

MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS
HUNTING SEASON / QUOTA CHANGE SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Species: Otter

Region: 2

Hunting District: region-wide

Year: 2021-2022

1. Describe the proposed season / quota changes and provide a summary of prior history (i.e., prior history of permits, season types, etc.).

Increase the regionwide otter quota from 25 to 40 and the per-person limit from 3 to 4.

Prior to 2002, there was no set quota for otter in the Region. Since then, quotas have gradually increased from 13 (2002) to 20 (2009). The quota was raised to 25 in 2014. Quotas have generally filled prior to the season closing date. The per-person limit of 3 otter has been in place for many years.

2. What is the objective of this proposed change? (This could be a specific harvest amount or resulting population level or number of game damage complaints, etc.)

The objective of this proposal is to match an increasing otter population across the region with a commensurate harvest opportunity.

3. How will the success of this proposal be measured? (This could be annual game or harvest surveys, game damage complaints, etc.)

Success of the proposal will be measured by:

- Filling the harvest quota
- Harvesting more males than females each season
- Maintaining a juvenile:adult-female (≥ 2 years-old) ratio of at least 2:1
- Maintaining trapper and public satisfaction

4. What is the current population's status in relation to the management objectives? (i.e., state management objectives from management plan if applicable; provide current and prior years of population survey, harvest, or other pertinent information).

Otter harvest age structure is indicative of an increasing population, with high proportions of juveniles and males in the harvest, and a component of older-aged animals as a component of harvest—present, but not a high proportion of the harvest.

5. Provide information related to any weather/habitat factors, public or private land use or resident and nonresident hunting opportunity that have relevance to this

change (i.e., habitat security, hunter access, vegetation surveys, weather index, snow conditions, temperature / precipitation information).

N/A

- 6. Briefly describe the contacts you have made with individual sportsmen or landowners, public groups or organizations regarding this proposal and indicate their comments (both pro and con).**

This proposal reflects a discussion of otter harvest data and trapper observations between Region 2 staff and District 2 trappers at the annual Montana Trappers Association (MTA) meeting in Missoula, and an agreement among the parties present that the proposed change in otter quota and per-person limit was warranted and desirable.

Submitted by: Mike Thompson

Date: May 21, 2021

Approved: _____
Regional Supervisor / Date

Disapproved / Modified by: _____
Name / Date