FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: April 14, 2017

Agenda Item: Grizzly Bear Hunting Regulations Date Correction

Division: Wildlife **Action Needed:** Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 10 Mins

Background: In July 2016, to meet requirements of a proposed federal delisting rule for grizzly bears in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE), the Fish and Wildlife Commission adopted a grizzly bear hunting season structure. The season structure regulation was developed using a regulation template that includes effective dates. However, because the grizzly bear season framework cannot go into effect at least until GYE grizzly bears are federally delisted, effective dates were never intended to be included. FWP is proposing to correct the mistaken inclusion of specific dates in the approved season structure by changing dates to "to be determined." No other changes to the season structure are being proposed.

Public Involvement Process & Results: The GYE Grizzly Bear Hunting Season Structure underwent an extensive public review and Commission approval process. The structure was explained in depth at a Commission work session in May, 2016. It was adopted for public comment at the Commission's May 2016 meeting, and then was open for a 31-day public comment period. More than 1,200 comments were received and reviewed. The season structure was finalized at the Commission's July meeting following additional public comment. It was clear throughout the process that the season framework was necessary to meet the delisting requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, but there would be no proposed season at least until delisting was finalized. Any proposed season would require additional Commission action and public process to, at a minimum, set quotas.

Alternatives and Analysis: This action simply corrects an oversight whereby effective dates were inadvertently included in the adopted season structure. Eliminating specific effective dates corrects that error, and otherwise makes no substantive changes to the adopted regulation structure.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale: FWP recommends the Fish and Wildlife Commission approve the GYE Grizzly Bear Hunting Season Framework with specific dates changed to "To Be Determined" recognizing that hunting cannot occur at least until this population is delisted and no longer under the protection of the Endangered Species Act and another Commission action considers whether to implement a hunting season and quotas.

Proposed Motion

I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission adopt the GYE Grizzly Bear Hunting Season Framework as proposed by the Department with the effective dates "To Be Determined."