentious agenda items at the end of an already hours-long meeting, then allowing people who agree with the Commissioners to testify first and give them more time to speak than those in opposition, who are either limited to 2 minutes or unable to testify because Commissioners end the meeting before everyone has had the opportunity to testify.

The FW Commission should deny an extension of the spring black bear season in Region 1 (R1). Commissioners who will make money off of the extended black bear season should be recused from discussion and voting on this proposal. In particular, Pat Tabor, who has worked strategically to benefit his family-owned outfitter business, Swan Mountain Outfitters, expanding their area of operation in the Swan Valley and the Swan Front, to hunt MORE mountain lions than is ecologically unsustainable, all for financial gain. His family business will benefit financially from an extended spring black bear hunt in R1. Mr. Tabor's votes throughout his politically appointed term as Co-chair and R1 commissioner have been filled with a self-serving agenda, not representing the majority of his constituents in R1. He has a long history of ignoring wildlife laws in both New Mexico and Montana but uses his political influence to skirt these laws and violations he has been charged with.

Hound hunting in occupied Grizzly bear habitat in R1 violates the Endangered Species Act (PL 93-295). The majority of Montanans oppose hound hunting as it does not practice the fair chase doctrine. It is a direct conflict with Grizzly bear recovery. Hound hunting and hound training seasons, May 26-June 15, is in direct conflict with people who recreate during that time, often with their companion dogs. The training sessions during this time frame affects black bears at a vulnerable time when cubs are born and do not need this type of harassment and disturbance. The spring black bear hunt should not be extended for two additional weeks. There is already excessive harvest of black bears.

Spring black bear hunts, including hound hunting and shooting black bears, should be discontinued. The general public starts recreating on our public lands as soon as the snow melts in the spring and are in harm's way along with their companion dogs. This is a public safety issue. The likelihood of a female black bear with cubs is highly probable at this time. The unnecessary death of black bear cubs killed and left orphaned are likely starve to death but are not reported or counted as fatalities. Where is your data to support extended spring black bear hunts? Or is this just another example of self-serving interest of the numerous outfitters on the FW Commission? The proposed black bear spring hunting extension undermines the public trust and science-based management of OUR wildlife. The majority of Montanans do not want black bears to be hunted 6 months per year.

Another important consideration is that too many protected Grizzly bears are killed by "mistaken identity" during the fall black bear hunting season. Too many Grizzly bears are "accidentally" killed during both bow season and general rifle season. Sometimes argued by both bow and rifle hunters that they surprised a bear, shot first, asked questions later, not knowing whether it was a black bear or Grizzly bear. Add an extended spring black bear hunting season and even MORE protected Grizzly bears will die an unnecessary death.

In closing, spring bear hunts should end for the above stated reasons I provide. Outfitters serving as FW Commissioners should be recused from discussing and voting on these measures as it is self-serving, biased, and unfair to the majority of Montanans who play by the rules.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kari Gunderson, PhD.

Swan Valley, MT (Region 1)

#82

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 22, 2024 3:49:14 PM
Last Modified: Monday, January 22, 2024 4:00:00 PM
Time Spent: 00:10:45
IP Address: 67.143.192.51

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Deborah Slicer
City/Town:	Huson
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	deborahslicer031@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I'm writing to ask that you vote NO to extending the spring black bear hunting season in several units (actually, there should be no spring bear hunting at all).

And the hound hunting proposal expressly excludes the 9 Mile watershed, which has been my home for 13 years, from grizzly protections so that hunters can pursue black bears with hounds and train hounds in spring. No rationale is given, as far as I can see, for excluding 9 Mile, where there are certainly grizzlies. 9 Mile is simply, clumsily struck out of the regulations by some mysterious hand.

We've seen the bears, photographed the bears, even Jamie Jonkel, who is located at the FWP headquarters in Missoula, has confirmed with me personally, and at our community center meetings, that there are grizzlies here. Hound harassment should not be permitted in 9 Mile. And many 9 Mile residents, including my family, are upset about this proposal. I'm sure you'll hear from them.

Deborah Slicer, I'm writing to ask that you vote NO to extending the spring black bear hunting season (actually, there should be no spring bear hunting at all).

And the hound hunting proposal expressly excludes the 9 Mile watershed, which has been my home for 13 years, from grizzly protections so that hunters can pursue black bears with hounds and train hounds in spring. No rationale is given, as far as I can see, for excluding 9 Mile, where there are certainly grizzlies. 9 Mile is simply, clumsily struck out of the regulations by some mysterious hand.

We've seen the bears, photographed the bears, even Jamie Jonkel, who is located at the FWP headquarters in Missoula, has confirmed with me personally, and at our community center meetings, that there are grizzlies here. At the very least, please correct this serious mistake. Reinsert protections from hounds for 9 Mile bears.

406 626-5537
Deborah Slicer
Professor Emerita
UMontana

#83

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 22, 2024 6:52:25 PM
Last Modified: Monday, January 22, 2024 7:31:07 PM
Time Spent: 00:38:41
IP Address: 157.97.134.160

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Terrance Little
City/Town: Seeley Lake
State/Province: MT
Email Address: tlittle19522@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Please stop this carnage. By extending this season and turning a blind eye to the humane abuses and self dealing that go along with it you are jeopardizing the long term health and viability of the wildlife that make our state so special. Think of the cost to future generations, your heirs, that will occur when your short sighted management policies deplete our most valuable resource down to the point that Montana is just like any other state east of the Mississippi.

#84

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 22, 2024 7:47:41 PM
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Time Spent: 00:03:24
IP Address: 98.97.113.222

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Glen Babcock
City/Town:	Huson
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	glen@gardencityfungi.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

New proposal is "Beyond fair chase"
Suggest no changes on Ninemile corridor for Bear management.
Thank you.

#85

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 6:55:54 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 6:57:36 AM
Time Spent: 00:01:42
IP Address: 69.145.220.230

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Katie Kotynski
City/Town: Great falls
State/Province: MT
Email Address: catsdogshorses111@yahoo.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Please don't extend hunting season into hiking and horseback riding season. It's getting very hard to recreate with extended hunting. Thank you.

#86

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 7:27:59 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 7:34:17 AM
Time Spent: 00:06:17
IP Address: 66.62.93.155

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Angela Wells
City/Town: Huson
State/Province: MT
Email Address: montanalark@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

As a Ninemile resident, I am opposed to changes to the black bear regulations that would remove hound hunting prohibitions in the Ninemile watershed (District 200). Although there are no known resident grizzlies in the Ninemile, it is an established migration corridor and provides connectivity between existing grizzly bear habitat zones as well as areas where recolonization by grizzlies is desirable.

#87

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 8:40:26 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 8:49:57 AM
Time Spent: 00:09:30
IP Address: 72.250.179.247

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Jeffrey Whitlock
City/Town: MARION
State/Province: MT
Email Address: lurker45@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I support the current proposals. I would like to see Region 1's spring season extended to June 15 in the future.

#88

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 11:50:06 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 12:05:52 PM
Time Spent: 00:15:45
IP Address: 69.145.58.74

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Dr. E. Wayne Vinje
City/Town: Bozeman
State/Province: MT
Email Address: wayne.vinje@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

The spring hunting season for black bear is barbaric. Hunting them after they have survived the winter, are starving, defenses down because finding food is primary, is inhuman. The opposite of fair chase hunting, appealing only to the worst of MT hunters, those only interested in killing. And to do it with hounds is unspeakable. Commissioner Pat Tabor has a primary conflict of interest and should not be permitted to vote on this issue. He has also committed multiple hunting violations. MTFWP does not have a current population count on the bear in the subject BMUs, using hounds there violates Federal law since the BMUs are Grizzly habitat, spring black bear hunts kill any number of black bear cubs, and black bear spring "hunting" is counter to NAM. Do not extend spring bear "hunting" season to June 15. Spring bear "hunting" should be outlawed, "hunting" with hounds needs to be terminated, and "commissioner" Pat Tabor should not be permitted to rule on this issue.

#89

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Time Spent: 00:08:14
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Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Jason O Rear
City/Town: Laurel
State/Province: MT
Email Address: j7.orear@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I support Commissioner Cebulls Bear proposals

#90

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 12:41:36 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 1:07:58 PM
Time Spent: 00:26:21
IP Address: 63.153.5.98

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Brooke Shifrin
City/Town:	Bozeman
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	bshifrin@greateryellowstone.org

Black Bear Season Setting

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Dear Members of the Commission,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the black bear proposals for 2024-2025 season setting. The Greater Yellowstone Coalition (GYC) is a regional conservation organization based in Bozeman, Montana. Its five field offices, strategically placed in Idaho, Wyoming, and on the Wind River Indian Reservation, create opportunities to work with all people to protect the lands, waters, and wildlife of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem now, and for future generations. For more than 40 years, GYC and our 100,000 supporters from across the country have advocated for a science-driven, collaboration-focused, and forward-thinking approach to keeping lands wild, rivers free-flowing, and iconic wildlife moving throughout a connected and vibrant landscape. The following comments are specific to the proposed hunting districts where black bear hound hunting would be prohibited due to overlap with occupied grizzly bear habitat.

GYC has worked on grizzly bear conservation since its inception 40 years ago. We strive to build collaborative partnerships with agencies and communities to protect core grizzly bear habitat, promote connectivity between grizzly bear populations, and reduce/prevent conflicts. Due to Montana's leadership in grizzly bear conservation, interagency efforts, and community support for grizzly bear recovery and range expansion, grizzly bear conservation is a tremendous success story. As home to the two largest grizzly bear populations in the lower-48 states and connective lands between, we believe Montana is uniquely positioned to build on this success story and ensure grizzly bears thrive in the state long into the future.

Hound hunting for black bears poses a risk for incidental take of grizzly bears. For that reason, we appreciate FWP's proposal for areas where hound hunting for black bears will be limited or prohibited. However, we believe the proposal is incomplete and strongly urge the commission to prohibit hound hunting of black bears anywhere in or near occupied grizzly bear habitat, in places where grizzly bears may be present, and in important connectivity areas between grizzly bear recovery areas. To meet requirements under Section 7(a) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and based on our interpretation of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service methodology for potential grizzly bear presence, the hound hunting closure area should be expanded to include all of black bear management units 200, 240, 216, 301, 316, 317 and 319.

There is consensus among many wildlife professionals and bear biologists that grizzly bears will not respond to pressure from hounds in the same way as black bears. More specifically, grizzly bears are likely to exhibit a fight rather flight response if harassed by hounds. These conflict scenarios will almost certainly lead to human, hound, and/or grizzly bear injuries or fatalities through defensive action by hunters to protect personal or hound safety (especially considering new Montana administrative rules governing citizen take of grizzly bears exhibiting 'threatening' behavior). Over 35 wildlife professionals with expertise in grizzly bear conservation and management stated in a January 2022 opinion piece in the Billings Gazette and Missoulian that, "The use of hounds to hunt black bears will result in conflicts and deaths for grizzly bears in the areas where hounds are used."

Weakened regulatory mechanisms around grizzly bear mortality will make it more difficult for the state to pursue delisting of grizzly bears from the ESA. Therefore, it is not in the state of Montana's best interest to allow for activities that will likely result in an additional source of conflict related grizzly bear mortality both within Demographic Monitoring Areas and important connectivity zones between recovery areas (based on recent best available science; see Sells et al. 2022, 2023a, and 2023b). Demographic connectivity between isolated grizzly bear populations would restore the metapopulation structure that historically characterized grizzly bear presence within the intermountain west (Merriam 1922, Picton 1986, Craighead and Vyse 1996). Restoring an interconnected metapopulation of grizzly bears will be important to the long-term persistence of grizzly bears in the United States (Proctor et al. 2005) because it will address genetic isolation and create resiliency to environmental changes (Haroldson et al. 2010, Breitenmoser et al. 2001, Hedrick 1996, Hedrick, and Gilpin 1996).

We respectfully ask that you expand closures areas for black bear hound hunting to include all current grizzly bear occupied range, areas where grizzly bears may be present, and important connectivity zones between recovery areas. Thank you for your consideration.

Black Bear Season Setting

Sincerely,

Brooke Shifrin
Wildlife Conservation Coordinator
Greater Yellowstone Coalition

Literature Cited:

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#91

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, January 22, 2024 7:29:46 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 1:55:48 PM
Time Spent: 18:26:02
IP Address: 67.143.192.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Tracy Mikesell
City/Town: Huson
State/Province: MT
Email Address: tanjmt@yahoo.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I am writing to oppose any increase/changes to black bear hunting in the Ninemile district. I am a long time home owner here and I do not want the increased traffic and danger and disruption this change would bring to the valley. In addition, hunters continue to misidentify grizzlies as black bears and this is a grizzly sensitive area, which brings me to the next issue of violating your rules of hound training/hunting in these same grizzly sensitive areas. Also, it is understood that Mr. Taber has an outfitting business which puts him in direct conflict of interest to these changes. It is wrong to hunt bears in the spring when they have cubs and extending hunting by another month makes this already unethical hunting practice more egregious. The continued problem of hunters trespassing on private property is also of great concern as people have pets and livestock scattered in this area. Also, the increase in people who walk their dogs and hike in the area presents an additional safety issue. Lastly, pulling additional teeth is unnecessary and redundant.

#92

COMPLETE

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Started: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 1:58:04 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 2:18:34 PM
Time Spent: 00:20:30
IP Address: 67.143.192.79

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Bruce Mikesell
City/Town: Huson
State/Province: MT
Email Address: bdmikes@yahoo.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

As a long time resident of the Ninemile Valley, I oppose any extension of the spring black bear hunting season, and the inclusion of using hounds or training hounds in the Ninemile.

Spring Bear hunting is unethical as bears are coming out of hibernation with new cubs and sows are mistakenly shot leaving orphaned cubs.

The Ninemile is a grizzly sensitive area as this is a corridor and grizzlies are frequently killed as they are mistaken for black bears. Using hounds or training hounds is intrusive to the entire community in the Ninemile and presents w significant safety risk to other recreational activities such as running, hiking, mountain biking, and walking dogs.

Training and using hounds is a conflict of interest for Mr. Tabor as he owns property in the Ninemile and an outfitting business that would directly benefit financially the proposed changes.

For these reasons I strongly urge you to deny the proposed changes as I believe they are unethical and detrimental to the wildlife, the residents of the Ninemile valley, and do not represent the best interests of Montanans in general.

Sincerely,
Bruce D. Mikesell, MD

#93

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 2:20:51 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 2:21:48 PM
Time Spent: 00:00:57
IP Address: 72.174.52.83

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: Sara Buley
City/Town: Great Falls
State/Province: MT
Email Address: sarabuley@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Please do not extend black bear hunting into June. This is when many hikers are out and having hunting going on creates a dangerous situation. Thank you, Sara Buley

#94

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 3:53:13 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 4:01:28 PM
Time Spent: 00:08:15
IP Address: 67.143.192.51

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name: **Steve Cummings**
City/Town: **Huson**
State/Province: **MT**
Email Address: **slash@centric.net**

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

I am very much opposed to hunting black bears with hounds and hound training in the 9 Mile watershed. This is sensitive grizzly recovery habitat. I live in 9 Mile, have seen and even photographed grizzlies in my back yard. (We adjoin USFS land.) Please oppose this proposal!

Thank you, Steve

#95

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 11:08:41 AM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 4:25:56 PM
Time Spent: 05:17:15
IP Address: 69.144.253.243

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Montana Wildlife Federation
City/Town:	Missoula
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	jeff@mtwf.org

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

The Montana Wildlife Federation opposes extending the Black Bear spring season to June 15th in Grizzly Bear Recovery Zones. We are in support of extending the season in areas where appropriate, outside of those areas. MWF understands that bears in certain parts of the state don't even leave their dens until late may, so the extended season will provide better opportunity for hunters, while helping with the management of Black Bear populations. With Grizzly Bear's delisting right around the corner, we feel that added mortality of Grizzlies through this season change could complicate efforts by the state to be in compliance with delisting. We would like to see this proposal amended to exclude Grizzly Bear Recovery Zones until sustainable populations of Grizzlies exist in those zones to account for human caused mortality. Thank you.

#96

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
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Last Modified: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 4:49:38 PM
Time Spent: 00:04:11
IP Address: 75.143.198.151

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Camille Consolvo
City/Town:	Great Falls
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	caconsolvo@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Extending this season to June 1 makes it challenging for hikers and backcountry horse riders. Recreating in hunting season is difficult enough, but to extend that time to June (all of spring) favors hunters over other outdoor recreationists.

#97

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 6:41:24 PM
Last Modified: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 7:11:43 PM
Time Spent: 00:30:18
IP Address: 72.174.237.190

Page 1

Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Jason Butler
City/Town:	Lolo
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	jbut1020@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Black Bear Season Setting

Eliminate hound hunting restricted areas in Montana. Idaho has demonstrated that a liberal approach to hound hunting for black bears contributes significantly to maintaining a healthy bear population. By removing restrictions on hound hunting, we can anticipate a reduction in the number of orphaned cubs, while simultaneously providing increased opportunities for hunters to harvest mature age class bears. This approach aligns with successful practices in Idaho and has the potential to positively impact our bear population.

Moreover, easing restrictions on hound hunting can have broader ecological benefits by aiding in the recovery of the ungulate population, which is currently facing challenges. Considering that cougar quotas have been increased for similar reasons, it seems logical to expand opportunities for black bear harvest in our state.

I believe that reconsidering the hound hunting restrictions will not only be beneficial for the bear population but will also contribute to a balanced and sustainable ecosystem. Your attention to this matter is highly appreciated, and I am hopeful that we can collectively work towards a solution that benefits both wildlife and hunters.
