



# Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Wildlife Division  
PO Box 200701  
Helena, MT 59620-0701  
June 7, 2016

Dear Interested Person:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) is requesting public review and comment on the following items. Supporting information on this item can be found on our website under "Opportunity for Public Comment" at [fwp.mt.gov/hunting/](http://fwp.mt.gov/hunting/) and/or [fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/](http://fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/).

## **TO MAKE A COMMENT**

For further clarification or additional materials, you may call the Wildlife Division office at 406-444-2612 or email at [fwpwld@mt.gov](mailto:fwpwld@mt.gov). Comments will be accepted: online by using any of the links below; in writing sent to the address above; and by email to [fwpwld@mt.gov](mailto:fwpwld@mt.gov).

## **COMMENT PERIOD DEADLINE & FINAL ADOPTION MEETING**

All proposed items will be accepting public comments until **Saturday, June 18<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m.** with final adoption at the **July Commission meeting**.

### **2016 Nongame Check-Off Work plan – Proposed**

FWP is proposing to use funding from the nongame wildlife account for FY17 to include: Inventory, monitoring and conservation work on Montana Species of Concern and species in need of inventory; Prioritizing habitat for conservation; Providing competitive student stipends for nongame research; and wildlife viewing and outreach projects.

### **2016 HB 454 Hunting Access Agreements – Proposed**

Under 87-2-513 MCA FWP may issue either-sex or antlerless elk permits to landowners for management purposes. The landowner must offer free public elk hunting, meet the conditions of the statute, and enter a contractual public elk hunting access agreement with FWP. There are two proposed agreements: the Swanz Agreement and the Robert Lee Ranch Agreement.

### **2016 Fall Upland Game Bird Quotas and Limits – Proposed**

Upland game bird season dates for 2016 were approved in February. Other than those changes specifically outlined below, no changes to the 2016 adopted quotas and limits are proposed.

Crossbows – The commission proposes that crossbows be considered a legal means of taking mountain grouse and fall turkey.

Sage grouse – Count data will be analyzed and presented to the Commission in July, along with any proposal to reopen the season in any or all of the currently closed areas.

### **2016/2017 Furbearer Seasons and 2016 Quotas – Proposed**

Except for the specific proposed changes for 2016 listed below all other season elements and quotas are proposed as unchanged from 2015.

Statewide: Establish trapping setbacks on federal and state public land for all species at all times to reduce the likelihood of unintentional capture of dogs.

Region 1: Increase otter quota from 23 to 28.

Region 2: Increase bobcat quota from 180 to 200.

Regions 1 & 2: Decrease the fisher quota from 7 to 0.

Region 6: Decrease swift fox quota from 30 to 10.

**2016 Wolf Hunting Seasons, Quotas and HD Boundaries, and SB200 Wolf Quotas – Proposed**

Other than regular calendar rotation FWP is proposing no change from the 2015-16 season structure.

**2016 Grizzly Bear Tri-State Memorandum of Agreement – Proposed**

The Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE) grizzly bear population is recovered and has been proposed for delisting. The proposed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming, along with an updated Conservation Strategy, will define the process by which the three states will coordinate the management and allocation of discretionary mortality of grizzly bears in the GYE.

**2016 Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem Grizzly Bear Hunting Regulation Framework – Proposed**

As part of the GYE grizzly bear delisting process, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service is requiring Wyoming, Idaho and Montana to outline the structure and framework of any future grizzly bear hunting seasons. Montana FWP's draft season framework is based on mortality limits for the Demographic Monitoring Area (DMA) in the recovery plan and proposed delisting rule, which includes all types of mortality. Mortality limits depend on the size of the bear population. After final federal delisting and approval of the Tri-State MOA, additional Commission approval will be required before any grizzly bear hunting season would be finalized.