

FWP R2 CAC Meeting

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, November 29, 2017
LOCATION: FWP Region 2 office (3201 Spurgin Road, Missoula)
TIME: 6-9:30 p.m.

In Attendance

Members: Jane Bennett, Louie Bouma, Steve Clevidence, Dan Conn, Marc Cooke, Robert Edwards, Laurie Johnston, Denley Loge, Tracy Manley, Bill Mitchell, Theresa Mondale, Jim Olson, Kylie Paul, Greg Price, Tom Puchlerz, Carey Schmidt, Joanne Weimer

Staff: Randy Arnold, Vivaca Crowser, Deb Espinoza, Joe Jaquith, Pat Saffel, Dori Schiele, Mike Thompson, Julie Golla, Rebecca Mowry, Liz Bradley & Scott Eggeman

Guests: Jennifer Ramsey & F&W Commissioner, Tim Aldrich

Welcome & introductions

Randy welcomed all in attendance; Mike gave a special welcome and introduction to our area wildlife biologists, Julie Golla, Rebecca Mowry, Liz Bradley and Scott Eggeman.

CWD update and news

Jennifer Ramsey D.V.M., (FWP wildlife vet) gave an update and presentation on Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). As of this meeting date, we have two confirmed cases of CWD in R5 area. FWP has had a plan in place for many years aimed at preventing the spread of this disease. And now, after detection, an initial response plan is in place, and includes a special management hunt to get an indication of prevalence and distribution of CWD. Long term impacts to Montana are possibly a decline in species which could also impact hunting opportunities. Sampling of road kill and symptomatic animals are being done within the surveillance area. Mule deer seem to be the most susceptible and the disease is more prevalent in males.

Fisheries update

Pat Saffel gave a presentation with updates on the proposed Bitterroot River Recreation rules, designed to address concerns about quality of river experience. These rules, which would put some restrictions on personal and commercial use of these portions of the river, are a result of a citizen committee effort, survey work and the investment of the time of many individuals, including CAC member, Jim Olson. Summary of the public comment show a 55% support overall for the proposal to institute some recreation rules on the West Fork and Upper Bitterroot. December 7 is the Commission meeting, where a decision on the proposal will be made.

AIS report: No new waterbodies are shown to be impacted by AIS positive samples, after the 2017 sampling season. AIS team will re-evaluate to make any changes or improvements to the survey and sampling program prior to starting the rehiring in January for all the seasonal check stations.

Wildlife Update

Mike Thompson gave an update and briefly touched on Spotted Dog working group and offered the draft Spotted Dog WMA management plan they have been working on. A public meeting will be held this week offering people an opportunity to hear more on the draft plan and to comment.

Hunting season update: R2 check station results show overall elk harvest up this year, WTD up, and mule deer harvest lower. Overall, it was a successful hunting season.

Twelve season setting public meetings will be held for R2 during January. After these meetings, regulation changes will be presented to the Commissioners for approval at their February. For more information on the statewide and regional proposals and meeting schedule, go to the FWP website, fwp.mt.gov.

State Parks updates

Randy Arnold gave a brief State Parks update. State Parks has a new Division Administrator, Beth Shumate, and several new Parks and Recreation Board members, including our district 1 representative, Angie Grove. Beth and Angie are interested in attending an upcoming CAC meeting.

Meeting adjourned and next quarterly meeting will be in February.