



MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

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Meeting Date: April 22, 2021

Agenda Item: Nature Conservancy Recreational Access Agreement, R2

Action Needed: Proposed

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 15 minutes

Background: A biennial rule for the 151,000-acre Nature Conservancy Recreation Management Area was previously established by the Fish & Wildlife Commission in August 2015. Prior to the initial biennial rule approval in 2015, FWP worked closely with the Nature Conservancy to develop a joint proposal for managing public recreation on their privately-owned Western Montana Forest Lands in FWP Administrative Region 2. The Nature Conservancy Recreation Management Area biennial rule was renewed by the Fish & Wildlife Commission in 2017 and 2019. The renewal of this biennial rule would perpetuate year-round recreational access for public use for an additional two years. One change to the previous rule is that it would be unlawful for a person to set traps or snares on TNC lands without a Special Use Permit.

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 help reduce the resource damage, vehicular damage to soils and vegetation, and excess disturbance to native wildlife including threatened and endangered species. Without these rules the Nature Conservancy may be forced to increase restrictions on public use and ultimately close these lands to public access.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale: FWP recommends the commission propose this rule for public comment.

Proposed Motion: I move that the commission propose biennial rules regarding public use of the Nature Conservancy Recreation Management Area.