

**MEETING SUMMARY**  
**FWP R5 CITIZEN ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**JANUARY 16, 2007**

**CAC MEMBERS ATTENDING:** Doug Haake, Barb Beck, Mike Whittington, Robert Willems, Doug Dreeszen, Greg Keller

**FWP STAFF ATTENDING:** Gary Hammond, Colonel Child, Ray Mule, Shawn Stewart, Doug Habermann, Jim Darling, Dianne Stiff, Jim Olsen, Jennifer Pelej

**GUEST:** Darin Watschke, U.S. Forest Service

**Gary Hammond Update:**

- Access coalition continues to grow. Recently added Beartooth Paddlers to make nine organizations.
- According to the Director's Office we have the most active CAC in state.

**CAC Feedback:**

Doug Dreeszen –

- Lack of access and identification of public land. Hunter contact has been positive. Noticed more littering during the hunting season than normal.

Mike Whittington –

- Habitat Montana reauthorized during the 2005 legislature provides \$3.5 million annually from sportsmen's dollars toward acquisition of conservation easements. Almost all easements come with an access provision. There were 30 funded projects as of 2005, and none in Region 5. Would like to see Region 5 utilizing this program.
- Block Management complaint - some properties don't offer much in terms of habitat and wildlife opportunities. With dollars limited for program, urge Region 5 to review properties for best mutual benefit. Some lease out prime acreage of their land to outfitters while saving other property for public access. Need to look at what habitat is offered and then take a look at those landowners on the waiting list.
- If FWP were looking for additional full-time employees, would like to see FTE's at the regional level to work on access groundwork.

Doug Haake –

- Magic City Fly Fishers appreciate a visit from FWP and encourage folks to attend.
- Conflict between a tribal member and angler on Bighorn River. Don't want issue to escalate now that it's in the press. Are agencies meeting with the tribes to discuss stream access law, the Supreme Court decision, etc? Harold Guse said that issues now go through the Governor's GAIN Council

- Example: Poker Joe FAS was closed by landowners because unhappy for variety of reasons. Concerned about this happening at other FAS's. Need to plan and address such issues before they come up.

Greg Keller –

- Would like to see more access to private land and forest service land in his area. What is status of anti-harboring bill this session? The Wildlife Federation supports this bill.
- May want to revisit the agency ARM rule regarding people signing onto multiple properties in block management.

Barb Beck –

- With gas prices going up this could affect fishing and hunting pressure locally.
- Compliments to FWP Website from member of the public.
- Compliments to seamlessness in staff to provide answers to a caller's question.
- Interested in conservation through Habitat Montana, especially sage grouse habitat.
- Would like to discuss the aftermath of the legislative session.
- Short agenda item on what's coming up in the world of FWP for spring fishing, CAC feedback on regulations, etc.

Robert Willems –

- For block management doesn't want too many permission slips to be issued for the same day.
- Access, would like to see better cooperation amongst state agencies.

### **Impacts of 2006 Summer Fires:**

Shawn Stewart, Wildlife Biologist -

- During the summer of 2006, 461,000 acres burned in Region 5 with the largest forest fire being the Derby fire at 208,096 acres.
- Dead animals are one consequence of fire. From a population standpoint, this is a relatively insignificant loss. Question is what happens in years after the fire? That's a harder question to answer.
- In the case of Derby fire, we are fortunate to have data for this mule deer census area. This is one of the longest data strings located in this particular burn area.
- This fire burned 40% of the census area, removed 80% of the sagebrush and one-third of the conifer cover.
- Post fire survey found very few deer groups within the fire area.
- Looking for 1250 non-migratory deer and found 550.
- During the winter survey taken during December 2006, it appears everything has gone back to the census area. A total of 500 deer are nutritionally challenged which equals half the population.
- HD's 520, 560, 575, and 590 will be entirely either sex for deer in an effort to reduce the population to new carrying capacity within the burn area. Severity of winters to come will determine survival.

Darin Watshke – Custer National Forest

- Fisheries assessment - assessing for hydrophobic soil which directly effects fish mortality because of water quality. The indirect effect is channel morphology, sediment delivery, debris, increased water, loss of shade, vegetation, terrestrial and aquatic insects, and species viability.
- BAER – burned area emergency response, which is federal money to assess human safety concerns first then resources.
- Specific guidelines include the threatened endangered sensitive species. Focus is on Yellowstone Cutthroat trout (YCT) streams.

Jim Olsen, Fisheries Biologist –

- Upper and Lower Deer Creeks have native populations of YCT, with just one stocking event. Populations of YCT dropping drastically with brook trout out competing.
- An EA was done, reviewed, alternatives considered. This included taking fish out and putting in hatchery - not allowed. Holding pond – fish would grow too big in a pond, wouldn't fit back in the creek. Leave alone? Fish were tested for disease, and new habitats assessed. Checked for hybridization. Fish on the forest were non-hybridized.
- Selected three streams as recipient waters. Began moving fish November 6, 2006, and ended November 17, 2006. The work was not completed. In need of more barrier structures. Will continue to remove brook trout and monitor Deer Creeks for fish remaining.

**Next Meeting:**

CAC members are to look at the issues list and get back to Gary and Jenny. The next meeting is scheduled for **May 15, 2007**.