



MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date:

Agenda Item: Extend Deer Hunting Opportunities to Licensed Hunters 10-15

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 5 min

Background:

In reviewing the deer, elk, and antelope regulations, the Hunting and Trapping Regulation Review Working Group has identified a discrepancy in the descriptions of the youth hunter opportunities. At the top of Page 19 the regulations state that some hunting districts offer special opportunities for youth ages 10-15 and instructs the reader to see pages 96-98 for details. However, the hunting districts listed in pages 96-98 only list opportunities for youth ages 12-15.

MCA 87-2-810(H) prohibits apprentice hunters under the age of 15 from purchasing an elk license making the age ranges listed under the elk license section appropriate. However, it is unclear if 10 and 11 year old licensed apprentice hunters can participate in the special opportunities listed for deer hunting by hunters 12 to 15 years of age.

A review of past Commission meeting minutes did not shed light on whether this was an intentional exclusion. Current Commission regulations allow licensed 10 and 11 year old's to participate in other opportunities such as the two day deer hunt. These opportunities are clearly available to 12-15 year old's using their general license, but the status of 10 and 11 year old apprentice hunters with the same general license is unclear.

Public Involvement Process & Results:

The public is able to comment at this meeting.

Alternatives and Analysis: The Commission could vote to change the language in the regulations to be consistent for all legally licensed deer hunters age 10-15. Alternatively, the commission could vote to leave the regulations as they currently are which restricts or omits legally licensed hunters 10 and 11 years of age from participating in special deer hunting opportunities in some hunting districts.

Department recommendation and rationale.

The department recommends the commission change the regulations to allow any legally licensed hunter 10 to 15 years old to participate in special opportunities offered in certain hunting districts for deer. This change will make sure the regulations are consistent in offering special deer hunting opportunities for all licensed hunters ages 10 to 15.

Proposed Motion: I move the Commission extend the special deer hunting opportunities available in certain hunting districts for 12 to 15 year old's to also include apprentice hunters 10 to 15 years of age.