Private Land/Public Wildlife Advisory Council

Report and Recommendations

Presented
to
Governor Steve Bullock
and the
63rd Legislature

January 2013

Council Members (2011-2012)

In December, 2011, Governor Brian Schweitzer appointed 7 Council members to terms ending June 30, 2013:

Kathy Hadley, Council Chairwoman
1016 East Side Road
Deer Lodge, MT 59722;

Joe Cohenour
2610 Colt
East Helena, MT 59635

Jack Billingsley
PO Box 768
Glasgow, MT 59230

Chris King
PO Box 187
Winnett, MT 59087

Mike Penfold
3552 Prestwick**,**
Billings, MT 5910

Alex Nixon
PO Box 72
Roberts, MT 59070

Bob Ream, FWP Commissioner
521 Clark Street
Helena, MT 59601

NOTE: During this period, the size of the Council was reduced from 15 members to 7 members, with no legislators appointed to serve on the Council during this cycle.

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COUNCIL CHARGE/PURPOSE

In 1995, a review committee (Private Land/Public Wildlife Council) was established in statute to make recommendations to the Governor regarding issues related to private land and public wildlife. The Council's statutory charge is articulated in Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 87-1-269 as follows:

"**Report Required - review committee.** (1) The governor shall appoint a committee of persons interested in issues related to hunters, anglers, landowners, and outfitters, including but not limited to the hunting access enhancement program, the fishing access enhancement program, landowner-hunter relations, outfitting industry issues, and other issues related to private lands and public wildlife. The committee must have broad representation of landowners, outfitters, and sportspersons. The department may provide administrative assistance as necessary to assist the review committee.

(2) (a) The review committee shall report to the governor and to the 59th legislature regarding the success of various elements of the hunting access enhancement program, including a report of annual landowner participation, the number of acres annually enrolled in the program, hunter harvest success on enrolled lands, the number of qualified applicants who were denied enrollment because of a shortfall in funding, and an accounting of program expenditures, and make suggestions for funding, modification, or improvement needed to achieve the objectives of the program.

(b) The review committee shall report to the governor and to the 59th legislature regarding the success of the fishing access enhancement program and make suggestions for funding, modification, or improvement needed to achieve the objectives of the program.

3) The director may appoint additional advisory committees that are considered necessary to assist in the implementation of the hunting access enhancement program and the fishing access enhancement program and to advise the commission regarding the development of rules implementing the hunting access enhancement program and the fishing access enhancement program."

Council Activities (2011 – 2012)

During the period December 2011 through December 2012, the Council met one time, in Helena on July 31. The primary purpose of that meeting was to get information updates on the following topics:

- **FWP Revenue Update:** Sue Daly, FWP Finance Division Administrator, provided the Council with information comparing license sales and related revenue generation during the years before passage of Initiative 161 and since passage of I 161, noting the impacts also associated with a statute enacted through passage of HB 607 in the 2011 legislative session that affects sales and revenue earmarks associated with sale of nonresident deer and elk licenses under certain conditions;

- **Hunter-Landowner Stewardship Project:** Council members were provided with the preliminary results of a survey imbedded in the program that had been completed by 485 graduates. Based on Council members' own experiences with the program and the survey results indicating participants were generally supportive of the program, Council members offered the following **Recommendation to FWP:**

    a) **Consider ways to increase awareness of the program, including the possibility of using social media to reach a wider audience;**

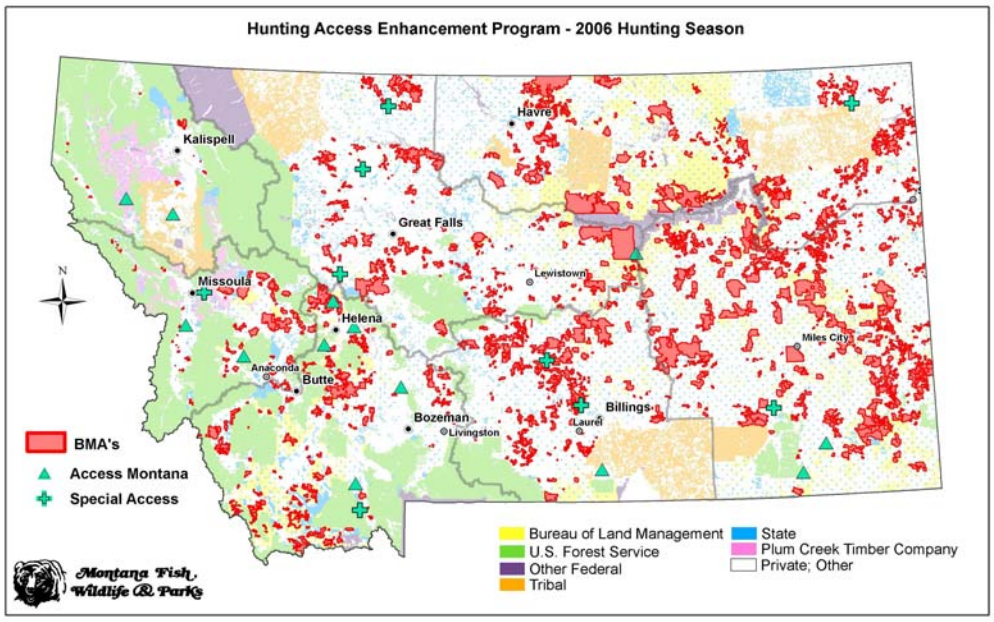
    b) **Consider ways to enhance the program to create more incentive for people to participate, including possibly adding some sort of access incentive whereby graduates could qualify for access to certain areas;**

  (See Appendix 1 – "Selected Results from a Participant Evaluation Survey Regarding the Montana Hunter-Landowner Stewardship Project" – HD Research Summary No. 35)

- **"Home to Hunt" License Discussion:** Hank Worsech, FWP Chief of Licensing, informed Council members that the "Home to Hunt" nonresident license statute was due to expire March 1, 2014, but that creation in the 2011 legislature of a new, somewhat similar license, "Native Montana Nonresident" license, that sold for a much lower price and that had fewer user restrictions had significantly impacted the sales of the "Home to Hunt" licenses. Hank also noted that since general nonresident deer/elk licenses were available over the counter in 2012, hunters could purchase those at the same price as the "Home to Hunt" license without facing any restrictions. During a work session, Council members discussed what a new license created from the two similar licenses might look like, but no formal position or recommendation was adopted by the Council regarding the "Home to Hunt" license.

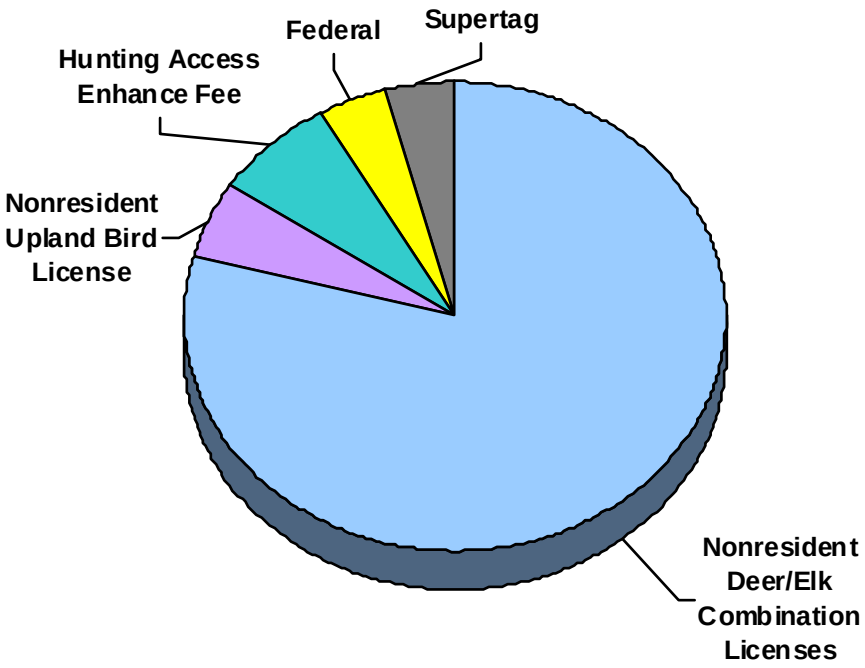
Hunting with
Written Permission
Only
J

HUNTING ACCESS ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM REPORT



(Block Management, *Access Public Lands*, Special Access Projects)

HUNTING ACCESS ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM REVENUE



Nonresident Big Game Combination Licenses

Effective 2011 license year, of the fee paid for the nonresident big game combination license, 25% is earmarked for the hunting access enhancement programs.

Nonresident Upland Game Bird License

Effective 2000 license year, nonresident upland game bird license fee increased to $110, with $55 earmarked for the hunting access enhancement programs.

Resident/Nonresident Hunting Access Enhancement Fee

Effective 2002 license year, hunting access enhancement free created ($2 resident/$10 nonresident), with revenue earmarked for the hunting access enhancement program.

Supertag

Effective 2006 license year, supertag created- lottery with unlimited chances ($5 each) for Supertag – 5 Supertags – 1 each for elk, deer, moose, sheep, goat; 2007 – antelope, mountain lion, bison added to list of Supertag options; except for license agent commissions, all proceeds must be used by the depart for hunting access enhancement programs and law enforcement;

Federal

PR excise tax dollars – amount varies annually;

Program Name
Hunting Access Enhancement Program
(includes Block Management, *Access Public Land*, and Special Access Projects)

Program Manager
Alan Charles, Coordinator, Landowner/Sportsman Relations

FY12 PROGRAM EXPENDITURES:

Landowner Contracts:	$4,916,859
Landowner/Hunter Services:	$1,554,754
Enforcement (6 FTE):	$524,635
Administrative Overhead:	$516,598
TOTAL :	**$7,512,845**

Landowner Contract Payments: Under statutory authority (87-1-267 MCA), "Benefits will be provided to offset potential impacts associated with public hunting access, including but not limited to those associated with general ranch maintenance, conservation efforts, weed control, fire protection, liability insurance, roads, fences, and parking area maintenance." The current system, articulated in 12.4.206 ARM, provides for cooperators to receive a $250 annual enrollment payment, and up to $11 per hunter day in annual impact payments, with optional 5% additional weed management payment. Total annual payment may not exceed $12,000. **In 2009, landowners received an average increase of 9% per landowner payment, when FWP increased the hunter day payment from $10/HD to $11/HD, resulting in approximately $460,000 more being paid to landowners enrolled in the program. Annual payments have remained at that increased rate through the 2012 hunting season.**

Landowner/Hunter Services:

- Approximately 45 seasonal BMA technicians are hired each hunting season to help set up, sign, patrol, and dismantle BMAs;

- Regional program coordinators negotiate contracts, produce informational materials, supervise seasonal staff, and respond to the needs of hunters and landowners.

- Program materials such as signs, sign-in boxes, rosters, permission slips, maps, and tabloids, and personal services and benefits for program staff are funded through program operations budgets. Annually, approximately150,000 maps, 34,000 regional BMA tabloids, and over 25,000 BMA signs are printed and distributed.

- Included in this category are expenditures for *Access Public Lands* projects (public land access) and Special Access projects (local projects focused on a specific species).

Enforcement (6 FTE):
A total of 6 full-time warden positions are funded through Hunting Access Enhancement Program sources. This 6 FTE is allocated statewide to game wardens who patrol BMAs for hunter compliance of landowner and FWP rules. Game wardens also assist with BMA contract negotiations, delivery of BMA materials, and landowner/FWP contacts.

Administrative Overhead
All FWP programs are assessed an administrative overhead charge, which is used to pay for various indirect costs associated with support functions primarily performed by staff in the Administration & Finance and Department Management divisions. Examples of such support functions include accounting, budgeting, property, personnel, administrative support, and data processing services. Administrative overhead charges are assessed on accounts based upon a percentage of overall expenditures.

Weed Management Payments: SB 326 (effective March 1, 2000) authorized FWP to offer up to 5% in additional incentive payments to Block Management Cooperators who agree to use those payments for specific weed management activities on their lands. For FY10, a total of $200,189 was paid specifically for use in weed management activities on BMAs. In past years, of landowners who elected to receive weed management payments:

34% indicated their intent to hire contractors for weed management measures;
86% indicated their intent to purchase herbicide or other chemicals;
6% indicated their intent to donate the payment to a county weed board;
3% indicated their intent to lease or rent livestock for weed control;
4% indicated their intent to implement some type of weed education;

*Some landowners indicated they intended to use the payment for multiple uses.

ENROLLMENT STATUS
Potential new cooperators are identified through various means, including individuals contacting FWP formally and asking to be placed on a waiting list for future enrollment consideration, individuals contacting FWP field staff and discussing possible future enrollment in the program, and FWP identifying potential candidates in high-priority areas or offering high-priority hunting opportunities and making initial contacts to identify potential interest in future enrollment. At the end of the 2011 hunting season, regional program coordinators reported 8 potential new cooperators could not be enrolled due to lack of funding.

BLOCK MANAGEMENT PROGRAM REPORT

- **PROGRAM STATISTICS**
- **PROGRAM EVALUATION**
- **PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION**

PROGRAMS FOR HUNTER MANAGEMENT AND HUNTER ACCESS

< The department may establish within the Block Management Program programs of landowner assistance that encourage public access to private and public lands for the purposes of hunting. **(87-1-265 through 87-1-269 MCA)**

< Participation is voluntary, based on agreements between the landowner and FWP.

< Recreational liability protection (as described in 70-1-201 MCA) is extended to cooperators participating in the program.

< A landowner participating in the program may receive benefits, including compensation up to $12,000 annually, for providing public hunting access to enrolled land.

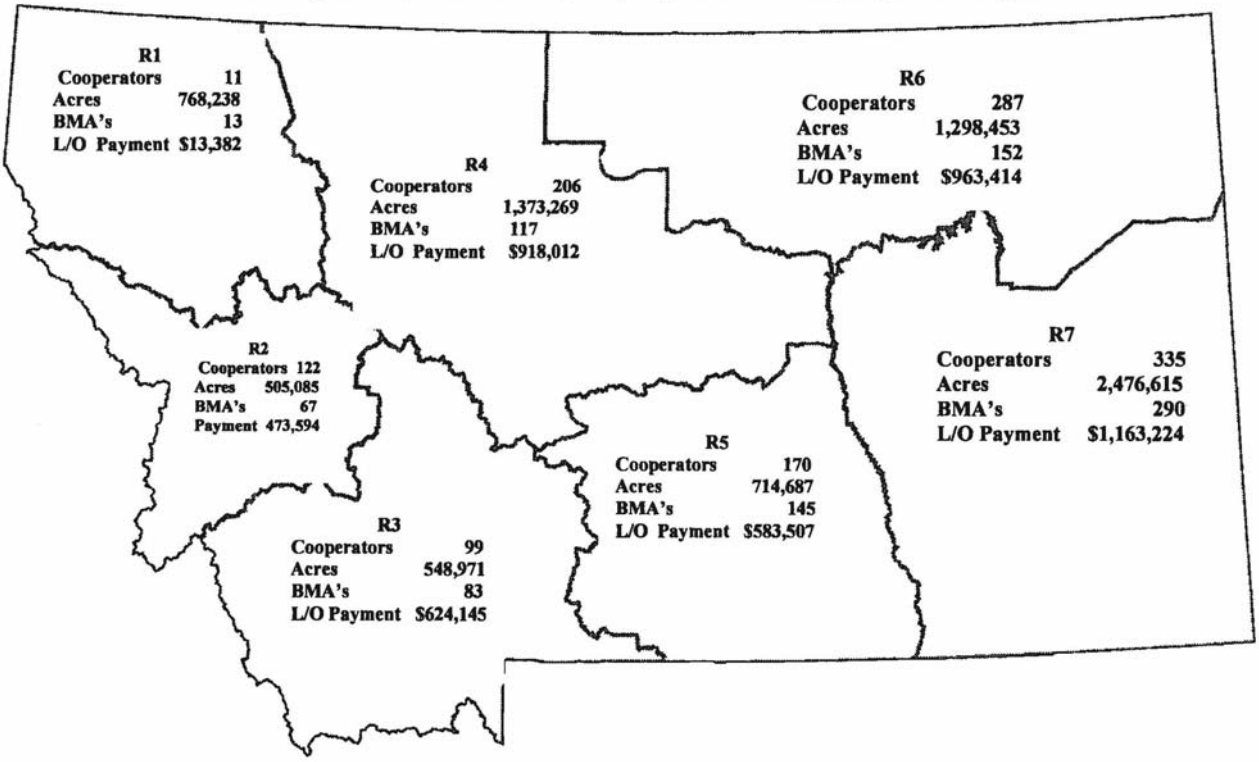
< Benefits will be provided to offset impacts associated with public hunting access including but not limited to general ranch maintenance, conservation efforts, weed control, fire protection, liability insurance, and road/parking-area maintenance.

< Enrolled resident and nonresident landowners may receive a non-transferable resident Sportsman's license or nonresident Big Game Combination license, as applicable.

< Licenses granted in this program will not affect the quota of 11,500 nonresident Big Game Combination License.

2012 BLOCK MANAGEMENT STATISTICS

1230 Cooperators 867 BMAs 7,685,318 Acres $4,739,276 L/O Payments



BLOCK MANAGEMENT SUMMARY – (2008 – 2012)

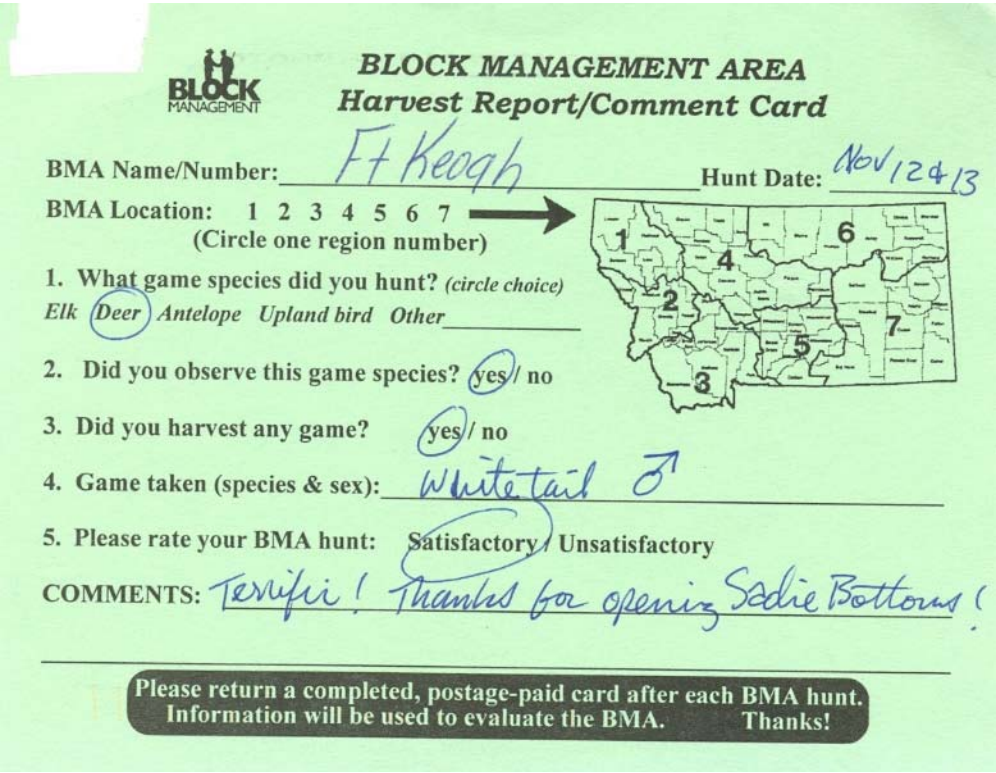
YEAR	TOTAL COOPERATORS	TOTAL BMAs	TOTAL ACRES	TOTAL HUNTER DAYS	TOTAL PAYMENTS TO LANDOWNERS
2008	1,256	924	8,449,162	455,473	$4,221,100
*2009	1,260	928	8,776,560	471,024	$4,732,869
*2010	1,287	931	8,457,624	486,225	$4,935,603
2011	1,288	919	8,166,055	437,088	$4,916,595
2012	1,230	867	7,685,318	Not yet Available	$4,739,276

NOTE: The 2011 Block Management Report contained errors in the acreage reported for the years 2009 and 2010. These errors occurred due to confusion associated with a major transfer of landownership in FWP Region 2, called the Montana Legacy Project, that involved Plum Creek Timber and Land Company transferring ownership of 310,000 acres to The Nature Conservancy(TNC), and much of that land subsequently transferring from TNC to federal, state, and private ownership. Over 240,000 acres of this land was enrolled in Block Management, and reporting errors resulted from redundantly reporting the same acreage under multiple ownerships, relying on interim and incomplete reports for source data, and trying to manage data during a database enhancement effort that spanned multiple years. The correct acreage figures are now reflected in the table above. *NOTE: There were, and are, no contract dollars paid for either the Plum Creek enrolled acres or the TNC MT Legacy enrolled acres. The errors that occurred were simply errors in reporting total acres enrolled in the program for those two years.*

2011 Season
Hunter Comment Cards/Daily Sign-In Coupons

A total of <u>16,122</u> hunter comment cards were received for the 2011 hunting season. These cards were voluntarily returned, and answered 3 specific questions.

<u>COMMENT CARD SAMPLE</u>



BLOCK MANAGEMENT

BLOCK MANAGEMENT AREA
Harvest Report/Comment Card

BMA Name/Number: Ft Keogh Hunt Date: Nov 12 & 13

BMA Location: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
(Circle one region number)

1. What game species did you hunt? *(circle choice)*
*Elk Deer Antelope Upland bird Other*_____

2. Did you observe this game species? yes / no

3. Did you harvest any game? yes / no

4. Game taken (species & sex): White tail ♂

5. Please rate your BMA hunt: Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory

COMMENTS: Terrific! Thanks for opening Sadie Bottoms!

Please return a completed, postage-paid card after each BMA hunt.
Information will be used to evaluate the BMA. Thanks!

<u>SUMMARY OF RESULTS</u>

Total received: 16,122

Total hunters observing game they were hunting:	**10,981**	**68%**
Total hunters who bagged game:	**3,768**	**23%**
Total hunters who rated BMA experience satisfactory:	**12,700**	**79%**

NOTE: These cards are used to evaluate individual BMAs, monitor regional, area, and program trends, and measure general hunter satisfaction with their BMA experience. Hunter comment card information is also incorporated into daily sign-in coupons used extensively in FWP regions 4, 5, and 6, at Type I BMAs where hunters administered their own permission.

Summary of Research

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Block Management Landowner & Hunter Evaluations from the 2009 Montana Hunting Season

HD Unit Research Summary No. 31

Michael S. Lewis and Alan Charles

June 2010

Administered by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP), Montana's Block Management Program was established in 1985 with three main goals:

1. To maintain public hunting access to private and isolated public land.
2. To help landowners manage public hunting on lands under their control, and provide benefits to offset the impacts of those public hunting activities.
3. To help FWP accomplish its mission of managing wildlife resources. In a state where nearly 65 percent of the land is privately owned, FWP depends on public hunting to manage populations of deer, elk, and other game animals.

A total of 1,274 landowners were enrolled in the program in 2009, comprising more than nine million acres of Block Management Areas (BMAs) across the state. Approximately 85,000 people hunted a BMA in 2009 (which resulted in more than 460,000 hunter days on all BMAs combined).

To measure the success of the program, FWP periodically conducts landowner and hunter evaluations. Two separate surveys were conducted following the 2009 Montana hunting season:

- **Landowner Evaluation.** All landowners enrolled in the program in 2009 were sent a survey by mail.
- **Hunter Evaluation.** A randomly selected sample of 761 people who hunted on a BMA(s) in 2009 were sent a survey by mail.

These two surveys were nearly identical replications of similar surveys conducted following the 2003 and 1996 Montana hunting seasons (Charles & Lewis, 2004; Charles, 1997). Hence, for the most part, results obtained from the 2009 surveys are directly comparable to 2003 and 1996 survey results.

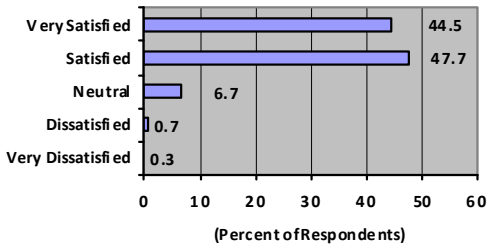
Overall, there was an excellent response to both 2009 surveys. A 66 percent response rate was achieved from the landowner survey. A 60 percent response was achieved from the hunter survey. These response rates are considered to be very high for mailback surveys of this type.

This research summary highlights the key findings from both the 2009 landowner and hunter evaluation surveys. Wherever possible, survey results obtained in 2009 are compared to those results obtained in 2003 and 1996.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2009 LANDOWNER EVALUATION

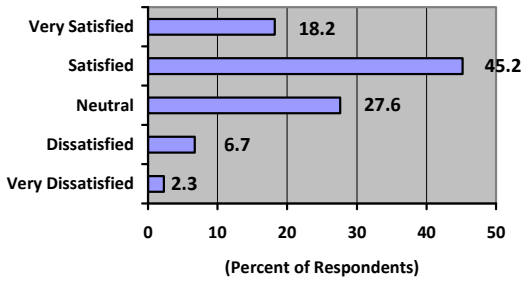
When asked how satisfied they were with the overall Block Management Program, 92 percent of the landowners who responded to the survey indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied (see Figure 1 below). This compares to 93 percent in 2003, and 80 percent in 1996.

Figure 1. Response to: "*How satisfied are you with the overall Block Management Program?*" (2009 Landowner Evaluation)



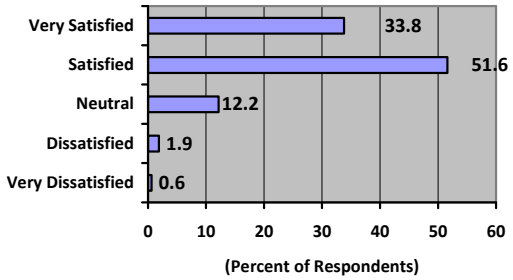
Most of the landowners (78 percent) reported the Block Management Program is an important or very important way for them to manage game numbers on their BMA(s). Related to this, 63 percent of the respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the results of the program in terms of managing game numbers on their BMA(s) in 2009 (see Figure 2 on the next page). This compares to 63 percent in 2003, and 60 percent in 1996.

Figure 2. Response to: *"How satisfied were you with the results of the Block Management Program in managing game numbers on your BMA(s)?"* (2009 Landowner Evaluation)



Almost all of the landowners (92 percent) indicated that the Block Management Program is an important or very important way for them to manage hunter activities. Related to this, 85 percent of the respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the results of the program in terms of managing hunter activities on their BMA(s) in 2009 (see Figure 3 below), and 79 percent were satisfied with the number of hunters who hunted on their BMA(s). Furthermore, 89 percent rated hunter behavior on their BMA(s) as being good or very good in 2009. In 2003 and 1996, 90 percent and 77 percent of the respondents respectively were satisfied or very satisfied with the program in terms of managing hunter activities.

Figure 3. Response to: *"How satisfied were you with the results of the Block Management Program in terms of managing hunter activities?"* (2009 Landowner Evaluation)



Of note, 80 percent of the landowners who completed and returned a survey for the 2009 season reported that they believe hunter behavior has improved or greatly improved as a result of the Block Management Program. This compares to 81 percent in 2003, and 76 percent in 1996.

Also, 65 percent of the landowners reported that their relationship with hunters has improved or greatly improved as a result of participating in the program. This compares to 64 percent in 2003, and 61 percent in 1996. Less than two percent of the landowners in 2009 reported that their relationship with hunters has deteriorated or greatly deteriorated as a result of the Block Management Program.

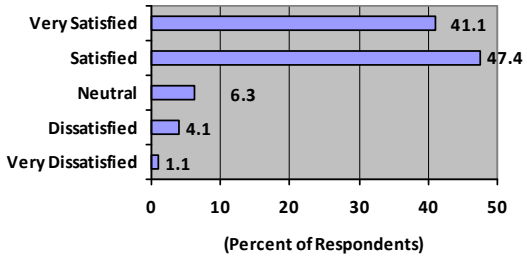
In terms of the compensation they received for enrolling in the program, 79 percent of the landowners responding to the survey reported they were satisfied or very satisfied with the total compensation they received for the 2009 hunting season. Less than nine percent were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. In 2003 and 1996, 79 percent and 75 percent of the respondents respectively were satisfied or very satisfied with their total compensation.

Of the landowners enrolled in 2009 who expressed an opinion, 99 percent said they plan on continuing their participation in the Block Management Program for the 2010 hunting season.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2009 HUNTER EVALUATION

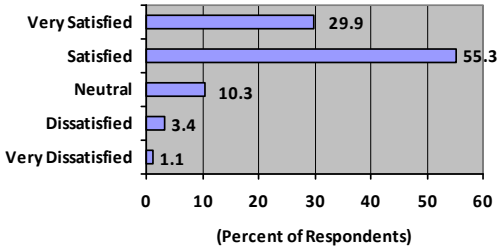
When asked how satisfied they were with the Block Management Program this past fall (2009), 89 percent of the hunters who responded to the survey reported they were satisfied or very satisfied (see Figure 4 below).

Figure 4. Response to: *"Overall, how satisfied were you with the Block Management Program this past fall?"* (2009 Hunter Evaluation)



Furthermore, 85 percent of the hunters reported they were satisfied or very satisfied with the hunting opportunities provided by the Block Management Program in 2009 (see Figure 5 on the following page). This compared to 86 percent in 2003, and 76 percent in 1996.

Figure 5. Response to: *"Overall, how satisfied were you with the hunting opportunities provided by the Block Management Program in 2009?"* (2009 Hunter Evaluation)



Of the hunters who responded to the survey in 2009, 83 percent reported they believe that the Block Management Program has improved or greatly improved landowner-hunter relations. Less than three percent believe that landowner-hunter relationships have been harmed or greatly harmed by the program. In 2003 and 1996, 84 percent and 70 percent of hunters respectively reported they believe the program has improved or greatly improved the relationship between hunters and landowners.

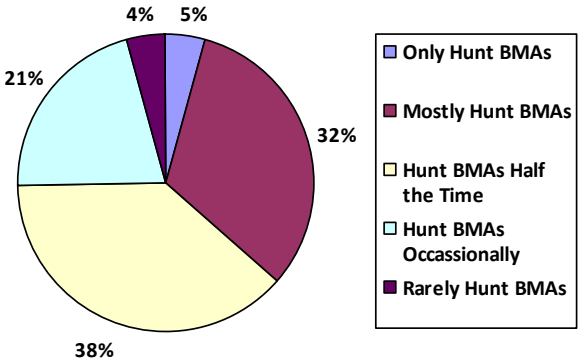
Related to hunting opportunities…

- Fifty (50) percent of the hunters who responded to the survey found game animals on BMAs hunted present in numbers meeting or exceeding their expectations in 2009.
- Sixty (60) percent were successful in harvesting game on a BMA(s) in 2009.
- Eighty-eight (88) percent were satisfied or very satisfied with the rules on BMAs hunted in 2009.
- Sixty-four (64) percent were satisfied or very satisfied with the number of other hunters encountered on BMAs hunted in 2009.

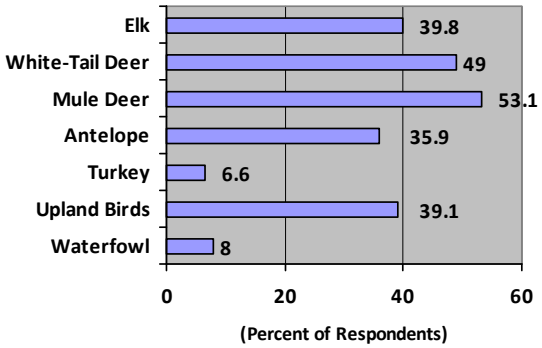
Hunter profile information (2009 season)…

- The average hunter spent nearly 10 days hunting BMAs.
- The average hunter hunted on four to five different BMAs.

Time spent hunting BMAs…



Game Hunted on BMAs…



Discussion

The Block Management Program is designed to balance the needs of landowners, hunters, and FWP. Landowners receive assistance in managing public hunting activities and benefits to offset the impacts of allowing public hunting. Hunters receive opportunities to hunt on enrolled lands, offered either on a first-come, first-serve basis or through some other means of allocated use. FWP is able to utilize the program as a tool to help achieve wildlife management goals and objectives.

In 1995, the Block Management Program was enhanced through additional funding and authority, allowing it to grow substantially over the next fifteen years. During this time, FWP staff has explored various ways to implement the program locally to accommodate differences in regional wildlife management needs and hunter use activities.

Results of the 2010 Block Management landowner and hunter evaluations, as well as past evaluations, suggest that the program has been a success both from the perspective of landowners enrolled in the program and hunters hunting on BMAs. FWP staff has been able to use the program to effectively manage big game populations, provide diverse public hunting opportunities, and develop effective relationships among landowners, hunters, and FWP.

References

Charles, Alan and Michael S. Lewis. 2004. *Block Management Landowner and Hunter Evaluations: Survey Highlights from 2003 and Comparisons to 1996 Surveys.* Responsive Management Unit Research Summary No. 13. Helena, MT: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks.

Charles, Alan. 1997. *Summary of the 1996 Landowner & Hunter Evaluations.* Helena, MT: Montana, Fish, Wildlife & Parks.

About the Authors

Michael S. Lewis, Human Dimensions Unit Supervisor. Human Dimensions Unit of FWP, Helena, Montana.

Alan Charles, Coordinator, Landowner/Sportsman Relations. Wildlife Bureau, FWP, Helena, Montana.

To obtain copies of this summary

Contact the Human Dimensions Unit of FWP by phone (406) 444-4758 or visit FWP's website at http://fwp.mt.gov (and click on the following links…"Doing Business", "Reference Information", "Surveys", Social & Economic Surveys").

BLOCK MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
Mission, Goals, Enrollment Criteria & Process

Mission Statement

Block Management is a cooperative, adaptable program designed to maintain Montana's hunting heritage and traditions by providing landowners with tangible benefits to encourage public hunting access to private land, promote partnerships between landowners, hunters, and FWP, and help manage wildlife resources and the impacts of public hunting.

Goals

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT
1) Program supports state & regional wildlife program objectives.
2) Program supports other FWP wildlife programs.

HUNTER OPPORTUNITY
1) Program maintains current opportunities and expands new opportunities.
2) Hunter pressure is managed at levels satisfactory to landowners and hunters.

LANDOWNER RELATIONS
1) Program recognizes landowner contributions to maintaining wildlife resource.
2) Program establishes long-term positive relationships with hunters/landowners/FWP.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACCOUNTABILITY
1) Program is fiscally responsible and accountable.
2) Program maintains a measurable, acceptable level of satisfaction among participants.
3) Ongoing structured program review maintains program adaptability.

PARTICIPANT EDUCATION/OWNERSHIP
1) Program fosters ownership among program participants.
2) Program fosters responsible hunter behavior.
3) Program increases hunter respect for private property and landowner concerns.

Regional Block Management Program Enrollment Process

1) Existing cooperators in each region will be evaluated through criteria and a process that:
    a) Identifies them as ineligible for re-enrollment;
    b) Identifies them as eligible for re-evaluation and equal consideration with new enrollment and other re-evaluated re-enrollment candidates;
    c) Identifies them as eligible for automatic re-enrollment;

2) The regional block management coordinator shall use a BMA Property RE-ENROLLMENT WORKSHEET to circulate a list of cooperators who were enrolled during the previous year to the appropriate field warden and field biologist for input. If applicable staff, including the program coordinator, agree that a cooperator should be automatically enrolled, no further action is required beyond having the regional coordinator maintain copies of the completed Automatic RE-ENROLLMENT Review Report in the current file for documentation of the re-enrollment decision.

3) Each Regional Supervisor will appoint a committee (which includes, at a minimum, the regional block management coordinator and at least one member each from the Wildlife and Enforcement divisions) to make annual Block Management Program regional enrollment and re-enrollment (if not identified for automatic re-enrollment) recommendations, which the Regional Supervisor will ultimately approve or disapprove in writing.

4) All new enrollment and re-evaluated re-enrollment candidates will be evaluated and ranked through a process which utilizes the ENROLLMENT Evaluation Form and BMA Property Application Form to document criteria and related information.

5) The Regional Block Management Enrollment Committee shall evaluate all previous BMA properties designated for "re-evaluation and ranking with new properties" and any new properties offered for enrollment utilizing these forms:
    - BMA Property RE-ENROLLMENT Worksheets
    - BMA Property ENROLLMENT Application Forms
    - BMA Property ENROLLMENT Evaluation Forms
    - ENROLLMENT Decision Report

6) All evaluations will be recorded on the appropriate form, including the names of FWP staff who provided input relevant to the evaluation and recommendations. Completed Decision Reports will be approved and signed by the Regional Supervisor. Original copies of signed forms and related materials will be maintained by the regional Block Management Coordinator, with copies of the signed ENROLLMENT Decision Reports sent to the Field Services office in Helena, care of the Coordinator of Landowner/Sportsman Relations.

Region _____ BMA Property

ENROLLMENT Evaluation Form

Instructions*: This form is to be used to evaluate all new properties offered for enrollment AND any existing BMA properties which have been designated for re-evaluation and ranking with new enrollment candidates. Scores and comments developed in completion of this form will be used by the Regional Block Management Enrollment Committee to determine which properties will be enrolled, and in what order of priority.*

Landowner Name: _____BMA acreage (private & isolated public)_____

BMA/Ranch Name: _____General Location: _____

1. Is this new property offered for enrollment _____ (OR) existing BMA property being re-evaluated _____?

2. What is/are the PRIMARY hunting opportunity(ies) available on this property:

   ELK M/WTDEER ANT UGBD PHST TRKY WTRFWL BEAR OTHER:_____

Criteria to be considered is making enrollment decisions	**Low Med High**
What is the level of public demand in the hunting district or general area for the type of hunter opportunity offered with this property? *Explain:*	1 2 3
What is the level of FWP need for the type of hunter opportunity offered with this property, as it relates to regional management objectives or regional access strategies? *Explain:*	1 2 3
How does this property rank in terms of size, land composition, and habitat type/quality necessary to provide the primary hunter opportunity offered with this property? *Explain:*	1 2 3
What is the potential for high levels of hunter satisfaction, based on opportunity offered, proposed levels of hunter use, and proposed methods of hunter management? *Explain:*	1 2 3
Additive Criteria	**NO YES**
Can enrollment of this property potentially address an existing game damage problem? *Explain:*	0 1
Will enrollment provide access to adjacent public land with limited/no public access? *Explain:*	0 1
Will enrollment provide access to private land previously closed to free public access? *Explain:*	0 1
Will enrollment of this property add acreage to an existing BMA? *Explain:*	0 1
Will enrollment provide some kind of special opportunity that is in high demand? *Explain:*	0 1
Will property be enrolled without any restriction on season length or sex/species of game? *Explain:*	0 1
TOTAL SCORE	

1. Where does this property rank in terms of enrollment priority? Low Med High

2. Based on regional budget and enrollment process, is this property assigned a sequential number (optional) to identify where, in order of priority, it ranks? Yes / No #_____

ROAD
CLOSED

ACCESS PUBLIC LANDS REPORT

Program Title:
Access Public Lands (formerly called Access Montana)

Program Coordinator:
Alan Charles

Program Authorizing Statute:
MCA 87-1-265 Hunter management and hunting access enhancement program created. The department may establish…programs of landowner assistance that encourage public access to private and public lands for purposes of hunting and may adopt rules to carry out program purposes.

Program Funding:
Source: Portion of revenue funding the Hunting Access Enhancement Program and Come Home to Hunt license fee (*new in 2010 (FY11) – expires March 1, 2014)*

Program Mission: *Access Public Lands* coordinates FWP agency activities related to hunting access on public lands. The program works to negotiate and maintain legal public hunting access to public lands, resolve landowner/sportsman conflicts, assist in marking public land boundaries, and disseminate information about hunting access on public lands. *Access Public Lands* utilizes a cooperative inter-agency approach for the resolution of landowner/sportsman conflicts related to hunting access on public lands.

Program Goals:
- Coordinate efforts to identify public lands where public hunting access currently exists.
- Coordinate efforts to identify public lands hunting access needs and, where necessary, establish legal public hunting access to public lands either where such access does not currently exist or where current access is threatened.
- Reduce landowner/sportsman conflicts related to hunting access on public lands.

Program Objectives:
- Work with regional staff and state and federal land managers to implement boundary marking projects in targeted areas to reduce conflicts and improve hunter dispersion.
- Solicit input from landowners, sportsman, and department staff to identify areas of historic conflict and develop appropriate solutions wherever possible.
- Develop and disseminate directories, maps, and informational brochures to assist the public with information about hunting access to public lands.
- Identify/prioritize areas where public land hunting access is needed, but either not available or threatened.
- Participate in state and federal land management agency planning and decision-making processes that affect public land access.
- Work to develop partnerships with local and regional state and federal land management agency personnel responsible for implementing public land access projects.

PROJECTS COMPLETED OR IN-PROGRESS

- North Hills Access Project (Helena) – Joint FWP / BLM easement and road development. Development of alternative route that provides access to southern end of Sieben BMA, BLM and DNRC lands. Route will provide year-round access to public lands – Completed – Estimated Total Project Cost: $40,000 – FWP cost share: $16,500.

- Quartz Creek Access to Helena National Forest (Clancy) – Long-term agreement whereby FWP provided two cattle guards in exchange for a 5-year agreement to provide access to the Helena National Forest – Completed – Total Project Cost: $2,300.

- Hay Draw Recreational Access Corridor (Broadus) – Joint FWP/BLM project provided drive in access across DNRC land to access multiple sections of BLM lands. Project involves development of an access road, parking areas, marking of approximately 30 miles of perimeter boundary lines, and agreement to provide patrolling through the hunting season - – Completed –Total project cost: $41,000 – Estimated FWP cost share: $20,500.

- Private Land Ownership Maps – Joint FWP/NRIS project to produce accurate, updated electronic map information, using USGS 100,000 quad map series, that identifies ownership of private land throughout the state – Completed – Total Cost to FWP: $0, other than staff time.

- Smith 6-S Ranch Access in the East Pioneer Range – project provided for a 1+ mile long access corridor road across private land to USFS land, with perpetual public access easement purchased by FWP and new road built to reduce damage to riparian caused by location of previous road. Project was a joint effort between private landowner, USFS, BLM, DNRC, local sportsman's groups, and FWP. Completed. Total project cost: $70,000.

- Larb Hills Public Cooperative Access Project (R6) – Joint efforts between FWP and BLM to install boundary signs on more than 4,000 acres of BLM land in Phillips County. Established two parking areas with information kiosks, and installed metal posts/signs along boundary. Completed. Total project cost: $4,500

- Three Buttes Cooperative Access Project (R6) – Cooperative signing effort between BLM, DNRC, private landowners, and FWP to install BLM and DNRC boundary signs and one information kiosk on more than 4,000 acres of BLM and DNRC land located 16 miles south of Culbertson along the Missouri River (Richland County). Completed. Total project cost: $4,500

- In 2010, four public access right-of-way projects were given tentative approval by FWP Commission, resulting in appraisals being contracted for a total cost of $23,000.

- In 2011, FWP purchased an easement on ½ mile of road that leads to the Haymaker wildlife management area, thus securing legal public access to the WMA and to adjacent USFS land, for a total cost of $50,000.

- In 2012, the Stacey Creek right-of-way easement was secured, granting permanent public access across .5 miles of formerly-private road to thousands of acres of USFS land in the Custer National Forest in southeast Montana; FWP cost: $20,000.

SPECIAL ACCESS PROJECTS REPORT

Program Title:
Special Access Projects

Program Coordinator:
Alan Charles

Program Authorizing Statute:
87-1-265 MCA. Hunter management and hunting access enhancement program created.
(1) The department may establish…programs of landowner assistance that encourage public access to private and public lands for purposes of hunting…
(3) The department may also develop similar efforts outside the scope of the block management program that are designed to promote public access to private lands for hunting purposes."

Program Funding:
Source: Portions of license fees funding for the Hunting Access Enhancement Program

Program Mission:
The department may initiate Special Access Projects that address species-specific, regional needs that may not lend themselves to involvement either in Block Management or Access Montana. Special Access Projects may also be used to develop pilot projects to address species-specific, regional hunting access issues.

Program Goals:
- Address localized, species-specific hunting access needs in innovative ways;
- Explore new methods for developing hunting access/hunter management agreements;
- Develop pilot projects that may lead to future enrollment in conventional programs;
- Involve localized communities of landowners, hunters, and FWP staff in projects;

Program Objectives:
- Provide regional staff with enough flexibility to develop local projects that can address regional species-specific hunter management/hunter opportunity needs;
- Utilize available funding to develop pilot projects that will aid in the future development and structure of the Hunting Access Enhancement Program;
- Utilize Special Access Projects to meet needs that cannot otherwise be met through existing administrative frameworks of the Block Management and Access Montana programs;
- Develop a wide array of hunting access options from which landowners, hunters, and FWP can choose when developing hunting access agreements or selecting hunting access opportunities;

PROJECTS COMPLETED OR IN-PROGRESS

- Northeast Montana (Glasgow) – Individual hired under personal services contract, assigned duties to provide area landowners with information about FWP hunting access programs and discuss potential hunting access agreements focused on upland bird hunting opportunities - Completed - Project Cost: $4,800.

- Southwest Montana (Madison Valley) – Elk Hunt Coordinator hired to assist hunters and landowners in the southern portion of the Madison Valley by coordinating public elk hunting activities – Completed - Project Cost: $3,000/annually.

- Central Montana (Bear Paw Mountains – Big Sandy) – Elk Hunt Coordinator hired to assist hunters and landowners in the Bear Paw Mountains area by coordinating public elk hunting activities – Completed - Project Cost: $5,000/annually.

- North Central Montana (Sweet Grass Hills – Shelby) – Elk Hunt Coordinator hired to assist hunters and landowners in the Sweet Grass Hills area by coordinating public elk hunting activities – Completed - Total Project Cost: $3,500/annually.

- West Central Montana (Helena) – Elkhorn Working Group formed to study issues related to management of elk in the Elkhorn Mountains and make recommendations to the department regarding their efforts - Completed. Project Cost: $4,500.

- Southwest Montana (Madison Valley) – Madison Valley Working Group formed to study issues related to management of elk in the Madison Valley, along with other wildlife and habitat management issues in that area – ongoing – Project Cost: $4,000.

- West Central Montana (White Sulphur Springs) – Elk Hunt Coordinator hired to assist hunters and landowners in the East Big Belts area during late season hunt by coordinating public elk hunting activities – Completed – Project Cost: $5,171.

- Eastern Montana (Miles City) – Hunters Against Weeds Car Wash – FWP/Custer Rod & Gun Club joint project offering a free car wash and decal to hunters who produced a valid hunting license during a three-day period including opening day of antelope season – Completed – Project Cost: $2,419.

- Western Montana (Avon/Ovando) – Elk Hunt Coordinator hired to assist hunters and landowners in this area during late season hunt by coordinating public elk hunting activities – ongoing – Project cost: $3,500.

FISHING ACCESS ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

Program Name
Private Land Fishing Access

Program Manager:
Allan Kuser, Fishing Access Program Coordinator

Program Authorizing Statute:
This program was introduced as HB 292 and titled "Fishing Access Enhancement Program". The statutory reference is **87-1-285, 87-1-286, MCA**.

Program Funding
Funding is $25,000 a biennium from the general license account.

Program Status:
The program is in its ninth year of funding.

Program Synopsis

The purpose of the program as stated in HB292 is "to provide incentives to landowners who provide access to or across private land for public fishing." House Bill 292 was enacted by the 2001 Legislature on a trial basis with the intention of augmenting the existing FAS acquisition program. The sole purpose of this program is to give practical, tangible assistance to those landowners who allow the public access across their lands in order to fish streams or lakes that otherwise are not accessible.

The PLFA Program differs from the FAS Program in three ways:

1. The funding is specifically earmarked for use on private land.
2. It is not a capital program through which FWP develops facilities on private land, i.e. boat ramps, dam repairs, stream bank stabilization, etc. Compensation provided to the landowner can be used for these things at his or her discretion.
3. It is a stand-alone program that does not incorporate the Lands Section in negotiating deals, the D&C Bureau to design and engineer projects, or the Parks Division to maintain the sites.

Program Goals
The goal of the program is to open up private lands to angler access. Essentially any project that accomplishes that goal is acceptable. Examples of acceptable projects include but aren't limited to the following:

- Providing anglers a parking area and access to a stream or water body on private land.
- Obtaining access through private land to get to a stream or lake that's not otherwise accessible.
- Obtaining access along a stream corridor above the ordinary high water mark.

FY2011

PRIVATE LAND FISHING ACCESS PROJECTS

Program Funding
2011 Allocation $25,000
2011 Expenditure $17,900 (as of April 26, 2011)

1) Spring Creek Community Center
The Spring Creek Community Center is located on the Stillwater River approximately 6 miles upstream of Absarokee. The county road leading to the bridge is narrow and ranchers were often blocked from crossing the bridge with farm machinery due to cars left by anglers accessing the river at the bridge. Warden Jeff Scott worked with the community to allow anglers to use the Community Center parking lot and put up signage directing anglers to the Center. As a result vandalism and litter has been on the increase at the Community Center. Funding will be used to cover additional expenses being incurred.

The Spring Creek Community Center is a private nonpolitical association that is not connected with a local governing body. A volunteer board is responsible for directing activities and use of the facilities. Ownership of the building and management of the property is assumed by members of the community at large. The property on which the building and parking lot is constructed is privately owned.
Contract Date: The Agreement is on a year-to-year basis.
Contract Terms: Compensation is $1,200 annually

2) Dry Cottonwood Ranch LLC
The Dry Cottonwood Ranch is located in Deer Lodge County just east of the community of Racetrack on the Upper Clark Fork River. Through this Agreement angler access is being enhanced at both the Galen and Racetrack bridges. Improvements include both pedestrian and boat access facilities.
Contract Date: The Agreement is for one year expiring on July 31, 2011, although access is perpetual.
Contract Terms: Compensation is $4,800 ($4,200 was material costs).

3) Martin and Buzz Flanagan/aka Flanagan Livestock-Farms
This project is located on the outskirts of Big Timber, MT, within Sweet Grass County. The landowners have agreed to allow unfettered public access in exchange for FWP fish stocking the privately owned reservoir.
Contract Date: The Agreement is for one year terminating on July 10, 2011.
Contract Terms: Public access is being provided in exchange for stocking the reservoir with fish in place of a monetary compensation.

4) S Bar B Ranch aka Jack Davies
Grasshopper Reservoir is located approximately 12 miles south of Chinook. The landowner has allowed public access to this reservoir for over 30 years. Grasshopper is

approximately 23 surface acres and is stocked annually with 2,500 rainbow trout and alternate year fall plants of 3,000 rainbow trout. The reservoir is estimated to receive 400-500 annual angler days. Funding provided by this program will be used to restore and improve the access road. Road work will be contracted to Moxely Construction out of Chinook.
Contract Date: The Agreement is for 5 years terminating on December 31, 2016
Contract Terms: Compensation is $7,800 ($1,560 annually) for the 5-year term.

5) Doug Gamma
Mr. Gamma owns property on Ashley Lake west of Kalispell. Mr. Gamma's family has historically allowed public access for ice fishing though his property but lately parking and litter problems are creating a nuisance for the family. Funding provided through this program will assist Mr. Gamma in providing a porta potty, signing, and improve the parking area for anglers using his property.
Contract Date: The Agreement expires with "ice out" in the spring of 2011.
Contract Terms: Compensation is $1,100 for 1 year.

6) Henry Gordon & Trisha Gordon Gruzzie
North and South Polly reservoirs and located approximately 15 miles north of Zurich (which is about 10 miles east of Chinook on Hwy 2). Historically, North Polly has been stocked with black crappie and rainbow trout while south Polly has been stocked with just rainbows. Both reservoirs were historically used by a private angling group from Chinook. However, this group no longer uses the reservoirs and the land owner is opening it up to public use. Compensation paid to the landowner will be used to improve the access road leading to the reservoirs.
Contract Date: The contract is for 5 years terminating on June 30, 2016.
Contract Terms: Compensation for both reservoirs is a total of $3,000 for 5 years.

FY 2012

PRIVATE LAND FISHING ACCESS PROJECTS

Program Funding

2012 Allocation	$25,000
FAS Operations	$19,420
2012 Expenditure	$44,420

1. Tuning Fork Ranch

This property is located in Granite County well up into the Flint Creek Drainage. The Tuning Fork Ranch is a large private ranch which is partially bisected by a gravel road that is accessible to the public. This project provides for signage providing notification to the public that the landowner is allowing public access for fishing as well as fence passages that are designed to allow pedestrian access to the creek but preclude livestock passage.

Contract Date: The Agreement expires on June 30, 2014.
Contract Term: The negotiated fee was $1,200 for a three year period.

2. Dixon Scott / Borgstrom Reservoir

Borgstrom Pond is located in Cascade County approximately 12 miles south of Great Falls off of the West Eden Road (Hwy 266). Access to the pond is gained from the landowner's driveway which passes adjacent to his residence. The landowner requires notification prior to access. The phone numbers provided for notification are 736-5446 or 781-9035. Compensation provided through this Agreement was used to purchase materials for signage and to install parking area fencing. No other compensation was desired by the landowner.

Contract Date: The Agreement expires July 15, 2016.
Contract Term: The negotiated fee was $620 for 5 years.

3. Gertrude H. Weaver Family Limited Partnership

Public access is granted through this Cooperative Agreement to Lake Blaine situated approximately 6 miles east of Kalispell. Access is gained from the Yeoman Hall Road. Lake Blaine is a popular local fishery without public access. The Weaver family allows the public to launch boats from their lakeside property. Currently the public is parking along the shoulder of Yeoman Hall Road. FWP has met with the Flathead County Public Road Supervisor on-site to discuss the counties concerns with parking and a potential partnership to improve public access and parking. In order to develop a long term solution Fish, Wildlife & Parks is working with the Weaver family to acquire a small parcel of land for an FAS. If successful, FWP would then develop off road parking and improve the boat ramp.

Contract Date: The Agreement expires on July 8, 2012.
Contract Term: The negotiated fee was $1,000 for 1 year.

4. Bernie Nowak

Mr. Nowak's property is located in the upper Rock Creek drainage adjacent to State Highway 348 north of Phillipsburg. Anglers have historically pulled off the paved roadway and parked on Mr. Nowak's property. The purpose of this Agreement is to provide indemnification for Mr. Nowak. In addition the Regional fisheries staff has provided assistance in defining a small parking area, fencing and signs directing the public where to park.

Contract Date: The Agreement expires on August 15, 2016.
Contract Term: The negotiated fee was $500 for 5 years ($100 annually).

5. Doug Gamma

Mr. Gamma owns property on Ashley Lake west of Kalispell. Mr. Gamma's family has historically allowed public access for ice fishing though his property but lately parking and litter problems are creating a nuisance for the family. Funding provided through this program has assisted Mr. Gamma in providing a porta potty for ice fisherman, signing, and making improvements to the parking area for anglers using his property. He also polices the area for trash. This is the seventh year of this annual agreement.

Contract Date: The Agreement expires with "ice out" in the spring of 2012.
Contract Terms: Compensation is $1,100 for 1 year.

1) Sterling Ranch (R4)

The Sterling Ranch is located along the Missouri River between Helena and Great Falls. The river reach encompasses over 12 miles of the Missouri River beginning at Holter Dam to downstream below Craig. In the 2001-2002-angler survey conducted by FWP, the river reach from Holter Dam to Cascade was the most heavily fished river in the state receiving 123,472 angler days on that part of the river. Access points are staggered sporadically throughout the length of the property. The landowner has historically allowed free public access but the amount of use has increased to the point that the ranch is forced to actively manage for the public use of their ranch property boarding the river. Additional management responsibilities associated with angler use include signing, fencing, installing cattle guards, installing pedestrian passes in the fences, litter control, weed control, etc. FWP has leased two separate parcels within this corridor for development into FWP managed fishing access sites known as Lone Tree FAS and Bull Pasture FAS. These two sites receive an extreme amount of public use that requires a higher level of development including parking areas and vault latrines.

Contract Date: The Agreement is for a 5-year period from July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2017.
Contract Terms: Compensation is $8,000 annually totaling $40,000 (5 years).

APPENDIX I

Hunter-Landowner Stewardship Project
Research Summary No. 35

Summary of Research

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Selected Results from a Participant Evaluation Survey Regarding the Montana Hunter-Landowner Stewardship Project

HD Unit Research Summary No. 35

Zoe King, Michael S. Lewis, and Alan Charles

October 2012

Abstract: *The Montana Hunter-Landowner Stewardship Project is a web-based information program available to anyone interested in promoting responsible hunter behavior and good hunter-landowner relations in Montana. To help review this program, FWP set up a five question evaluation that enables participants to provide program-related feedback and recommendations. Following a recent analysis of the responses to this evaluation, FWP confirmed that the program is providing helpful information regarding a number of important landowner and hunter issues. The program also appears to be helping to change the behavior of many participants. In particular, many of the hunters who have completed the program indicated they are now more aware of a variety of landowner concerns that are important to consider as part of hunting on privately owned land. Program participants also offered a diverse array of ideas regarding how the program could be further enhanced. FWP is carefully reviewing these recommendations as part of its continuing efforts to promote responsible hunting behavior and good hunter-landowner relations in Montana.*

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Established nearly two years ago, the Montana Hunter-Landowner Stewardship Project is an information program for anyone interested in promoting responsible hunter behavior and good hunter-landowner relations in Montana. The program is delivered through an interactive webpage found on the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) website. It is a voluntary program designed to be completed by participants at their own pace. Upon successful completion, participants are awarded a certification of completion and they can request a free cap and bumper sticker bearing the program logo from FWP.

The program was developed based on recommendations from two citizen's advisory councils, the Hunter Behavior Advisory Council and the Private Land/Public Wildlife Council, urging FWP to expand efforts to promote responsible hunter behavior and good hunter-landowner relations beyond Montana's basic hunter education program. In response, the agency convened a group of hunters and landowners to identify key issues relevant to the topic, and assist with development of information that might help effectively address those issues. Staff from FWP's Communication and Education Bureau, Landowner/Sportsman Relations Section, Technical Services Section, and Web Content Team worked together to develop and implement the program. Goals of the program include:

- **Promoting better understanding of the common ground and different perspectives held by landowners and hunters.**
- **Promoting better understanding among landowners and hunters about what constitutes acceptable hunter behavior.**
- **Providing landowners and hunters with information and ideas about how to develop and maintain good relationships.**
- **Providing information about the shared experience of landowners and hunters in various hunting situations.**

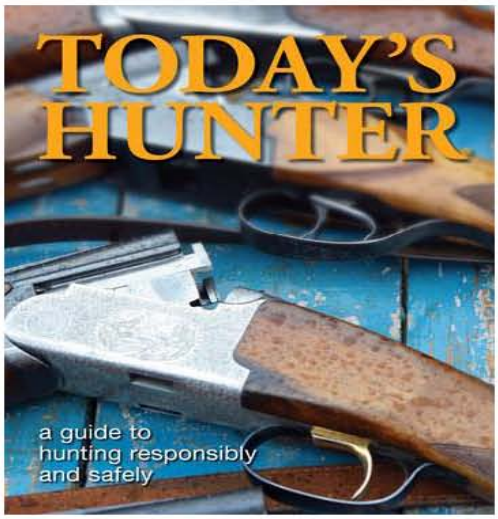
The webpage for the Hunter-Landowner Stewardship Project can be found at fwp.mt.gov (FWP's website). At the FWP homepage, click on these links in the following order: *"Hunting"*, *"Hunter Access"*, and *"Hunter-Landowner Stewardship Project"*.

ABOUT THE EVALUATION & RESULTS

To help review this unique program, FWP set up a five question online evaluation survey at the end of the program that enables participants to provide program-related feedback and input. The five questions in the evaluation survey are as follows:

1. In what way did participating in this program affect your view of responsible hunter behavior and/or hunter-landowners relations in Montana?
2. Are you considering doing anything different than you have in the past regarding responsible hunter behavior and/or hunter-landowner relations?
3. Would you recommend this program to anyone else and who would that be?
4. Do you have any suggestions for FWP on how the agency might improve this program?
5. Do you have any suggestions on what else could be done to promote responsible hunter behavior and good hunter-landowner relations in Montana?

This research summary provides selected results from this important program evaluation. The results presented in this summary are based upon input received from nearly 500 people who have voluntarily participated in this program since its inception in the fall of 2010. Approximately three-quarters of the evaluation surveys were completed by hunters. The remaining evaluations were primarily completed by those participants who identified themselves as being both a landowner and a hunter.



According to the participants who completed the evaluation, the program has positively affected their views of responsible hunter behavior and hunter-landowner relations in a number of different ways. The most frequently received comments included:

- *It reaffirmed much of what I already knew. The program reinforced my views of responsible hunting behavior.*
- *It provided valuable insight regarding a number of legitimate landowner concerns.*
- *It helped to me to better understand the issues faced by both landowners and hunters.*
- *It showed the different perspectives of hunters and landowners so they can work together.*
- *It was a useful reminder of hunting ethics and responsibility, and the need for hunters to build good relationships and be an asset to landowners.*
- *I learned a lot from the program*
- *Good idea. Good information. Good program.*

Program participants also reported they are doing many things differently now as a direct result of completing the program. The most frequently mentioned changes in behavior that were reported by participants included:

- *I now better communicate my intentions to landowners and try to understand their expectations and act accordingly.*
- *I am now more aware of a variety of landowner concerns that are important to consider as part of hunting on privately-owned land.*
- *I will now report possible violators to appropriate authorities.*
- *This helped me to know how to talk to and ask a landowner for hunting access.*
- *I am more aware of and stay current on rules, regulations, and hunter-landowner issues.*
- *I let landowners know how much I appreciate hunting on their lands.*
- *I remind others about responsible hunter behavior and the importance of hunter-landowner relations.*

A strong majority of the program participants indicated they would recommend the program to others including friends, family members, hunting partners, other hunters, and landowners. Many participants mentioned the importance of recommending the program to new hunters (including youths), nonresident hunters, and others who have little experience hunting in Montana.

When asked if they have any suggestions for how FWP might improve the program, program participants offered a diverse number of recommendations. Some recommendations addressed the content and delivery of information, while others suggested ways to enhance the program beyond existing content and format. FWP intends to carefully review these recommendations and incorporate those ideas most useful in helping to update and improve the program. The most frequently mentioned recommendations included the following, organized under three general headings:

(1) Program /Information

- *Make it mandatory for nonresidents to get a license.*
- *Make completion of this program mandatory to hunt on privately-owned land.*
- *Make it a part of the hunter education safety program.*
- *Require that all violators complete the program.*
- *Make it a book/CD and sell it. Offer the program to clubs, groups, etc.*

(2) Content/Design

- *The program is too long.*
- *The download time is too slow (e.g., many users couldn't get the videos to run fast enough).*
- *There is a need for a "save" button. There is no way for a person to stop, leave the program, and return to the site and begin again where they last left off.*
- *There is a need for more videos (e.g., regarding accidents, shooting too close to a hunting partner/vehicles/buildings, etc.).*

(3) About the Questions

- *Many of the questions were too easy.*
- *The easy questions are okay for beginners, but more questions are needed for advanced hunters.*
- *There is a need for less text and more focus on questions/videos.*

Last but not least, program participants offered many suggestions about what else could be done to promote responsible hunter behavior and good hunter-landowner relations in Montana. The most frequently received suggestions included:

- *This program is a good start. There is a need to continue efforts to better inform and educate both hunters and landowners. This will open the door for all sides (including landowners, hunters, and FWP) to work together.*
- *There is a need to better market and get the word out about this program.*
- *This program should be mandatory for all violators.*
- *Provide opportunities for hunters, landowners, and FWP staff to get together and meet face-to-face (e.g., community meetings, work days, social events, etc.).*

- *Sponsor hunter work days with FWP staff and landowners so hunters can demonstrate their appreciation and willingness to help address landowner concerns.*
- *There is a need to consider evaluating the program in terms of whether or not it is actually leading to better hunter-landowner relations and increased hunting access on privately-owned lands in Montana.*
- *Consider developing a list of landowners who would consider offering access to those hunters who have completed the program.*
- *Consider spotlighting those hunters and landowners who provide good examples of hunter behavior and hunter-landowner relations.*

DISCUSSION

Promoting responsible hunting behavior and good hunter-landowner relations in Montana is an important goal for FWP. The Montana Hunter-Landowner Stewardship Project is proving to be a valuable tool to aid FWP in this endeavor. Since its inception, nearly 3,000 people have completed part of the program, while over 1,160 hunters, landowners, and other citizens have successfully graduated and received lifetime program certification.

Results from the evaluation presented in this research summary will help FWP to improve and enhance this already successful program. In the future FWP intends to increase its efforts to publicize this unique program in the hopes that many more interested hunters and landowners will complete the program and benefit from the information offered through the project.

Hunter Landowner

STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

fwp.mt.gov

At the FWP website click on these links in the following order…
"*Hunting*", "*Hunter Access*", and "*Hunter-Landowner Stewardship Project*"

About the Authors

Michael S. Lewis, Human Dimensions Unit Supervisor. Human Dimensions Unit of FWP. Helena, Montana.

Zoe King, Human Dimensions Statistical Technician. Human Dimensions Unit of FWP. Helena, Montana.

Alan Charles, Coordinator, Landowner/Sportsman Relations. FWP Wildlife Bureau. Helena, Montana.

To obtain copies of this summary

Contact the Human Dimensions Unit of FWP by phone (406) 444-4758 or visit FWP's website at fwp.mt.gov (and click on these links in the following order…"Doing Business", "Reference Information", "Surveys", Social & Economic Surveys").