

# **FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET**

**Meeting Date:** December 8, 2016

**Agenda Item:** Biennial Fishing Access Rule

**Division:** Fisheries

**Action Needed:** Final

**Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation:** 5 Min

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## **Background**

FWP is recommending the Commission approve the proposed Fishing Access Site (FAS) Biennial Rule. The rule pertains to:

- Fees (camping, group use permits, facility rentals, special recreation permits)
- Stipulations on camping at fishing access sites
- Group Use Permit requirements (groups of more than 30 people)
- Special Recreation Permit requirements (permit system in place on the Blackfoot and Madison rivers for commercial use, competitive events, organized group activities)

The new rule would replace the current FAS Biennial Rule, which was adopted by the Commission in March 2015. The proposed rule contains changes to the camping fees for both fishing license holders and non-license holders.

## **Public Involvement Process & Results**

Following Commission approval of the proposed rule in October, FWP conducted a public comment period from Oct. 23-Nov. 22. A total of nine comments were received. One comment expressed opposition to any fee increase, while another supported the increases unconditionally. The remaining seven commenters thought the proposed increases to camping fees were too much or not appropriate for the amenities provided; six of them specifically recommended a \$3 increase for both license and non-license holders.

## **Alternatives and Analysis**

The Commission could choose to: 1) accept the changes proposed in October (\$12 for license holders and \$18 for non-license holders); 2) reject the proposed changes and reauthorize the current rates (\$7 for license holders and \$12 for non-license holders); 3) accept the changes suggested above by the majority of commenters; or 4) propose changes of their own. In any event, this is a biennial rule and must be reauthorized.

## **Agency Recommendation & Rationale**

FWP recommends the Commission approve alternative 3, the fee increases as suggested by the majority of commenters. Specifically, this will increase the fee for camping to \$10 for license holders and \$15 for non-license holders. Seniors and disabled persons will still receive a 50% discount of these new fees, as provided for in statute. This recommendation addresses the concern from commenters about fees rising too quickly, but is still beneficial to the FAS program by helping to offset more of the cost of maintaining FAS campsites.

## **Proposed Motion**

I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission approve the Fishing Access Site Biennial Rule as modified by the Department.