

FISH and WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: February 10, 2017

Agenda Item: 2017 Spring Turkey Quotas

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 5 Min

Background

Season structures and hunting district boundaries are adopted biennially for most game species. This happens every other year between December and final adoptions in February. Except for sage grouse, upland game bird season dates for 2017 were finalized in February 2016. Other season elements including bag and possession limits may be changed annually. There are no established quota ranges for spring turkey licenses and consequently, all changes require Commission approval. There are three proposed changes for 2017 Spring Turkey quotas and limits: two in Region 3 and one in Region 4. Spring turkey licenses are for male turkeys only. The proposed changes in Region 3 are an increase over those originally proposed in December based on commission guidance and consultation with regional staff. All other elements of the spring turkey quotas and limits are proposed to remain unchanged from 2016.

SPRING TURKEY

- 399-20: increase Region-wide general licenses from 200 to 400
- 399-21: increase Region-wide youth licenses from 25 to 100
- 445-20: increase Cascade County general licenses from 10 to 15

Public Involvement Process & Results

Public comment on this proposal ran through Jan. 13, and we received 31 comments. Twenty-three spoke in favor of the proposals citing that there are a lot of turkeys, three were against saying 400 licenses are too many although one suggested 200 hunters being allowed two tags each. Five commenters spoke to other matters including too few turkey licenses in Powell County, turkeys are a problem on a ranch near Lolo, an advocacy for two spring male licenses per person in the Bears Paw Mountains, that spring season should start and end later, and a comment on pheasant season.

Alternatives and Analysis

Proposals may be adopted as proposed, with adjustment, with additions, with deletions or no change from 2016 (status quo) as per staff justifications, public comment and/or Commission discussion.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

FWP recommends the Commission adopt the proposed changes, keeping other elements unchanged from 2016. This is consistent with known biology, management history and survey efforts to date.

Proposed Motion

I move the Commission adopt the proposed spring 2017 turkey quotas and limits as presented by FWP.