



# MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

## CAC MEETING MINUTES

December 8, 2021

### In Attendance:

**Members:** Lea Bossler, Louie Bouma, Marc Cooke, Clayton Elliott, Kit Fischer, Everett Headley, Laurie Johnston, Denley Loge, Tracy Manley, Bill Mitchell, Kylie Paul, Gregory Price, Matthew Quinlan, Carey Schmidt, Ron Skinner, Pat Sweeney, Susan Thraen

**Staff:** Randy Arnold, Vivaca Crowser, Mike Thompson, Liz Bradley, Pat Saffel, Loren Flynn, Jamie Jonkel, Joe Jaquith, Dori Schiele, Lori Brooks, & Alyssa Janicsek

**Guests:** Tim Aldrich & Ron Jendro

### Welcome, overview & introductions

Vivaca Crowser welcomed all in attendance, and Zoom worked well for those joining online. Vivaca and Randy talked about the CAC's role in the season setting process and how FWP is working on simplifying the regulations.

### Simplification and Season Setting Process

- FWP received a lot of comments and public attention on the first round of proposals.
- Biologists are looking at both social and biological viewpoints to find a middle ground.
- The general take-away from the first round of comments in R2 was that the proposed changes were going to complicate things instead of simplifying them, so some adjustments were made before going to the Fish & Wildlife Commission this month. Also, one change that FWP is really focusing on statewide is moving away from elk permits and issuing B licenses instead.
- Mike Thompson also reported that FWP proposes to get rid of unlimited mule deer permits to open up hunting opportunities in some places. The unlimited permits were originally offered to help raise the ratios, which worked for a time, but the ratios are not where biologists want to see them currently. This proposal won't grow trophy bucks but will increase the ratio and will be less restrictive for hunters.
- Some changes to hunting districts in the region but not as many as originally proposed.
- There is a commission meeting on Dec 14, 2021, and there will be public meetings in January. The public will be able to comment online after the meetings and another commission meeting will follow in early February.

### Jamie Jonkel: Bear Conflicts

- Jamie and his team have been tracking verified grizzly bear sightings for many years and Jamie is working on an updated map and information currently. Last year's information is available.
- Jamie gives presentations to communities and is hoping to go to Mineral County soon.

Education is key to preventing bear conflict.

- Missoula has been a very high conflict area due to many opportunities for bears: garbage, bird feeders, berry crops, fruit trees and lush, grassy areas.
- April-November is the busiest time of year for bear activity, but Jamie is still getting calls daily about bears.
- There is no perfect answer to the garbage issue due to the expense and convenience for the public and garbage service companies. With that being said, FWP has a good relationship with Bitterroot Disposal and Republic Services.
  - Not much enforcement can do except warn/ticket excessive garbage problems.
  - Bear-proof garbage containers are expensive and hard to come by.

**Randy: Parks and Rec Re-Org and Misc.**

- Things are moving along with a lot of details still to work out.
- Loren Flynn, our Regional Park Manager, will be our Regional Recreation Manager.
- Getting ready to hire a Maintenance Bureau Chief
- New R2 commissioner is Jana Waller—she had a prior commitment and couldn't be here tonight, but she plans to be at as many meetings moving forward as possible. She welcomes members to reach out.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05pm. Next quarterly meeting TBD.