



# MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL.

**Meeting Date:** June 24, 2021

**Agenda Item:** 2021 Nonresident Hound Permits

**Action Needed:** Final

**Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation:** 10 Minutes

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**Background:** The 2019 Montana State Legislature adopted legislation that created a Nonresident Hound Handler License (Class D-4) in MCA 87-1-325, 87-2-519, and 87-6-404. The bill was intended to reduce the amount of unlawful outfitting that may be occurring, increase resident lion hunting opportunity, and to shift outfitted lion hunting to those properly licensed in Montana. The 2021 Montana State Legislature amended these statutes (primarily 87-2-519 and 87-6-404) in important ways, including removing limitations on the number of Class D-4 licenses that may be issued in a specific hunting district, decreasing the fee from \$500 to \$250, increasing the maximum number of Class D-4 licenses that may be offered for sale from 35 to 80 in a license year, and making the Class D-4 license valid for use when hunting mountain lions or black bears. Nonresident landowners that own at least 640 contiguous acres may hunt on their own land without obtaining a Class D-4 license.

Because the current license year will expire prior to the start of the spring bear hunting season, all 80 Class D-4 licenses may be offered to nonresident mountain lion hunters this fall. Any hunter using hounds to harvest a mountain lion will be required to have an appropriate license authorization to take mountain lion.

**Public Involvement Process and Results:** Due to the lateness of the legislation, limited public comment has been received on this topic. Last year, much of the public comment came from nonresidents that disliked the limitations placed on their use of hounds for mountain lion hunting. The legislation provides greater options for nonresident who use hounds for hunting.

**Alternatives and Analysis:** The commission may choose to approve, amend, or adapt the proposal.

**Agency Rationale and Recommendation:** Because the issuance of Class D-4 licenses for fall 2021 will not influence the availability of these same licenses in license year 2022, the department recommends that the commission authorize the use of all 80 Class D-4 licenses without district restrictions through the lottery drawing scheduled to close on August 18, 2021.

**Proposed Motion:**

I move that the commission vote to approve the drawing of 80 Class D-4 licenses in 2021 after other big game drawings for which all mountain lion districts can be applied, and surplus Class D-4 licenses be made available to eligible applicants through surplus sale as presented by the department