

FISH and WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: January 15, 2015

Agenda Item: Mountain Lion Conservation Plan

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Informational

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 10 Minutes

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Background: The Department is embarking on writing an updated Mountain Lion Conservation Plan. Our most recent document guiding mountain lion management is the 1996 EIS *Management of Mountain Lions in Montana*. After 18 years this document is seriously outdated. In addition to the EIS, FWP has used information from more recent, research-oriented efforts in mountain lion management, but we have repeatedly heard from both FWP staff and sportsmen that a new lion plan is needed. Writing the plan will involve continual communication with FWP staff and interested publics. There will also be a MEPA analysis done before the plan can be finally adopted. Work began on January 1, 2015 and will be completed by December 31, 2015. Thereafter, the primary author, Jay Kolbe, will be retained until July 1, 2016 to present the plan and its use to the Commission, FWP Director, FWP staff, TWS 2015 annual meeting, WAFWA, other state wildlife agencies, sportsmen's groups, and other interested lay groups through television, newspapers, magazines, and any other suitable parties or venues.

This is an opportunity for the Commission to become familiar with the process for writing the plan and with the person who will write it. Jay Kolbe is currently our wildlife biologist in White Sulfur Springs and was formerly our biologist in Seeley Lake. He has a strong background in wildlife research and management, and has been intimately involved in Montana mountain lion management issues. He was competitively selected among FWP biologists and researchers who expressed an interest in writing the plan.

NO MOTION IS NEEDED, INFORMATIONAL ONLY