



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Region Three Citizen's Advisory Committee Best Western Gran Tree – Bozeman December 5, 2012

CAC Attendees: Mike Dailey, David Gibson, Cale Christiansen, LeRoy Mehring, Rick Arnold, William Mealer, Barb Cestero, Dan Crismore, Ken Sinay, Sam Samson, Tom Helm, Cyndy Andrus, Rick Grady

CAC Absent: Robin Cunningham, Katie Weaver, Joe Cohenour,

FWP Staff Present: Pat Flowers, Andrea Jones, Christine Marozick, Sam Sheppard, Travis Horton, Jerry Walker, Bob Harrington, Scott Opitz, Mike Vaughn

Guests:

Legislators: Scott Sales - SD 34, Kelly Flynn – HD 68, Ray Shaw - HD 71, Kerry White- HD 70, Alan Redfield – HD 51, Jeff Welborn - HD 72, Senator Ted Washburn - HD 69, Kathleen Williams – HD 65

Public: Ward Olson, Jim Bailey, Robb Gregmar, Tim Aldrich, Nick Gevock, Joe Maloney, Joe Gutkoski, Nancy Schultz, Katheryn QannaYahu, Bill O'Connell, Glenn Hockett, Mark Albreck, Steve Jennings, Robert Aronsen, Zack Waterman, Laura Lundquist

Greetings, Introductions, Roundtable – Pat Flowers

Bill Mealer: shared concerns regarding seropositive elk in Blacktail

Leroy Mehring: “bone to pick with FWP” regarding omitting sending SW Montana info and request for comment on land purchase of Milk River

Rick Arnold: TU

Cale Christiansen: farmer

Dave Gibson: retired

Mike Dailey: Watershed Committee, nothing new to address

Barb Cestero: Conservation and recreation

Dan Crismore: Two issues- 1) would like to see hunting trespass fine raised 2) Blacktail game range – currently closed to people on foot and vehicle – would like to grant walk on access to hunt wolves

Ken Sinay: Yellowstone Safari Association – would like to comment on wolves and on Madison River Management plan

Sam Samson:

Tom Helm: farmer – Would like to address landowner/sportsmen relationships.

Rick Grady: Land easement with FWP and block management; concerns with fees of NR vs. residents; concerns about Milk River land acquisition

Pat: We continue to hear about wolf management issues. Latest is harvest of wolves on border of Yellowstone National Park. May have read in paper – hot topic among wolf supporters and those that want to see more harvested. Ken?

Ken: We make money showing people wolves. I am also a hunting guide. I cross the boundary between groups of people. Ten were harvested that lived most their lives inside Yellowstone National Park – 7 had collars. We've had calls from all over the country and world. One lady said she would boycott tourism in Montana until something changes. Safari Association advised contacting Tourism office and FWP. I am not anti management, but it does have an economic impact and national impression. National environmental organizations use this incident on wolves that live in Yellowstone National Park and pose no threat to livestock outside the Park to reinvigorate their campaigns focused on wolf management. Eyes of the world are on us and how we manage wolves that come out of the Park. Collared wolves pose no threat to regions outside the Park. This research is pretty cool to see and how it relates to how we choose to manage wolves in the future. Ultimate goal is something that is somewhat neglected in the media, and that is total economic impact and plan.

Question regarding regulations and certification. Do you need to have taken the certification class to hunt?

Pat: No

Rick Arnold: To Ken - Is concern hunting wolves in general or just the 7 shot from the Park?

Ken: Good question. If they had not been famous wolves... being Park wolves, they are naïve wolves, walking by cars, coming in to calls. If they were not well known, it would not be as big of an issue.

Pat: Therein lays the problem. We've gone from endangered wolves to them being hunted. We've changed the legal status, but not the perceptions of how they should be managed on the landscape. They are wild animals that are susceptible to hunter harvest. We have chosen a method of hunter harvest to help with management. Park has chosen a preservation model. That difference is a constant challenge when it comes to managing wildlife. Wildlife don't recognize that boundary. The reality is: we will continue to manage wildlife in Montana subject to rules and regulations. Although I understand the concern from those who watch Park wolves and feel a personal connection to them, the reality is I think together we need to focus on changing those perceptions. We need to start thinking about wolves as wild animals and not as specimens in a zoo. We tend to anthropomorphize and we need to step away from that. One correction to a statement, there were 4 animals harvested in Montana in quota areas. Of the 4 harvest, only 1 spent a lot of time in the Park. I'd like you to think about changing the perception on how we view and manage wolves. Wolves coming out of the Park are no different than bison coming out of the Park and are subject to harvest. Unless we change the

management model to the Park's or vice versa, we are constantly going to face this challenge with the public.

Wildlife bureau updates

Grazing on Wildlife Management Areas

Bob Harrington: Overview of what we do with our grazing program

- Of 77 WMAs, 20 are grazed for livestock. In R3 there are four grazed for domestic livestock: Fleecer, Mt. Haggin, Wall Creek and Robb Ledford.
- Roughly 100 projects throughout state on conservation easements with very closely controlled conservation programs totaling 600,000 acres. 200,000 are rested every year.
- When grazing occurs it is done so with:
 - **A grazing objective** (wildlife production and habitat conservation)
 - All grazing operates within a **minimum standard** for "rest." We operate by minimum standards so area can replenish preserves.
 - Grazing management with a **grazing plan**
 - We **monitor rangeland health** by monitoring soil and site stability, hydrologic function and biotic integrity

LeRoy Mehring: You personally monitor these? Every 5-10 years? Isn't that a long time to wait in between?

Bob: Ecologically wise that is nothing. We try to monitor long term, 5 years is not that long of a time for rangeland.

LeRoy: Not to my knowledge. If you don't move cows for 5 years? That's too long.

Bob: There is a manager that controls moving cows. I go out and test temperature of the ground.

Pat: Those are managed by our biologists and WMA managers. Some have very hard dates when cows have to be moved. In one case, for example, we had our WMA biologist work with that system and provide flexibility, and we had to back away and create harder dates.

Bob: I'd like to elaborate on the concept of rest. Our standards are operating on standards of rest; we'll graze it and hold off the next year. It's really only grazed during active growing every three years. The administration is monitored daily/weekly.

Dan Crismore: When were you last at the Blacktail?

Bob: Every year

Dan: I would like to talk to you about that later, we've lost that as a grazing ground to our elk.

William Mealer: Date of turnout of livestock creates an issue if early in calf/cow pairs in disease transmission, now that you have a confirm case in Wall Creek, are you going to change that? Seems like the turnout should be a significant time after the partition of the elk.

Bob: Grazing is designed on plant threshold not political threshold.

Bill: It's a misnomer when you have so many WMA's that are grazed, I doubt the benefit of grazing the WMAs with so many elk.

Pat: Bob, please address. How do we address this constant issue? We are usually a small portion amid public and private land areas. We initially started this to try and be a good neighbor. Are we grazing on WMAs in a way that compliments wildlife management?

Bob: Yes, we have been grazing and monitoring since the mid 1980s. Should we or shouldn't we graze WMAs? I'm not comfortable handling the philosophical question of should or shouldn't

we. I'd be glad to get you some references on people who could better answer that question. A proper level and proper grazing system will not have a negative effect on the habitat.

Pat: The other question of Bill's regarding the turnout of cattle and brucellosis from aborted elk fetuses. We will be thinking about that more in elk brucellosis CAC. We are in the process of cogitating on their recommendations. That will be one of the issues. At this time we are concentrating on risk management and practical ways to provide separation at key times of the year.

Bill: Wyoming won't stop their feeding program which is the cause of this infection. We will continue to have the influx of infected animals.

LeRoy: Bob – clarify the point that wild game do not like to eat old decedent grass that hasn't been grazed for 30 years and they don't want the old grass. They like the new fresh grass, and they move to those newer areas.

Dan: We did graze cattle on Robb Ledford last year. They are looking for moisture.

Bill: Fire? What part of your plan includes controlled burns?

Bob: We don't mess with controlled burns. There's a lot of fire already. Robb Redford – from an ecological standpoint, it is doing fine. "The sky is not falling ecologically."

Pat: Would you like to spend more time on this in the future?

Unanimous yes.

Rick Arnold: Could you bring one of the WMA managers next time?

Bob: Some of these are questions for my supervisor.

Pat: Calvin Johnson, Rick Northrup, Howard Burt will be here next time to answer these questions.

Hunting season wrap up, including status of wolf and bison hunts

Andrea: These numbers pretty much mimic the numbers from last year. We are not comparing apples to apples because we didn't run two of our check stations we did last year. Any specific questions I can answer? Trend is pretty much the same as last year.

Robert: I'd like to see numbers go back 20 years, not just one year.

Andrea: All that info is available online, and you can always call me.

Pat: We also do the harvest surveys available annually and online.

Bill: In 2012 you don't have Livingston, 20 years ago the numbers wouldn't be 123, it would be 12,000. Now b/c of the wolf you don't have elk in the upper Yellowstone Valley. That ecosystem doesn't exist anymore in the upper Yellowstone Valley.

Pat: Every year we move the check stations around. The ones you see in 2012 are more of our standard list. Ruby off and on. Livingston very rarely.

Bill: Livingston was probably the most active station.

Pat: No, during late season hunts we had a check station, but not typically during the general season. Both bears and wolves are very active in there. We went from a high of about 20,000 in that Northern herd to 4,000-5,000. So a big shift. Some of that was intended with a very aggressive late season hunt. The range couldn't sustain a herd that size.

Bill: Now those elk have a winter predator with the wolves, instead of just the cougars.

Pat: That brings us back to the question of harvesting right outside the Park.

Ken: That's a realm for education as well. How do we choose to manage wolves and to a major extent, manage all of us? There are alternative ways to manage. The take home I have now,

FWP is probably going to continue as usual, but I'm hoping there'll be some alternative on wolf management in the future.

Pat: It's to our advantage in managing wolf numbers to encourage hunters to not shoot collared wolves. We try and get collars in all the packs and that's for research efforts. You can't regulate that since you can't see collars on wolves in some cases.

Cale: Make the collars more visible.

Andrea: Information on wolf harvest is available online and is updated every day. Trapping begins on the 15th. FWP commission will discuss wolf harvest in a conference call on Dec 10 at 9 a.m. Public can write in at fwpcomm@mt.gov.

Bill: This summer there was a confirmed kill of human jogger in Saskatchewan. How many wolves are we going to tolerate before we have a human death here?

Moose research project

Andrea: Last meeting there was a question on Moose research. Vanna provided moose statistics, hunter success rates/number of wolf permits (shown on power point)

Pat: Decline in moose numbers started before reintroduction of wolves.

Bill: A lot of moose decline is due to wood tick. Are they looking at that?

Andrea: Yes.

Bill: Is there anything they can do to reduce moose mortality related to ticks?

Arnold Dood: It's a fact, but not a significant one.

Ken: Warmer climate tends to increase tick numbers. So climate change makes it worse.

Andrea: Other states moose populations. We are concerned but don't have a lot of data to make management decisions. Biologist Vanna Boccadori said to keep in mind it is especially difficult to survey moose because they don't gather and behave the same way as elk. It is hard to get accurate counts.

Mike Dailey: We have had an incredible abundance of moose here, and we're not in a moose hunting district. I'm thinking they are being chased into our area by wolves.

Dan: We also have a massive quantity of moose down low, even in town. Seen 7 moose in a hay field right outside of town. 21 in one hay field this summer.

Ken: Along the same lines – I spent a lot of time on Rocky Mountain Front – increase of moose in that area has been incredible. Lower elevations have very high quality habitat.

Andrea: (information for who to contact if you would like to assist in study displayed on screen)

Bison hunt: season dates reviewed, harvest update

Proposed reintroduction of bighorn sheep to the Bridgers

Pat: Last brought up 15 years ago. Recently reinvigorated. Julie Cunningham has been working with landowners a lot regarding domestic sheep. Gathering info on disease risk to wild sheep. EA is out, probably make decision later this week.

Robert: What is feasibility on making that happen?

Pat: In a nutshell, we've got a variety of opinions from landowners on reintroduction, including one domestic sheep owner. Reintroduction itself is not imminent.

Bill: Is reintroduction going to be done on private or public land?

Pat: Originally proposed on private land as reintroduction site. Vast majority is public land – 85%. We do know domestic sheep are disease threat.

Joe G: Any plans to plant sheep in Cabinets?

Pat: Had proposed a plan to but ultimately that was shelved. It's hard to find good habitat and separation between livestock/sheep and bighorn sheep. There are no easy ones left. That's what we're facing in the Bridgers. Statewide it's going to take some real innovation and creative work with domestic sheep owners.

LeRoy: I have not observed any sheep all summer or fall until about a week ago when I saw ONE sheep way out of where he's supposed to be. And I spend a lot of time up there. Nothing by the dam.

Pat: Last reintroduction was in Green Horns and that's been a challenging one. Potential conflict issues with domestic sheep.

LeRoy: Has anyone reported any sheep besides me?

Pat: No reports out of there. I usually hear just from biologists, that area's biologist is currently vacant.

Dan: Seen a few up there this summer, ewes.

Fisheries bureau updates, *Travis Horton*

Travis: I oversee biologists and R3 programs. We also took over FAS and Madison River Recreation Program.

- Wild trout management was initiated here in R3 in 1960. It set the focus on management since that point.
 - Stocked fish caused wild trout to disappear. Ended with fewer fish than started with. This has changed fish management for whole state. We no longer stock for supplementation.
 - Now we are focused on habitat. Keep habitat healthy and it will keep fish in rivers.
 - R3 waters get fished from people around the world. 25% of fishing in state comes from R3.
 - It is cheaper to protect than to restore. There are educational opportunities with the public for habitat improvement. Habitat improvements have a long history. Example is the Jefferson River. These projects have shown we've been able to keep more water in the river and increase trout populations.
- Habitat improvements – Big Hole
- Arctic Grayling – last populations in lower 48. Success on reintroduction on Ruby and Red Rocks.
- CCAA Conservation Measures – 143 stream flow projects, entrainment, riparian health, migration barriers.
 - Tight cooperation between, DNRC, FWP and landowners.
 - 18 projects actively restoring rivers, 102 of riparian fencing, 71,000 willows planted, 70 head gates, 55 stock water systems, 80 irrigation improvement projects, 22 fish ladders, 5 culvert replacements, 1 fish screen, weed control (6500 acres surveyed, 118 acres treated).
- Riparian assessments: 175+ acres surveyed. 102 acres resurveyed in 2012.
 - Second surveys showed improvements.
- Grayling numbers are improving.

- That program should become a model for western states.
- Fisheries challenges:
 - Social Crowding concerns
 - Madison
 - Big Hole and Beaverhead
 - Native Species conservation
 - Grayling
 - Westslope and Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout
 - Invasive species
 - Eurasian water milfoil
 - Northern pike
 - Bass and other warm water species
 - Water
- Madison River Recreation Management plan
 - Madison River CAC will wrap up their recommendations by Jan or Feb
 - Madison River usage – massive increase in 2010
 - Over 120,000 angler days, decrease in 2011 due to high water and cold spring
- Cutthroat trout management
 - Brook trout outcompete cutthroats. Rainbows hybridize which is easier to deal with. Trying new things and thinking broadly.
- Pike: focusing on Toston trying to remove pike that have become established in that region
- Water: droughts have impacts on fish. Cooperatively work with landowners to leave water in stream. Ongoing problem. Snow pack is uncertain in future.

Sam Samson: I live in Boulder Valley – variance of water supply is wicked mainly due to irrigation. Does FWP have jurisdiction over how much water runs in creek? How can we get Big Hole type deal going? Get landowner cooperation? Lower valley dries totally up. Fish get caught in pools. Could be bad if you're not an ethical fishermen. Could you look into Boulder Valley?

Travis: Ron Spoon has been trying to get water in Jefferson. Program varies as far as what we try to accomplish.

David: In working with landowners

Travis: Personalities drive everything. Big Hole is traditional ranching families. Hard to blanketly say it is harder or easier working with certain people.

Rick Arnold: Could you explain whitefish in upper Madison and potential effect on river? Spotting projects?

Travis: Whitefish are native and distributed widely. Numbers are astounding and we are unable to estimate numbers. We have seen some decline in the last few years. We started a project with Montana State on Whitefish to identify where they are spawning. We don't know much about them. Once we know where they are spawning, we could find rearing habitat. Also trying to effectively sample to get an idea of long term trends. There has been restoration work in the Madison Valley to improve spawning and rearing habitat to benefit main stem river. In general, the Madison has great habitat. It is the focus outside the upper Madison to find habitats we can improve for spawning and rearing.

Rick Arnold: So you're reasonably satisfied with spawning and rearing in upper Madison?

Travis: Yes, the numbers of small fish are looking really good. More numbers = smaller fish. It's a balancing act.

2013 Montana Legislative Session

Pat: Every two years we prepare our own package. We find legislators who are willing to carry a bill for us. That's how we move bills through that we find important.

- 1) Hope to have bill introduced regarding wolves that will allow electronic calls, allow hunters to not wear orange, reduce nonresident cost, allow more harvest/hunter
- 2) 87171 – allows FWP to use money from USFWS. Was inadvertently altered in 2007. This is a cleanup bill.
- 3) Extend sunset on good neighbor bill until 2019. Enacted in 2009 to require that when FWP is purchasing land to put aside up to 20% of purchase price.
- 4) Youth combo licenses: allows nonresident youth to apply same time as resident sponsor.

Legislators invited to share ideas/proposals for 2013

Scott Sales: No preconceived notions except for changes to wolf policy. Really just came to listen.

Kelly Flynn: Have a number of FWP bills I'm involved with.

- I'm going to carry bill from dept on wolves. We do need to liberalize things. Recommendations are good changes. I've been talking to several people from department. Looking at one part with hunter orange. Like to see that eliminated for wolves and mountain lion hunting. Needless regulation.
- Second thing to eliminate trophy fee for lion hunting. That's the only species with a trophy fee. We've lost the need to have that. We have the addition of money if you draw for moose/sheep/goat. It's an impediment to sportsman in Montana.
- Third has to do with outfitting. Change to allow emergency guide's license.
- Fourth is block management – tried to do some things last session. Tried to put money in block management. Perhaps people are seeing we're not getting as many people enrolled in that as before. Trying to come up with ideas to provide another option within block management.

Shaw: List of concerns from constituents.

- I'm a 5th generation Montanan focused on agriculture. Concern about buffer zone around the Park and livestock district.
- To Pat – how many wolves collared in upper Ruby in last two years? How are we going to fund wildlife services and predation problems?
- Robb Ledford Management area – been involved with that for a very long time. Elk typically do not stay very high up. They go down onto Anderson's and Bradley's. Why

don't we use Blacktail Management Area and graze it and do a trade off? Cattle have come out of Sweetwater already, and elk are already down where the cattle were.

- We don't have enough FWP enforcement during hunting season. From Cameron up there is a big section that is a disaster. People pulled out of block management because of it.
- Would like to thank all of you for your time and efforts.

Kerry White: Issue is to clarify laws we have and give flexibility to government agencies so they can do the right thing.

- Big Hole is interesting with cooperation in fisheries projects. That's very important. FWP doesn't cooperate with landowners as well as they should sometimes. Need to give more latitude and help with something that's destroying the landowner's industry.
- Elk numbers are dropping and website says it's not a significant drop. 13,000 *IS* a significant drop.
- We've got a problem with predators.
- Also the proposal to bring bison out into Paradise Valley. Snowmobiling alone in the Gallatin brings in 20 million a year. Feelings of the landowners in a state where ½ is private land, you need to work with the landowners.
- I appreciate being here to comment. Thank you.

Alan Redfield:

- Several landowners and outfitters asked me to propose an increase in trespass fees. 1st offense should go from \$25 to \$150. Minimum fine would be \$500 and loss of license.
- I am a rancher who has lost livestock to predators. Would like to see hunting season on grizzly bears. We are seeing these bears out a lot further than people think.
- I am one of ranchers involved in bison lawsuit. Focus has been on species that doesn't have disease. Focus in on rancher and cows. We've had it handled for quite awhile. We've vaccinated our cattle since 1949, the vaccine is not that great. It's a lot of hassle and a great cost.

Jeff Welborn: Would like to thank each of you for the opportunity to visit with you and for the commitment you put into this panel.

- Will not be carrying any legislature to the FWP commission.
- My family still allows people on our land through the block management system. Still support that.
- I look forward to future visits. Please come to me with questions.

Ted Washburn: 3rd time in FWP committee. Quite a few bills already filed.

- One on large predators – wolf. They put the Canadian wolf in the Park after we already had the Montana small wolf.
 - 88 fire took away cover for moose. Reports from 5 years before fire and then 5 years after showed moose cover was gone.

- I've received letters from retired park rangers. Prior to wolves, the only winter predator was the lion. Other predator was bear, which is hibernating.
- Now with wolf out there, herds dropped from 3,500 to 500 elk. Between bears and fox etc, elk are gone after a few days. Gone from Gallatin Canyon, Paradise Valley. Now without a late hunt the motels don't have business, not even regular hunting season because the elk are gone.
- I have a bill on wolves – statewide season with 110 and 316 having quotas.
- Get back to federal requirements for wolf numbers.
 - General season should open Oct 1 and close Feb 28, except in two around the Park –Sept 15-Feb 28. Archery regular, electronic calls used, outside of regular season, no hunter orange.
- Invasive species – funding would come out of general funds
- Also working on old bill that was out in 2009 to allow hunters to use a suppressor when hunting wolves and mountain lions.
- Next – act allowing trapping by residents to trap mountain lions. I agree with Kelly Flynn's bill on mountain lion trophy fee.
- Next – use of lighted nocks on archery equipment. 1/3 of animals struck with arrow are lost because hunter can't see where they go. Purpose is to cut down on loss of game because the hunter can't find it.
- Next – classifying large predator incidents, i.e. bad news bear or mountain lion. Must have written permission of landowner to release on private property. Landowner should have right to say yes or no.
- Next – revised deer and elk licenses. No increased fees in licenses.

Pat: Response from CAC first, then rest of audience

- Discussion among legislators, CAC members, and public

Rick Arnold: Rep Washburn, what are your thoughts on funding for the future fisheries program?

Washburn: Nothing I've seen so far, probably sitting in the Governor's files somewhere.

Dan Crismore: Rep Washburn – Regarding mountain lion trapping, as a houndsman and a lion hunter – I think you'd have the Houndsmen Association upset.

Washburn: I would expect that. Lion populations are way over where they should be.

Dan: I've proposed increases in my district too. Trapping thing I have opposition to. Other issue would be raising nonresident licenses from 17,500 to 20,000. We're not selling our licenses as it is.

Washburn: That's for good reason if you really study it.

Dan: If we raise our licenses, it's going to take our opportunity away. Also, I don't agree with 10,000 licenses sold in wilderness areas.

Washburn: Those licenses would be good only in wilderness areas and that money would go to block management.

Dan: Number just seems really high.

Washburn: Committee can do what they want with the bill. It's out of my hands once it hits the committee.

Dan: Thank you, sounds like you have a lot of good things in mind.

David: Washburn, what's the rationale for the suppressor.

Washburn: The Bill was proposed in 2009 for use with wolves. (lion has dual citizenship, game and predator)

David: But what does the suppressor do?

Washburn: Already allow it for coyotes...

Cyndy: Flynn, could you talk more on your emergency guide license?

Flynn: Original draft had no restriction on time at all. If you have a guide quit or someone without a First Aid card, you can't get that to and from the Board in time to higher another guide. After 30 days they have to get an actual guide license. It covers a situation that is not covered right now.

LeRoy: Wouldn't that provide a situation for an unqualified person (without a First Aid card) to be in that position?

Flynn: Most outfitters are going to search for qualified people because they are liable. It's an attempt to go between the two.

Rick Arnold: Already a grace period at least for fishing guide, isn't there?

Flynn: No, you do not. Problem is the bureaucracy itself to get your application processed and license back. I would not carry it the way they originally had it. Emergency guide / assistant could not present himself as a "guide"

Bill Mealer: Regarding the trespass fee – hunter numbers are down, young hunters in particular can't afford all these GPS devices. They may make a mistake and trespass. Have to be careful to not discourage youth from hunting so we don't lose gun advocates. If a person is not a hunter, they don't see that importance. Safari Club just funded a tasing of grizzlies in Alaska. Interesting, I would urge you to look into that. Maybe not with wolves, but with grizzlies. You have to get 40 yards away and tase it. Once it's tased it won't want to get tased again. We do need more aggressive laws for managing mountain lions.

Sam Samson: The bill on raising trespass fees - I am totally for it. I live on private land. I let people come through to hunt on public land. There is a LOT of abuse. Law enforcement comes with ticket, and person just says, well how much is it? And pays the fine. Fine is not enough to be preventative. We recommended to BLM the fees go up to \$1,000. As for youth, sock it to them and they'll never do it again. A fine needs to be worth getting. Law enforcement needs to have a minimum fine to work with. I agree with you 100%.

Bill Mealer: I am not opposed to a reasonable stiff fine especially for 2nd offenders. But a lot of kids that hunt are not from rich families. They get a fine and they may stop hunting. Maybe do community service and make them give time instead of risk taking away their hunting.

MikeD: I disagree. They come to me 10 minutes before shooting light and say, "Can I shoot that deer?" They need to be responsible and show impetus 3-4 months ahead and just ask. Nobody does that. We just need to teach them.

Bill Mealer: Trespasser educator program to teach kids how to not trespass.

Pat: To avoid arguments, let's move on.

Tom Helm: Flynn - Can you share ideas on block management? And how to share appreciation for landowners that choose to not be involved in block management but still allow access?

Flynn: One of the things we need to look at is what we did in 1995 when we switched to a more expanded program. That same \$1,000 in 1995 is only worth \$500-\$600 today. Plus we put side boards on a larger amount of land to be involved in the program. We need to incentivize the landowners. If we give less today than in 1995, is that really encouraging people to join? Money is an issue. I offered two bills in last session. Money from nonresident applications to fund it, that passed through the House 100%. From the Hunting Access Enhancement program they took 2.5 million and put it to land purchasing. Increase hunter/day money to landowners. There is a perception that block management is getting overrun by hunters. Hunters feel block management is so overrun by hunters that game goes somewhere else. Perception of quality isn't in size of animal, but having space. I would like to see that done in some fashion with a block management program. This was met with a lot of opposition. I don't have the magic answer, but am looking to people around Montana to improve an already good program.

Shaw: There are a lot of out of state landowners coming in and buying large tracts of property. Still have some in block management. But access to those is being bought out by nonresidents and block management is no longer accessible or being overrun. On some ranches, game is not there anymore. They are not there for trophy hunting but for the hunting experience. Great program but some things need to be worked out. Big concern in our area.

Pat: Department agrees. It's tough to find a solution. Private property rights and interest of public. Only solution is neighbor to neighbor. Sportsmen and landowners need to come together. We can be there, but FWP cannot create a solution, it's got to be neighbor to neighbor. It's worked to a certain extent in the Madison. We've made some steps.

Mike Dailey: There are 2-3 ways to run block management to reserve time. Regarding having one call-in day, is that going to change?

Pat: I have not heard that we're going to change that approach. Most popular are those that limit numbers and maintain a quality experience. We've got a few in R3 and they fill very quickly. I hunt in R3 and other parts of the state. I hope they don't do that in the eastern part of the state. There's a lot of opportunity to decide when you get there and I like that. I think a mixed bag for block management is best, more tools, increasing compensation... a stagnant price/hunter day hasn't helped.

Bill Mealer: I have a close friend that used to be in block management in Jeffers. He says he has to have a section of land to qualify for block management. He can't participate anymore b/c he doesn't have enough land. Why not revise that for river bottom land?

Pat: I am not aware of that section rule.

Sam Sheppard: 640 contiguous acres is for landowner preference.

Pat: Audience have any comments?

Mark Albrecht: Different parts of the state don't require the same treatment. What works in the Madison might not work in Paradise Valley. I'd ask the legislature to not regulate everything. I'd like to work neighbor to neighbor rather than creating dividing lines. Concerns that we focus all our concerns on the "big bad wolf." During drought we wanted to kill more elk. And we did it. Now it's pushing them off the areas they can be hunted to the areas they can't be hunted. Are there things we can do besides going after the wolf? What can we do to find a common goal and work together? Elk Brucellosis working group is very diverse, let's find something like that to work together like Habitat of Montana and get on the same page without pointing out that we're different. Thank you.

Joe G: it was mentioned that hunters have opportunity to shoot lions during rifle seasons. How many does that happen to?

Sam Sheppard: Small %. Incidental. Quotas on that too to allow for hounds men.

Robert: Ted's idea – all it's going to do is shift the location of wolves. Need more money for block management. It should be done with science, not legislation. On wolves, would like to see everyone who buys elk/deer license be required to buy a wolf license for (\$3) and can get a second one for more money.

Jim: Ted – regarding the bill on transplanting large predators on private land. Clarify?

Pat: We never release anything on private land period. Those are always on public land. There is currently a requirement for a recording process for releases. That said, when we are releasing a bear on public land, in some cases there can be private land nearby that it may move onto.

Jim: Funding endangered species fisheries work from general fund, does that jeopardize federal funds at all?

Washburn: Invasive not endangered.

Glenn Hockett: Are you aware of the citizens working group set of recommendations for bison? We are interested in solutions. This issue is going to come up and I'd like you to be aware of this set of recommendations. This paves the way for future solutions both in Greater Yellowstone area as well as rest of state.

To Kerry: Regarding turning bison into livestock, could you address that? We try to legislate our way out of it and it builds animosity.

Last question to Kelly – I would like to talk to you about block management as well. We have property in the Highline. There is the issue of crowding; I would love to visit with you about that.

Kerry: Put a livestock holder on bison to generate conversation, to raise discussion on what's going on. I see three issues:

1) Private property rights. What can you do?

2) If bison are coming out of the Park, hunting groups would like to preserve future hunting opportunities for sportsmen.

3) Disease. Brucellosis vaccine in cattle is relatively effective, but not 100%. Vaccine for bison is relatively ineffective. In the testing of bison, bison are in captivity for 8 years before they test positive. For elk there are zero vaccines available and there is not one going to be developed anytime soon.

Other legislators are working on a bill also. I'm working on it. The definition of livestock for bison is different, so we need clarity in the law. I'm looking for different opinions. Basis of bison is threefold.

Pat: To give background, we did ask for and receive from the commission the authority to create late season hunts for bison on public/private land. But they do have to be sporting opportunities, not hunting right out of the burrow pit. Fair chase. The other thing is that private property currently has quite a bit of authority when it comes to responding to bison on their land. You can haze them, move them, same as elk. When it comes to bison they can shoot them when they are threatening their livestock.

Sam Sheppard: Yes, if they are comingling with cattle, that would constitute a threat. With the case of a horse, it would be goring as the threat.

Kerry: What's on the book right now says it has to be livestock. Landowners call me who say they're threatening their kids, trees, property.

Sam Sheppard: Yes they do. The threat has to be to self and property. Just cause he's passing through doesn't mean you can go out and wack him. Meer presence of wild animal on a landscape is preserved in constitution of state of Montana. In response to wild animals, Montana is a wild place. I grew up in the Bear Paws. I didn't pick up rattle snakes. Kids in Gardiner know not to pick on bison. We provide more protection for bison on trees in Gardiner than we do for deer eating trees in Bozeman.

Kerry: I would like to comment on the ability to haze, landowners depend on neighbors in a good relationship. They share fence, water, etc. When you haze bison or elk, you've moved the problem from your place to your neighbor's and that's not a neighborly thing to do. As for hazing the bison, it's problematic. They are different than deer and elk. Bison are an issue and it

needs to be discussed. There are some things in the law we might be able to do that landowners can't.

Pat: Kathleen Williams just walked in – wanted to give you the opportunity to present any comments/concerns to talk about those now.

Kathleen: My strategy with wildlife related bills: I am ready to work as a team to be constructive for wildlife management.

Shaw: Washburn and I have to leave for another commitment, thank you for the opportunity to be here.

Joe G: Reinforcement of Dr. Mealer on WMA's and cattle grazing. On Wall Creek cattle enter WMA's May 1. Calving season for elk is last week of May/ first week of June. I would recommend June 15 to avoid any aborted fetuses. Relative to cattle grazing on WMA's, I would get rid of the whole thing. NO grazing on WMA's.

Jim: Need to address COST EFFECTIVENESS . In all the EA's I've looked at, there's been no way to analyze what it's costing us. EFFECTIVENESS – we are measuring the effectiveness of plants. This is the department of Fish, Plants and Parks, that's what you just said. If the elk are only on 1/3 of the area, aren't we concentrating those animals in time and space?

Ward: Concern with bison is that there are not enough areas when you come out of the Park, we can push with legislature to allow bison to wander out of the Park in areas where there is little to no conflict. But eventually this increases the potential issue of hunters and fair chase, and not just in the Yellowstone basin.

LeRoy: Comment for Ken on calls from people who are going to boycott Montana – to hell with em! This is our state! If they want wolves put em in their backyard!

Bill Mealer: In the Yellowstone River drainage, the other group that's hurt is the meat processors. A lot of Montana families are not getting the red meat protein they were getting before b/c we're not getting those tags.

Comment for T Washburn – encourage lighted arrow nocks. It greatly increases chance of recovery and reduces wanton loss of wildlife.

Ken: I have a concern with too many gadgets, too much reliance of technology, too many shots in poor light, which encourage shots for longer ranges in poorer conditions. Just another point of view.

Bill Mealer: Well ethics are what happen when no one is looking; these aren't going to change that.

Tim: Thanks for the opportunity to be here today. I am a member of Missoula CAC. I have some comments and suggestions for the legislators. A great improvement on wolves is measurable

objectives. I would encourage more aggressive tools, i.e. the number of permits people are authorized to purchase and use and rather than a set harvest number, authorizing commission to adapt to situations as they come along. People who learn to specialize in hunting wolves are the ones that are going to hunt wolves, not the regular hunter who is out hunting deer/elk.

Pat: Thank you to the legislators. They get hit with 10,000 invitations to these things. They get inundated with calls, emails, and don't get compensated nearly enough for the work they're about to do. Thank you for the work you're about to do and for stepping up to represent us.

CAC Caucus; Set 2013 meeting dates

Bill Mealer: Grazing wildlife areas

Andrea: Do you want to have a more detailed presentation on moose study?

Ken: Would appreciate it.

Sam Samson: Last Montana Outdoors had a very good, thorough coverage of it if you want to reference that.

Pat: Think on that and let me know.

LeRoy: Too soon in moose study to have a good discussion.

Bill Mealer: Block management – would be worthwhile thinking about how to increase block management in R3.

Dan Crismore: Access on Blacktail

Pat: Primary purpose of Blacktail was for elk winter range, albeit with limited range. We are hypersensitive to forcing them off that when we're struggling to get them to use it. Call Howard directly.

Ken: Value of wildlife based tourism. 2011 USFWS ten year summary just came out on value of wildlife to nation/state. Something like that or value of nongame wildlife program/wildlife observation/funding for MFWP. Revisit those ideas.

Pat: Overview of how we are currently funded? That would be timely as we're facing some pretty serious funding issues. It's been a long, long time since we've had a resident license increase. We are not going into this session asking for any fee increase. We need to all think very seriously about that. Just like \$1 in 1995 for landowners isn't worth the same today, \$1 in license fees isn't the same today. Maybe we can get Sue Dailey down here to talk about that.

Barb: Let's think of suggestions about where there are new opportunities for funding for FWP. We are seeing declining hunter numbers.

Pat: We are trying to evaluate all the pieces of all our programs and see where all our priorities should be. The things that fall out are the things that bring in the least amount of \$. We've struggled internally on how to do that.

Rick Arnold: Big thing is whether FWP budget is going to stay within FWP or come from the general fund.

Pat: That would anger everyone that buys licenses if we just let everyone's license money go to fund whatever. I hope there would be a strong reaction against that.

Cyndy: There are so many constituents that would oppose that.

LeRoy: We are not as residents opposed. It comes from the legislature. We would be more than happy to give FWP money, but the legislature stops it.

Rick Arnold: With TU talking about fishing licenses, there is so much money left on the table from increased license fees.

Bill Mealer: Regarding value of hunting and wildlife, Shannon Taylor teaches a class at MSU on that subject.

Sam Samson: Lately there was a court order against trapping wolverines. I want to speak for the wolverines and agree with the court order and say they should not be trapped.

Bill Mealer: I agree.

Rick Arnold: What can we do as a CAC, as far as the regulation for putting together a letter to state that we are in favor of this or that? For something that comes through the next legislature?

Pat: I'll send it out electronically. There are limitations on what you can do as a body since you've been elected. You can't take a stand as a group unless it's approved by the governor's office. Of course as an individual you can. And you can comment as a group on anything except legislative issues.

Rick Arnold: We as a body have the ability to comment in support of or against if we all come to a consensus.

Pat: With a new governor coming in, we don't know what guidance we'll get from that office. I'll get you that information. We'll see if this governor's office changes the current rules.

Sam Samson: I live near Helena and if you can't make it up send it to me and I'll take it over.

Rick Arnold: Another thing that's going to come up is fracking. This is going to be an extremely important subject we are all going to need to discuss.

Sam Samson: Huge article in last Smithsonian and a few issues ago in the Audobon.

Rick Arnold: Has there been any discussion of improving access on Jefferson River?

Pat: Not aware of any. Jerry – can you think of any new access on the Jeff?

Jerry Walker: They tried to return access to the high road side on the Big Hole. On the upper Jefferson, I'm not aware of any.

Pat: Our highest priority for years has been getting some access at Logan. We finally have some property. That will be a big boom for that area, but will take awhile.

LeRoy: Bridge access on the Big Hole. There is a 180 ft right of way on that road. Anybody can use that to access and nobody can say anything.

Bill Mealer: Could you clarify the license for youth combo?

Pat: I'll email it to you. This describes all the pieces we're going to discuss this session.

2013 Dates:

(David Gibson and Ken Sinay may be out of tenure.)

March 7, 2013 12:30

June 6, 2013

September 12, 2013

December 5, 2013

Public Comment:

Joe G:

- Boo on crossbow hunting. We should be able to use crossbows during archery season. Does not give much advantage over compound bows. Old people or people with back surgery would benefit. Crossbows don't travel as far as bow and arrow.
- Should be able to bait bears. States around us bait bears and they all have good populations of bears. If you have bait, you can identify the bear and know if it's with cubs.
- Jefferson River used to have a program where you couldn't keep rainbow trout. Now there are tons of rainbow trout.

Pat: Best chance to influence any of those is through the season setting process. That's when those comments are most valuable.

Laura Lundquist: No comment.