

FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: February 13, 2019

Agenda Item: The Nature Conservancy Biennial Rule Regulating Use on Recreation Management Area Lands

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Renewal

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 15 minutes

Background

This proposal would extend for two years The Nature Conservancy Recreation Management Area biennial rule previously established by the Fish and Wildlife Commission in August 2015. During the winter of 2015, MTFWP met with The Nature Conservancy to discuss ideas for a possible land recreation management plan for their 163,883 acres in Missoula and Powell counties including their Clearwater – Blackfoot Project acquisition of 117,152 acres purchased from former Plum Creek Timber Company in January 2015. The Nature Conservancy Recreation Management Area biennial rule was renewed by the Fish and Wildlife Commission in August 2017. The proposed renewal of this biennial rule would continue providing year-round recreational access for public use.

Public Involvement Process & Results

Public notice of the rules and a public comment period will begin if the commission approves the proposed rules.

Alternatives and Analysis

Managed public access will reduce the resource damage, prevent vehicular damage to soils and vegetation, and will avoid excess disturbance to native wildlife including threatened and endangered species. Without these rules, TNC may close these lands to public access.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

FWP recommends the commission propose the rule for public comment.

Proposed Motion

I move that the Fish and Wildlife Commission propose biennial rules regarding public use within The Nature Conservancy Land Recreation Management Area.