



FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AMENDMENT

FWP proposal to be amended: 2027–2028 Fishing Regulations: Proposal #41 on setline limits and season length on the Yellowstone River from the I-90 Bridge in Billings to the mouth of the Bighorn River

Commissioner: Vern Gagnon – Region 5

Date Received by Commission Liaison: *Amendment #5- September 30, 2026 @ 12:05 PM*

Proposed Amendment: I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission adopt the following amendment to the proposed 2027–2028 Fishing Regulations:

Amend the 2027–2028 Fishing Regulations as follows:

- *This amendment to the 2027–2028 fishing regulations **removes** Proposal #41, which changes the number of setlines allowed on the Yellowstone River from the I-90 Bridge in Billings to the mouth of the Bighorn River from six to only three lines from May 1–June 15.*

Requested by FWP: ☒ **YES** ☐ **NO** (check one)

Department Response:

Rationale and Background: This proposal was initially carried by the Department in response to public comment received during the Region 5 May 2026 scoping meeting and in a formal written comment. The proposal's intent was to address crowding concerns and maintain or improve the number of channel catfish, sauger, and burbot in the Yellowstone River around Billings. Although the Department has little information regarding the number of setlines and associated catch and harvest rates for this reach of river, there are no observed negative population-level impacts to these fisheries correlated with the standard setline regulations. As such, reducing the number of allowable setlines this regulation cycle is premature and would create additional complexity to the current standard regulations. FWP staff plan to assess setline use over the next two to four years while continuing to monitor sauger, burbot, and channel catfish populations. FWP mail-in fishing pressure surveys will be incorporated when evaluating fishing pressure and angler use. The Department will evaluate these data when considering angling restrictions during future regulation-setting processes.