

**R-5 CAC MEETING**  
**August 14, 2007**

**CAC Members:** Doug Haacke, Mike Whittington, Doug Dreeszen, Greg Keller, Dan Dutton, Shawn Todd, Lee Gustafson

**Guest Speakers & Staff:** Carolyn Sime, Quentin Kujala, Jeff Herbert, Sue Dalbey, Tyler Grimm, Harold Guse, Doug Habermann, Jim Darling, Jenny Pelej, Dianne Stiff

CAC Member Feedback:

Doug Dreeszen –

- Over the Fourth of July weekend, users found the Bluewater Fishing Access Site to be unmaintained.
- Just to note that there was a discrepancy in the big game hunting regulations on the opener for archery in hunting district 520 – showed opens 9/2 but actually 9/1. This has been corrected.

Doug Haacke –

- The property owner upstream of Morraine FAS on the Stillwater River has blocked off access to a side channel using pallets.
- Feedback on the suggested change to the fishing regulations on the Bighorn is yes, agree with the change.
- Fishermen have applauded the Department for the fishing closures and the timing of them.
- The work on access in our region is becoming quite exciting for sportsmen and would like to give Gary Hammond a pat on the back for the extra work.

Shawn Todd –

- Positive feedback regarding instituting a camping reservation system in the State Parks.

Mike Whittington –

- Just wanted to resurface the block management issue regarding prohibition against hunters signing up for two block management properties the same day. This is a detriment to the landowner to see harvest and the hunter to gain access to adjoining places.

Dan Dutton –

- The whitetailed prairie dogs were translocated successfully near Belfry.
- Any indications on restrictions or closures for bird hunting for the upcoming season?

Lee Gustafson –

- With regards to the Public Land Access Association, the Laurel Rod and Gun Club are quite supportive of the progress being made with access.

- The Buffalo Mirage FAS is very well maintained.
- On the west fork of the Stillwater River, there is a closure sign on barbed wire located in the high water mark and right of way.
- The Region 5 staff is applauded for doing all the work on the Alexander Road access. Proceeding with this project with DNRC incurring the cost.
- Young's Point does not have a formal offer yet. Still need to negotiate the percent. In the meantime, looking at another site upstream from Columbus adjacent to the Eagles Nest Ranch on the Yellowstone River.
- The Bighorn River conflict continues. Due to the drought this river is overrun with people as the Stillwater River is too. Suggestion is to collect data from users on these rivers at least two years before a planning process.

Robert Willems (contributed via letter since unable to attend the meeting)

- Concerned about access. Believes Block Management is a good program but feels it is losing ground. Wonders if an increase in payments may be helpful. Disturbed with abuse by sportsmen and landowners.
- Pleased to see groundwork is starting for wolf hunting. Wonders if ranchers experiencing problems could be given priority for licenses. Feels access will be an issue with wolf hunting as well.
- Wonders why BLM land leasing needs to "take a back seat to sage hens."

State Parks Internship – Tyler Grimm conducted visitation surveys at our Region 5 state parks and one fishing access site (Deadman's Basin) to look at user trends. The summary of this report will be made available to the Region 5 CAC by the next meeting.

Wolf Management Updates and Discussion –

Carolyn Sime went over the background information on wolf management in Montana. At this point now looking at how to hunt and/or trap wolves in Montana after delisting. One item discussed was the fact that 50% of the Montana wolf packs are actually "breeding pairs". In order to hunt and/or trap wolves you need to have more than 15 pairs; if this drops to 10-15 there is the potential for wolves to go back on the list and if below 10 pairs then they go back on the list. FWP will need to track the breeders. The dispersal rates from Yellowstone Park and Idaho impact the breeding pairs too.

Quentin Kujala talked about the evolution of the wolf season. In 2007 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed to delist wolves with the final decision to be by February 2008 or for sure sometime in 2008. The Montana legislature then created a wolf license at the 2007 session. The Department is now looking at season development, population objectives and monitoring, timing of harvest, and opportunity and harvest allocation. The Department's stand is to create a season type that will not drop the wolves below 15 pairs.

CAC Term Limits – CAC members were asked to choose one of the following: 1) ending Sept 1, 2007 with no extension, 2) end Sept. 1, 2007 with an extension of two years, or 3) stay until Sept. 1, 2008.

- Feedback from members – felt there wasn't enough interaction between CAC members; learned a lot from being on the committee, but feels hasn't put that much back into it; wish they could have information for presentations a little earlier than the meeting, so could review before; allow the CAC more time for feedback; send out a questionnaire to CAC members to assemble some input on the efficiency of the Region 5 CAC before the next meeting that may amend the charter or not.

Next CAC Meeting – Tentatively November 27, 2007.