

FWP COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: December 9, 2010

Agenda Item: Close Bighorn Sheep HD 213

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Approval of Proposed Rule

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 5 minutes

Background

Bighorn sheep in hunting district 213 near Anaconda have recently suffered significant mortality related to a disease/die-off event that included some agency culling. Out of concern for population recovery and in the interest of offering reasonably hunting opportunity for any successful applicant, FWP proposes to close HD 213 until such time as population recovery is sufficient to maintain biological viability and reasonable hunter opportunity. The scale of this population-level event and the elimination of reasonable hunting opportunity argue for this procedural exception to the biennial season setting process.

Public Involvement Process & Results

In addition to public comment at the December 9 Commission meeting, public comment will run from December 10 thru 5 p.m. Friday, January 14, 2011. Any final adoption by the FWP Commission will be at the February 10, 2011 Commission meeting.

Alternatives and Analysis

Proposals may be adopted as proposed, with adjustment, with additions, with deletions or no change from 2010 (status quo) as per staff justifications, public comment and/or Commission discussion.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

Given the observed mortality, there seems little option but to pursue this closure. Public awareness has been maintained through this and other die-offs with this closure expected to be generally supported by the public.

Proposed Motion

I move the Commission adopt the proposed bighorn sheep hunting district 213 closure as presented by FWP.