



# MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL.

**Meeting Date:** December 14, 2021

**Agenda Item:** WMA Public Use Rules

**Action Needed:** Proposed

**Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation:** 5 minutes

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**Background:** Since 2012, the commission has adopted public use rules on a biennial schedule for lands acquired for the primary purpose of providing effective fish and wildlife habitat, including Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), Wildlife Habitat Protection Areas, and Fisheries Conservation Areas. FWP is currently working on revising Administrative Rules (12.8.201-12.8.219 ARM) for all department lands to include public use rules on WMAs. In February 2021, the commission approved continuing with the current set of rules for another year. FWP is again proposing to continue with the current set of public use rules for another year (see attached proposed rules).

**Public Involvement Process & Results:** There has been no public involvement to date regarding this proposal, but the public has had opportunity to comment on the rules in previous years. Very few comments were received, but most indicated support. If approved for public comment by the commission, the proposed rules would be released for public comment.

**Alternatives & Analysis:** Based on the public response, the department may recommend additional modifications when seeking final approval from the commission at a future meeting.

**Agency Recommendation & Rationale:** FWP recommends approving the current set of public use rules for another year. These rules help ensure the fish and wildlife habitat values, for which these properties were acquired, would be maintained while supporting compatible public uses and allowing the department time to implement a more consolidated rule package in the future.

**Proposed Motion:** I move the commission approve for public comment the WMA public use rules as presented.