

Region 3 Citizens' Advisory Committee Livingston, Montana December 3, 2008

CAC Attendees: Tom Milesnick, Bob Gibson, Sam Samson, Joe Cohenour, Ted Coffman, LeRoy Mehring, Gene Budeski, Cyndy Andrus, Amy McNamara, Tom Henderson

FWP Staff Present: Pat Flowers, Mel Frost, Sam Sheppard, Jerry Walker, Bruce Rich, Kurt Alt, Joan Buhl, Sue Daly, Chris Smith, Ken Hamlin, Julie Cunningham, Scott Opitz,

Guests: Terry Murphy, Bob Wagner, Debby Barrett, Jeff Welborn, Gail Vennes, Wes Miner, Druska & Rich Kinkie, Martin Davis, Dean Gilbert, Mike Maugh, Jim Wisman, Tracy Brewer, Anthony Scioling, Louis Goosey, Joel Boniek, Jim Durgan, Dan Vermillion, Steve Wilcox

Pat Flowers: Greetings, introductions, review of agenda, updates

Pat Flowers: Updates

General Elk Season Extension – FWP Commission has extended the general elk season in eighteen hunting districts in Region 3 that are over-population objective. Over-harvest of bulls is a concern. FWP will use the past four-year season average (2004-2007) of bull harvest to determine the maximum number of bull elk that can be taken in each district. Hunters are being asked to call FWP and report harvest. Seasons can be closed on 24-hours notice.

Madison Valley elk management – Agreement was reached in late November that meets everyone's interest to redistribute elk off the valley floor, among other things. A hunt coordinator will be hired to communicate with landowners and find ways to distribute hunters to obtain harvest through the season extension.

New FWP Director – Joe Maurier has been appointed by Governor Schweitzer as FWP's acting director.

Additions to agenda

- Update on wolves
- Penalties for game violations

Ground rules for CAC interaction

- Civility, do not interrupt when someone is speaking
- Acknowledge order of who's speaking; raise hand to be acknowledged
- Don't dominate the discussion
- Maintain respect and civility for other members, guests, and staff.

• Acknowledge that everyone has different opinions. Make comments about an issue and not the person. It's ok to respond with enthusiasm. Be able to present differences of opinion without offending.

Elk, elk movements and brucellosis – Julie Cunningham & Ken Hamlin presented data (PowerPoint) from elk studies (1976-1986 and 2005-2008) in relation to Greater Yellowstone area elk movements, brucellosis, hunter access, and wolves. Data is essential to understand movement and migration patterns, distribution of elk in relation brucellosis transmission risk and management of accessibility for hunters. A study in HD 314 (Eightmile to Rock Creek) is proposed for 2009.

Wolves – Chris Smith updated members on status of lawsuit filed to put the wolf back on the endangered species list. FWP Commission has adopted a wolf season for Montana and is awaiting the outcome of the lawsuit.

2009 Legislative Session – Chris Smith & Sue Daly

Legislative Proposals – Chris Smith (see handout). FWP has three legislative proposals

- Mandatory trapper education for new trappers
- Authority to revoke fur dealer licenses Presently FWP does not have authority to revoke a fur dealer's license
- Archery seasons for mountain lions, wolves, and bears Give FWP Commission authority to establish archery-only seasons for mountain lions, wolves, and bears

Other Legislation Likely to Surface

- 1) PLPW statutory changes proposed to provide a free hunting license to cooperators (would not be deducted from their payment).
- 2) Fort Peck Hatchery Funding and Operations warm water stamp money does not provide enough funds to operate hatchery.
- 3) Stream access and fences at bridges.
- 4) Wolf Hybrids not clear who has the authority over wolf hybrids (specific definition of what constitutes a hybrid wolf). This legislation is for those who want to have hybrids as pets.
- 5) Bison and Disease Management remove DOL from responsibility for managing bison and give to FWP
- 6) Light Vehicle Registration Fees for Parks and Fishing Access Sites opt-in rather than opt-out. The \$4 fee presently collected is allocated \$3.50 to parks, \$.25 FAS, and \$.25 to Nevada City and Virginia City.

Brucellosis Task Force – tabled for the time being.

Sue Daly – FWP Budget (handout)

- Budget bills have to be approved by the legislature
- 50 funding sources are earmarked and dedicated to specific resources
- Operations budget (salaries/operations) HB2 appropriation
- Capital budget HB5

Legislator Issues/Comments/Legislation they are sponsoring

Joe Cohenour for Rep. Jill Cohenour – sponsoring two bills

- 1) Twelve-year-old who turns twelve during the hunting season and has passed hunter education is allowed to hunt the entire hunting season.
- 2) Allow hunter education to be taught in the schools—more awareness of hunting, heritage, basic gun handling.

CAC Caucus

River Etiquette Subcommittee Report - Amy McNamara and Cyndy Andrus (see revised handout with input from Ennis meeting)

How do we move forward?

Two-pronged message – resource protection and user responsibility. Need to have conversations with private industry (FOAM and Trout Unlimited) to build partnerships in helping us get the message out, as well as private companies (Simms, boat companies, etc.).

Discussion/suggestions:

Gene: Get the Board of Outfitters involved.

Amy: Given past discussions and meetings, this may not be the best way. The committee is recommending engaging the general public.

Gene: Awareness billboards at FAS.

Jerry Walker: There are bulletin boards at our sites—good idea. FWP should promote ethics, good behavior.

Bob: Seek support of the other CACs in the state

Cyndy: We could be the blueprint and pass it on to the other CACs.

Joe: Include this in hunter education—a couple of hours.

Pat: Incremental problem.

Mel: We have twelve hours to teach the entire hunter education curricula. There is some latitude to add items, but not a couple of hours.

Joe: Teach etiquette at an early age.

Mel: Possible to integrate into aquatic education program in schools.

Pat: Maybe Trout Unlimited could step in.

Tom Henderson: Biggest problem is coming from college kids—waters closest to the college.

Don't have to target TU or people who spend a lot of money on equipment.

Gene: Disagrees – guides are a problem. Adult float fishermen are a problem.

Bob: Aquatic education in the schools would be a great opportunity to get message out.

Cyndy: The committee would like to go out and talk to private industry between now and next meeting to see if there is interest. The committee needs comments/suggestions from CAC members to be sure we aren't forgetting anything.

Pat: If there's something you think is missing, send a message to a committee member with your comments.

Tom Milesnick – Committee should pursue. *Consensus from group*.

Meeting dates for 2009 (Locations TBA)

Helena – February 18 Butte – June 3 August 26 December 2

Inadequate penalties for violations

Tom Henderson: Fines and penalties seem to be very light for residency violations/illegal take of elk.

Sam Sheppard: Need more information on circumstances of cases you're referring to. Restitution value starts at \$1,000 for a bull elk. While they're mandatory, fine could range from \$135-750. It's at the discretion of the court and it varies court to court.

Public Comment:

Dean Gilbert: River Etiquette – involve watershed groups. Would be good for someone to present to those groups.

Lou Goosey— elk migration routes turned into a wolf discussion. It's apparent to me that the wolves changed the migration.

Tom Milesnick: Extending the elk season and opening to either-sex—there's a lot of opposition to this – needs to be a cow season. Not getting much control.

Pat: We are soliciting applicants to serve on R3 CAC. Applications are due December 5. Thanks to Ed Peretti, Sam Samson, Ted Coffman, Bob Gibson, and Craig Sharpe for their time and contributions while serving on Region 3 CAC.

Adjourn.