



# MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

## CAC MEETING MINUTES

August 24, 2023

### In Attendance:

**R2 Staff:** Randy Arnold, Liz Bradley, Desiree Cozad, Ben Dickinson, Morgan Dollinger, Loren Flynn, Ryan Klimstra, Pat Saffel, Dori Schiele, & Sydney Young

**Other FWP staff & guests:** Jamie McNaughton, Jason Lindstrom (field trip)

### Tour of Bitterroot Valley/Lolo Creek FWP Sites

FWP staff and CAC members visited John Owen Fishing Access Site, Fort Owen State Park and the Purcel Ranch I Block Management area from 1pm-6pm, before concluding the tour and beginning the meeting at Travelers' Rest State Park. (see page 3 for field trip details)

### Agenda Items

- **Updates from FWP Divisions**
  - **Fisheries- Pat Saffel**
    - The 2024 Fishing Regulations are currently out for public comment- comments will be accepted through 9/19/2023 and then the final regulations will be adopted at the Commission meeting in October.
    - The Statewide Fisheries Management Plan is also out for public review and includes different Hoot Owl criteria for some rivers in region 2. These criteria will include different 'triggers' for different fish species. This may mean that rivers designated native cutthroat habitat may go into hoot owl closures earlier in the summer than usual.
      - Public Meeting set for 9/6/2023 at the Region 2 FWP Office
      - Comments accepted through Sept. 25, 2023.
  - **POR- Loren Flynn**
    - Environmental Assessment for improvements at Harpers Lake FAS was posted, construction of the new latrine and ADA accessible fishing pier is slated for next winter.
    - Frenchtown Pond has a new ADA accessible kayak launch and pier which was installed earlier this summer. Waiting on a couple parts to be delivered but functional and receiving a lot of use!
  - **Wildlife- Liz Bradley**
    - Statewide Elk Management Plan is wrapping up, the Decision Notice will be posted in early fall.
    - There will be a public comment opportunity in November for the Biennial Hunting Season Setting process.
    - There's a field trip for the Doney Lake Forestry Project happening on 8/29 and an EA will likely be out in this fall.
    - EA on Spotted Dog WMA for some grazing leases/exchange of use agreements will be coming out later this fall.

- **Administration- Dori Schiele**
  - Working through bugs in our licensing system and processes until our new ExploreMT system goes live.
  - We have been busy replacing licenses, issuing B-tags, and issuing licenses to customers who didn't receive the licenses they purchased online.
- **Q&A/Comments:**
  - CAC Members and Staff appreciated the diverse topics and round-robin style of this meeting/field trip.
  - Several shared their thoughts regarding the tour participants, BMA operator and FWP staff throughout the day who were a "wealth of information."
  - CAC Members were open to doing a field-trip style meeting again, focusing on another watershed and the recreation sites/history in that area.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00pm. Next quarterly meeting is December 5, 2023.

# FWP Region 2 CAC Field Trip Agenda – August 24, 2023

- 1:00**            **Meet @ Travelers' Rest State Park** (6717 US-12, Lolo, MT)  
Arrange carpools
- 1:15**            **Wildlife crossing structures (Kylie Paul, CAC)**
- The science of road ecology & partnerships it requires to accomplish them
  - Federal funding
  - Locations of structures that we'll be in the vicinity of today
- 1:30**            **Travel to John Owen Fishing Access Site**
- 1:45**            **John Owen FAS**
- Meet local recreation & fisheries staff
  - Partnerships for access
  - FAS development, management & maintenance
  - Current fisheries management topics
  - Woody debris
  - Enforcement at recreation sites
- 2:30**            **Travel to Fort Owen State Park**
- 2:45**            **Fort Owen State Park**
- Overview of historical significance
  - Recent historical restoration work
- 3:15**            **Travel to Purcell Ranch**
- 3:45**            **Private lands conservation, access & wildfire**  
(Purcell Ranch/12960 Severin Meadows Trail)
- Block Management—meet the landowner
  - Conservation, weed management & fire on private land
  - FWP's role with wildfire-coordination, partnerships, wildlife, etc.
- 5:45**            **Head back to Travelers' Rest**

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*If you can't join in the whole field trip but want to meet up along the way, please join us at any of these locations at these approximate times.*

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