

Recommendation 2: FWP should develop voluntary corner-crossing access agreements with private landowners through the FWP Access Public Lands Program that will provide public access to public land that is not otherwise legally accessible.

1. Typical terms of the agreements could specify:
 - a. No restrictions on species that could be hunted;
 - b. No restrictions on weapons that could be used;
 - c. Access would be available from September 1 – January 1;
 - d. Only walk-in hunting access would be allowed;
 - e. Individual circumstances would allow for tailoring to specific needs;
2. Compensation may be considered by FWP per agreement.
3. Regional FWP regional staff, in conjunction with appropriate land management agency staff, will make a determination of the priority and desirability of a potential corner crossing.
4. Public notice of project sites may include:
 - a. Publication of online coordinates;
 - b. Maps made available at FWP offices and on FWP website, and on-the-ground markers and signage, offered in the least intrusive manner possible, similar to that used a bridge fishing access sites;
 - c. Parking areas, where necessary, would be established through terms specific to the individual landowner agreements;
5. Hunters using the program are advised to be proficient in the use of a GPS, and encouraged to complete the Hunter-Landowner Stewardship Project
6. Establish one or two agreements in September 2014, if possible, and at least one agreement per FWP Region thereafter
7. Initial volunteers may be sought by willing Council members and FWP field staff.
8. Upfront costs to FWP are anticipated for signage, set-up, fencing, materials, staff time, etc. These and other longer term costs are anticipated to maintain the program.
9. BMP access coordinators may conduct follow-up monitoring of landowner satisfaction. Sign-in boxes should be used to track hunter participation and acquire hunter satisfaction data. FWP field staff will be used to evaluate program

Rationale

Montana contains approximately 31 million acres of state and federal land. Many parcels of this public land are adjacent to each other only at the corners. Other parcels touch public roads or waterways only at the corner. In Montana, crossing at corners is not considered legal access. FWP should work with interested, volunteer landowners in a respectful manner to increase access to public land through a Corner Crossing pilot project.