Meeting

Region 5 Citizen Advisory Council Meeting Agenda

09/15/2009
5:30 PM to 9:15 PM
Fish, Wildlife & Parks
2300 Lake Elmo Drive
Billings, MT 59105

Meeting called by: Bob Gibson

Type of meeting: CAC Council Meeting

Location: Pictograph Caves State Park

Facilitator: Bob Gibson

Note taker: Dianne Stiff

Attendees: Daniel Aadland, David Charles, Daniel Dutton, Doug Haacke, Greg Keller, Shawn Todd, Mike Whittington, Robert Willems, Dale Vermillion, Gary Hammond, Harold Guse, Dianne Stiff, Ken Frazer, Ray Mule', Bob Gibson, Darla Bruner, Carolyn Sime, Chris Smith

Absent: Doug Dreeszen, Jed Evjene

Agenda topics

5:30-6:30 p.m.	Dinner & Tour of Pictograph Cave SP	Darla Bruner
6:30-7:00 p.m.	Issues of Concern	CAC Members
7:00-7:45 p.m.	The Status of Montana Wolves	Carolyn Sime
7:45-8:30 p.m.	FWP Long-term Funding	Chris Smith
8:30-9:00 p.m.	Bridge Access Projects and Plans	Gary Hammond
9:00-9:15 p.m.	Housekeeping, Adjourn and van returns to Billings	Bob Gibson

Welcome, Dinner & Conversation — Bob Gibson

Issues of Concern	CAC Members

Discussion:

Shawn Todd – Looking forward to the wolf update. Hunting season hasn't really started and Roundup area is currently really dry.

Daniel Aadland – The main topic Dan is hearing about is the killing of the ram. He is still getting feedback on people adjusting to the archery quotas.

Doug Haacke – We had five to six weeks of high flows on the Bighorn River with the Bureau of Reclamation's management of Yellowtail Dam. One of the side effects was the crowd's all returned after the flows dropped causing 6 more weeks of crowding. Suggest that some data be gathered on the over crowding issues of the Bighorn River. Finding additional access in the St. X area would relieve a lot of the pressure too. It would be worth mentioning and discussing the irrigation at a Lovell, WY meeting as this is adding warmer water to the lower stretches of the Bighorn. Dale Vermillion added that it might be good to know if there are any beneficial effects of the high flows like cleaning out the moss and mud. Doug had heard from people during the previous year that significant flows took care of a lot of the silt in the river. High flows certainly have some benefits, but also some unforeseen consequences too. One of the benefits was getting rid of a lot of Russian olive, but in some cases we lost some side channel habitat, and the islands were washed away. You could tell the fish have moved around a lot, which is great. One thing that was really peculiar this year is that the bug hatches were all out of sequence. Mike Whittington indicated that the Bureau of Reclamation is conducting a geomorphology study on the Bighorn river. This should give a threshold of where you can say flushing flows are good, but too much of a flushing flow would not be a good thing when you are continually degrading the main channel. Doug also said that if the river is managed correctly, we shouldn't be looking at flows of 14,000-15,000 cfs during a normal water year. Gary Hammond gave kudos to Doug and Mike for their work on the Bighorn River and Lake issue.

Greg Keller – The new boat landing below Absarokee (Jeffery's Landing) is getting a lot of use. Gary Hammond said that FWP is going to put up a sign with a narrative on the history of the site since it was named Jeffery's Landing instead of Riverside Inn. They have lots of elk calves and lots of deer fawns, so it should be a good hunting season.

Mike Whittington – During August the Montana Wildlife Federation board members and directors from all over the state reviewed happenings in the state that are of interest to the federation, and planning for the next year. They were provided with a copy of an internal memo from FWP dated July 9, 2009, that caused a lot of concern among federation members at that meeting. The essence of the memo is that the Director's office is telling the regional supervisors, wildlife and the lands section that very likely from now through 2014 all of the habitat Montana money will be used to purchase parcels of Plum Creek land in the far western side of the state. That is a long period of time something like 5 years according to this memo, where absolutely no habitat money will available to the rest of the state. When opportunities for acquisitions like Yellowstone River WMA or conservation easements become available, the other 2/3 of the state is going to fall off the table because there won't be funds. Habitat Montana money is the sportsmen's money. That is all of us who buy hunting licenses or pay excise tax on hunting equipment fund habitat Montana. Sportsmen created this for the purchase of preserving habitat and a side benefit of that is providing a whole lot of hunting access. Mike wanted to share with the committee and department employees that this is a subject of a lot of concern for the Montana Wildlife Federation and virtually all the directors that were at that meeting. Ken McDonald was there, so he knows the concern.

David Charles – He had heard comments over the summer that was complimentary of what the Department is doing with access sites. The publicity was great. People that have used them talk about how good these sites are. The other topic was the changes in Helena with a lot of concern about whether those signal a change in the future for us. There are real concerns about whether something is behind the scenes that the rest of us don't know about, especially when we see people from Ohio brought in taking senior positions that don't appear to have a lot of background in Montana or others hired who do not have a lot of background in hunting and fishing. People are very concerned and if there is a misstep some place, there is the potential explosion out there in the state. This perception of the Department changing direction could be detrimental to the next legislative session. Bob Gibson commented that we in Region 5 have folks in organizations and individual

sportsmen who are very supportive of this Department and what we are doing. Gary can make three phone calls and a legislative room could be packed the next day. Anytime something needs to be done as far as input or "shovel work," there are people who simply come and help out.

Daniel Dutton – One concern from Red Lodge is people who are not to crazy about the wolf hunting want to know how we'll know when the quota is reached and if there are enough breeding pairs left so we don't run out of wolves? Another question from the Bridger area people is when can they go down and utilize the new property south of Bridger along the river? Will that be farmed or will that be some other habitat? An article in the Carbon County news updating the public on this new site would be helpful.

Robert Willems – He's received good comments from nonresidents regarding the new Musselshell fishing access site. There have been some wolf problems in Martinsdale area. He's observed a lot of antelope fawns but not as many antelope bucks. Hasn't seen as many whitetail fawns. Thank you to FWP for having the meeting at the Pictograph Caves SP Visitor Center.

Dale Vermillion – The fishermen are very concerned about the bridge access on the Boulder River. The impression is that the county commissioners are going out of their way to make it difficult for bridge access on the Boulder as a response to the landowners. This is particularly on the Eight-mile bridge. A number of people were told that if they use that the county commissioners would close it.

Action items:	Person responsible:	Deadline:
Bighorn River over crowding survey, news release on the new Meinhardt property purchase. Eight-mile bridge on the Boulder River.	Ken Frazer, Bob Gibson, Gary Hammond	Fall 2009

The Status of Montana Wolves	Carolyn Sime

Discussion: The State of the Wolves, Carolyn Sime – Wolf Program Coordinator.

Congratulations Montana as today truly is a historic day. It's the first day of fair chase legal wolf hunting.

Past –

- Timeline started in the mid-1980's with the dispersal of wolves into Montana from Canada.
- The US Fish and Wildlife Service started the first recovery plan in 1989.
- Reintroduction into Yellowstone National Park and central Idaho was intended to get there faster, recover wolves, and delist them sooner – we are lagging behind a little bit with the soon part on the other end of recovery.
- From 1995-2005 dispersal has led to a Regional Northern Rockies wolf distribution. Wolves from our region have migrated west as individuals. There are thought to be a couple of new pairs in Washington and couple of siblings in Oregon.
- Maps were shown on international travel in the last couple of years, and pack distribution in the tri-state area.
- Since the mid-1990s:
  - Montana started its plan back in 2000 with the Wolf Advisory Council, and that is when Carolyn's tenure on wolves with FWP started. Montana's plan was completely approved by 2004.
  - From a biological point of view wolves recovered by 2002. But delisting in 2004 was delayed due to the lack of a plan from the state of Wyoming that the federal government could approve.
  - About that time Senator Conrad Burns felt that if the goal is to delist wolves and transfer management to the states, what better time but the present. Our state begun receiving funding in 2004. FWP came on board as the agency under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Idaho's response was the same. They signed a MOU. Wyoming's response was to sue the federal government.
  - By 2007 the Wyoming plan had been approved.
  - Delisting was then in effect March 2008. The 9th circuit federal court in Missoula challenged that federal decision and it was a coalition of groups (12 or 13 organizations primarily nonprofit NGO types – some regional, some national scale groups). On behalf of the federal government several others intervened in the lawsuit and supported that decision – Montana was one of those folks, state of Idaho, and many other entities.
  - Spring of 2008 there was a hearing to deal with the question about a preliminary injunction. Those

folks who challenged that delisting decision had such concerns about state management that they asked the judge to call time out and to leave wolves listed while the rest of the main lawsuit carried on.
    - The preliminary injunction was granted in July 2008, so the federal government lost that case in the sense that wolves went back on the list. Permission was asked from the court to withdraw that decision. In essence they asked to redo the decision. The judge granted permission so round one of wolf litigation was over by the fall of 2008. That effectively cancelled any sort of hunting plans that any of the states had. At that point in time the federal government took a lot of time and read through the judges order, tried to really understand what the concerns were and what the major legal issues were.
    - They moved forward with the delisting decision early in 2009 under the current federal administration and that took effect on May 4, 2009.
- Officially on May 4, 2009, Montana is delisted again. State laws, state management plan and administrative rules and basically state framework take affect.
- Wolf biology –
    - Populations can grow 20-30%, so if you have accelerated mortality they can also drop off pretty fast as well.
    - Gray Wolf populations in Montana = chart from 1979-2008.
    - Wolf Management Hunting Units (WMU) 1, 2 and 3 = pack location map from 2008. WMU 1 has the highest population level and so also has the highest quota level that was approved by the FWP commission.
    - There is a subunit with it's own subquota on the west side of Glacier Park.
    - A graph was shown with the minimum Montana wolf population by WMU for 1999-2008.
- Livestock Depredation –
    - Montana is a predator rich environment.
    - What happens to Montana upon delisting? Wolves are classified as a species in need of management. That places them under the protection of state law much like game animals. It's a classification in state law that also allows our commission to establish hunting and trapping seasons for the species.
    - There is the ability for FWP and the commission to establish administrative rules that guide us as an agency on how we go about implementing state law. We have administrative rules in place, and we also now have a state plan.
- Wolves and livestock interaction -
    - With delisting our rule is the same as the agency with the responsibility of managing and conserving the species. Our partner agency is the US Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services. Their contribution to the program is to investigate suspected injured or dead livestock and try to determine that cause. If it is a predator, their job is then to do their best to figure out what species. If it was a wolf, grizzly bear, black bear or mountain lion then the two agencies work in conjunction with each other to figure out the best response. Their role stays the same with delisting.
    - Montana has a defense of property law that allows a livestock owner to haze or harass a wolf or kill a wolf if they see the wolf attacking, killing or threatening to kill their livestock. Our experience in Montana is that even while listed, in the part of the state where could you do that under the federal regulations, there are roughly 5 to 7 wolves per year taken in defense of livestock.
    - Currently FWP is fully funded with federal dollars. These are incoming funds from the US Fish and Wildlife Service as well as directed appropriations from congress. With delisting that is questionable from this point forward. It is easy to make the case that while the species is listed that the federal government should pay. It is a little harder to make the case that they should continue to fund the program in a delisted context.
    - We still continue to advance that idea primarily with the thought in mind that there are only so many places in the lower 48 where you can have something like a wolf or a grizzly bear. If the nation values those species, Montana is willing to invest the energy and personnel and time to conserve and

manage those species, but we also think of that as a national investment. We continue to work with the congressional delegation for ongoing federal funding. Currently we have money in the bank through June 2010 and after that it will be a work in progress.

- A graph was shown on the long term tends of livestock conflicts from 1995-2008.
- In 2007 the Montana livestock reduction and mitigation board (a 7 member board) was created. Administratively it is its own board and attached to the Montana Department of Livestock. Appointments come through the governor's office based on recommendations from FWP as well as the Department of Livestock. The governor can fill one seat at large. The general sequence is Wildlife Services investigates the loss. They mail a copy of their investigative report and a claim form to the owner of the livestock, and the payments are verified losses only by Wildlife Services. Right now the funding for that program is a small portion from the Montana general fund with the primary source being the Defenders of Wildlife. Senator Tester has sponsored a bill with many others coming on board to co-sponsor including Senator Baucus. We're sure Representative Rehberg would jump on board too. Basically this bill would create a demonstration program to provide matching money so that state money or any private donations that come in would go further to address some of these economic aspects.

- Do wolves impact elk?
  - Research has gone on in a lot of different places in southwestern Montana. Is it the same everywhere? Not really. We are learning that it is possible for wolf predation to affect elk and elk populations, but we are also finding that the affect can be very different depending upon where you are plus the degree of that affect can be different and can also change through time. The big take home message from this research is, it isn't the same everywhere and it's not the same through time.
  - Predator density – how many predator species? Black bear released in an area may take their share of elk calves, human hunting comes along, wolf comes along takes a couple, lion predation, so you've got more things in play on that elk population than you have in the past when you add wolf in that mix. Research has shown in southwest Montana and Yellowstone Park that there are declines in the total number of elk, primarily through recruitment, and also adult mortality. In some study areas group sizes have gotten bigger, with the elk becoming more aware of and detecting predators. In some study areas group size has gotten smaller.
  - Movement - generally hunters are saying, "I don't see elk in the places I used to see them." The displacement is relatively short, a half-mile maybe per the research through GPS collars to date. Wolves are not making elk abandon their winter range and go some place else. Those large scale shifts are habitat related. We also know that with lethal control, removal or killing wolves in response to livestock conflicts, wolf densities are not as high. Again the difference maybe between inside a national park where we don't raise livestock or live, versus outside national parks. We do know that elk use habitats differently now and their behaviors have changed in response to that added risk.
  - Bottom line, we as hunters need to get better at human hunting of elk. We have to make some adaptations and adjustments as well.

Present -

- Montana fair chase hunting.
  - In the past Montana has had the wolf on a bounty system where you kill it for money, kill it on purpose, kill as many as you want, poison them, take them however you want, and that's not really hunting in the way we think of hunting today.
  - The beginning of fair chase hunting is a management tool for wolves in the same way we do for other wildlife species.
- Map of the Montana Wolf Management Units with the 2009 quotas – WMU 1 – 41, WMU 2 – 22, WMU 3 – 12.
  - Licenses are over the counter. Residents are $19.00 and nonresidents are $350.00
  - Backcountry hunting area open on September 15, 2009, ½ before sunrise. That includes the Bob Marshall complex, Scapegoat Wilderness and the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness. Hunters can

hunt through November 29, 2009.
    - The general fall big game season includes wolves beginning October 25 through November 29, 2009.
    - There is a possible extension into December if the quotas are not met. A certain percentage up to 10% of each quota could be eligible for harvest in December. If the quota fills by the November 29 there is no extension into December.
    - Ultimately Montana, Idaho and Wyoming needs to function as a large regional population so wolves are able to disperse around and mix up their genes. That is a critical component to their conservation and management, and it is a tenant of recovery itself.
- Quota systems are rigorously tracked.
    - When a wolf is harvested, the person has 12 hours to call 1-877-397-9453, available 24-hours per day. That is a registration so we know you've harvested it, and then it counts toward the quota. Within 10 days you need to bring the skull and pelt at the minimum, for inspection. FWP tags the pelt, collects some samples from the animal, ask some questions like if you were specifically hunting for wolf or was this opportunistic harvest. Try to understand more about wolf hunting.
- Why would you hunt wolves?
    - To manage the population.
    - The charge from our Wolf Advisory Council – include trapping and hunting as management tool, which is treat them and manage them like other wildlife.
    - Hunting will be an important tool and remains to be seen how effective it will be – we are not sure. We do feel it's time, it's appropriate and we have experience managing lots of other species, carnivores in particular.
    - We are hopeful that with some harvest of wolves in areas near private land where we have livestock, it will have the potential to help with that by some relief.
- Beginning in 2007, FWP initiated some research with the University of Montana and started asking deer and elk hunters who get called during our telephone harvest surveys some questions on wolf sightings, how many seen and location.
    - Map from 2007 was shown. It's important for FWP to figure out whether hunters are detecting wolves where we know wolves are located.
    - Another thing that was important for us to know is how many deer and elk hunters see wolves, which turns out to be between 5 and 7 percent.
    - About 80% of the deer and elk hunters reported seeing wolves during the 5-week season. That was one of the factors that was considered by both FWP and the commission in setting a very conservative quota statewide of 75 for the first season.
    - Ultimately the most important goal we had was to get a season underway this fall.

Future – Litigation

- The main issues are complex policy having to do with leaving wolves listed in Wyoming and delisting everywhere around it.
    - Montana supports delisting. Montana's response is that we are a full participant in the law suit as an intervener so that enables us to file briefs with the court and give an oral argument in court in front of the judge. Montana opposed the preliminary injunction and Montana basically is going to do everything it can to try to uphold that delisting decision in court.
    - In the absence of quality data and good professional work by your fish and wildlife professionals in Montana, all opinions are valid. It really is incumbent upon the agencies to just do good technical work. Our constituents have come to expect that from us and should continue to.
    - At the preliminary injunction stage, you had all the heavy hitters that are wolf researchers and wolf managers filing affidavits opposing the injunction saying these wolf populations can sustain hunting. On the plaintiff side are the people who are challenging that federal decision. Their affidavits come in saying that we are going to be harmed if this hunting season goes forward because it's going to hurt our ability to see wild wolves. That is a valid concern, but we are trying to honor as many value systems as possible and begin to manage wolves and other wildlife. This

was a real dichotomy in the judges mind and potentially one of the reasons that he denied that request.

- The scientific method can inform your decisions as you can conduct different tests. For example, if we accelerate wolf harvest is that going to make the population go down? If we are collecting good data, we can look at that question and come up with an answer. But within a decision making context that is really a poor venue to reconcile value systems.
- You want to use public forums – FWP Commission, the public comment opportunities we have in Montana - to try to reconcile those disparate guide systems, as the courtroom is a very bad place to do that. It tends to create mutually exclusive outcomes. No matter what value systems are in play, we as an agency are required to be respectful of that diversity and do our best to incorporate as best we can but still manage the species and conserve it. We need to find ways in public venues to reconcile those differences, the chief consensus and sustain them. As soon as someone vetoes out and goes to court, it's really hard to problem solve.
- Wolves will move through the biennium season setting process for 2010 and 2011. Because of the litigation it is unclear for sure whether we will have a 2010 season and that is primarily because the main part of that lawsuit is going to play out during the first half of 2010. If the federal government loses the case as the judge has indicated that it is a possibility, wolves will be listed again. 2010 is going to be a dynamic year from a legal point of view.
- Ongoing will be litigation, refining of Montana management – both the wolf/livestock interface and wolf/prey interface and some of our monitoring protocols for wolves just like with other species. We try to refine it and get better at it through time and funding.

Other Information Sources –

- www.fwp.mt.gov/wildthings/wolf
- casime@mt.gov - Carolyn Simes e-mail address
- www.fwp.mt.gov/hunting/planahunt/wolf

Action items: Wolf Updates	Person responsible: Carolyn Simes	Deadline: Ongoing

FWP Long Term Funding	Chris Smith

Discussion:

Major funding sources background -

- FWP is a self funded agency. Occasionally we get some of the general fund money for things like Access Montana or the Parks program, but by and large FWP is funded by our own revenue sources.
- We have to think about what is our long term revenue forecast? What is going to happen with the income we have because that is what we have to live within and manage?

How is FWP funded today?

- Fish and Wildlife Program (funded separately from our state park programs)
  - Funded through general license account, earmarked license dollars, Pittman/Robertson, and Wallop Breaux.
- State Parks Program
  - Voluntary light vehicle registration (established in 2003)
    Parks' earned revenue
    Coal Tax Trust revenue
    Bed Tax
    Motorboat fuel tax

What is the outlook?

- Fish and Wildlife Program
  - General License Account – flat or decreasing (depending on proposed initiative)
  - Earmarked Accounts – flat or decreasing
  - Pittman/Robertson – up and down
  - Wallop Breaux – up and down

- State Parks Program
  - Voluntary vehicle registration fees – flat or decreasing
  - Earned revenue – up
  - Coal Tax Trust revenue – down
  - Bed Tax – flat
  - Motorboat fuel tax - flat

Where are we now and what do we see coming down the road?

- In both the Fish and Wildlife and Parks programs expenditures now exceed revenue.
- Current Fish, Wildlife and Parks programs being sustained with "savings."
- Parks fund balance will be depleted in 2013. (July 2013)
- Fish and Wildlife programs have more time and options, but increasing demands (extend out to 2014).

What is FWP doing Short-term?

- Controlling expenses
- Leveraging funds
- Planning to "live within our means" through FY 2013

What is FWP doing Long-term?

- Re-evaluating programs to see what is important and what "new" is needed.
- Beginning discussions now – before we reach a "crisis."

How can the CAC get involved?

- Share ideas on what's important about FWP programs.
- Share ideas about how FWP can be more efficient.
- Share ideas about new revenue alternatives.

CAC Comments:

Mike Whittington – Observed changes since the early 1950's. The fish and wildlife program has changed from primarily serving the interests of the hunter and fisherman, managed the game species, managed the fisheries, issued the licenses, conducted the law enforcement necessary and so forth. Now the department's management and responsibilities include all kinds of wildlife with endangered species, wolf management, etc. The Department is doing many things beyond serving the sportsmen. Sportsmen have a lot of interests other than shooting game of course like watching wildlife for example, but the role has changed so dramatically and the funding source has changed very little or almost not at all. It's license dollars and excise tax on equipment. The excise tax is a large source of revenue that was self-imposed by sportsmen. Sportsmen lobbies brought those programs into existence. The sportsmen are carrying this burden with property purchase including purchased wildlife management areas, which is purchased with sportsmen's dollars. All the general public in the state enjoys these areas. There are those out bird watching, doing photography, hiking, etc., which is fine, but what this is telling us in the long term is that the department has to make the public aware that sportsmen cannot continue to carry the burden for all of these programs that don't serve hunting and fishing. Sportsmen shouldn't pay for wolf management aside from managing and administrating hunting seasons. The department has to provide some leadership within to help create a mindset that the whole population of the state is enjoying these things that a small segment is paying for all to enjoy. That is where we have to go long term.

Chris Smith – One of the things the Department looked at through our Human Dimensions Unit, which does social science research, was how well the public understands where our funding comes from. The results were that hunters and anglers have a pretty good understanding of where the money comes from for FWP. The general public doesn't have a clue, although nonhunters and nonanglers strongly support Department programs for habitat, conservation, and acquisition of places like the Yellowstone River WMA and our management of wildlife in general.

David Charles – Good idea to study; would like to give this some thought and get on the agenda for future meetings.

Dan Dutton – My guess is that Montana is not the only state faced with this problem. Are you going to look into other states to see what they are doing and learn from them?

Chris Smith – Yes. We are looking at what other states have done. Those that aren't where we are today either was there sometime in the past or are going to be there sometime in the future. We are working through

the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, which has been an umbrella for all 50 states. There's been discussion about trying to tackle this at the national level.

David Charles – Conduct public education as far as the department coordinating with the Wildlife Federation and some of these other groups who have an understanding of where the funding is coming from and give the opportunity for all of us to participate.

Action items: FWP Long Term Funding – future CAC agendas	Person responsible: Bob Gibson	Deadline: Next Meeting

Bridge Access Projects and Plans	Gary Hammond

Discussion:

Acquisitions –

Clark Fork of the Yellowstone – FWP had purchased this site (Meinhardt acquisition near Bridger), we close on it tomorrow. We'll be developing an interim parking lot. Then Phase I development will be a parking lot by next spring or early summer, and Phase II a small campground near the river by the summer of 2011. After purchase is complete tomorrow this area is open to the public. Park along Hwy 72 on the buffer or park along the county road legally then walk onto the property. The boundary will be marked right away and signs installed too.

Holmgren – Purchased a couple of months ago. The property is surveyed and boundaries marked. Floating down the Yellowstone River, there are signs along the river showing entering property and leaving property. You can legally access this site from the river. We have a railroad crossing that we need to get cross arms and a light for, so it won't be until late next summer until the public crossing is completed. There will be a parking area and latrine completed mid to late summer too.

Yellowstone River WMA – This site has been closed for road construction. Hopefully this will be completed by the end of September. In addition, signing has been worked on with this new road opening up to the BLM not through the BLM land.

Weymiller Property – Donated to FWP, and we just completed a fence opening with a walk through. Signs are posted, and it's about 10 acres on the Clarks Fork River near the Robertson Draw turnoff.

Bridge Projects Completed or Near Completion –

Bundy bridge on the Yellowstone, East Fork of the Rosebud, Spring Creek, Nitche Bridge, and West Fork of the Rosebud will be on September 23, 2009. A number of our CAC members have been out working on these projects.

We conducted a field trip of the list of the most critically identified sites in Region 5 after our May CAC meeting, then we went to work on these sites and now those are completed.

The process for these projects is coordinate with the county commissioners, coordinate with the county road superintendent, line location, in some cases we've called the local law enforcement authorities, coordinate with the adjacent local landowners, 124 permits issued.

Other Suggested Areas –

Eight-Mile and Fourteen-Mile bridges on the Boulder River.

Donations –

Magic City Flyfishers, Trout Unlimited and Billings Rod and Gun Club have purchased materials and a stockpile of gates for these projects. Club members have been volunteering their time too. Thank You!

Public Land Access Program (PLAD) –

2 ½ million was appropriated or approved during the last legislative session – one million is going towards western Montana and 1 ½ million is available for access to pieces of public land.

We are in the process of developing the criteria and ranking system. We do have a project ready to go providing access to Haymaker WMA near Harlowton, which will also get people to the national forest.

Action items: Identified Bridge Access Areas	Person responsible: Gary Hammond	Deadline: Ongoing

Housekeeping and Adjourn	Bob Gibson	
Action items: Next meeting – December 9, 2009 Get agenda items into Bob.	Person responsible: CAC Members	Deadline: End of November