

MINUTES
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Commission Conference Call Meeting
1420 East 6th Avenue – Helena Headquarters - Helena, MT 59620

MARCH 23, 2010

Commission Members Present: Bob Ream, Chairman; Shane Colton; Ron Moody, Willie Doll.

Fish, Wildlife & Parks Staff Present: Art Noonan, Deputy Director; Quentin Kujala, Hank Worsch, Ron Aasheim, Regena Peterson.

Topics of Discussion:

- 1. Opening – Call to Order**
- 2. 2010 – 2011 Region 1 Black Bear License Validation**

1. Call to Order. Chairman Ream called the Commission conference call to order at 9:00 am.

2. 2010 – 2011 Region 1 Black Bear License Validation. Season structures and hunting district boundaries are adopted biennially for all game species. For the 2010 and 2011 hunting seasons the process was completed in February. Black bear license validation for the spring season was moved from Bear Management Units 103 and 106 (the east portion of FWP Region 1) to BMUs 100, 102, 104, 105 and 108 (the west portion of FWP Region 1). This sort of license validation for the Spring black bear season first appeared in BMUs 103 and 106 ten seasons ago to reduce potential for incidental grizzly take by black bear hunters moving into high density grizzly bear habitat from other BMUs.

Starting in 2010, with license validation, FWP can identify bear hunters in the Cabinet Yaak BMUs to specifically target grizzly bear education and conservation information. FWP can use the Automated Licensing System technology to reach such bear hunters by moving the validation requirement from the east side of Region 1 (BMUs 103 and 106) to the west side's Cabinet Yaak portion (BMUs 100, 102, 104, 105 and 108).

While the conversion maintained the requirement that hunters with the validation cannot hunt in any other BMU in the state during the spring season, there is an unintended consequence of confusion and concern among many spring season black bear hunters advocating they are being unnecessarily restricted to hunt in either Region 1 or in the rest of the state. FWP agrees and proposes to refine the validation system by removing the restriction on a hunter's ability to hunt outside Region 1 regardless of validation during the spring season.

Action: Colton moved and Doll seconded the motion to adopt the proposed refinement to spring bear license validation for 2010 and 2011 as presented by FWP. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

Bob Ream, Chairman

Art Noonan, Deputy Director