



MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: February 13, 2020

Agenda Item: 2020-2021 Hunting Season Dates

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 5 Minutes

Background: Season dates are currently adopted biennially for all game and managed species. This happens every other winter with adoptions in December and final adoptions in February. These dates are a combination of fixed dates (mountain grouse season Sept. 1 opener) and “formula” dates (general deer and elk is defined by counting backwards five weeks from Thanksgiving Sunday). For the “formula” dates, there is an annual change due to the progression of the calendar from one year to the next. That means at least one day’s difference and, periodically, nearly a full week. In some cases, these annual movements can place season dates in conflict with public expectations or traditions. Some specific areas have exceptions to these general statewide dates by species. Those exceptions are also proposed again for 2020 and 2021 or are proposed to be different within individual species-specific proposals.

The proposed 2020 two-day statewide youth deer hunting season scheduled during MEA days will overlap the last Thursday and Friday of the statewide archery season. The proposed youth hunt days for 2021 will not overlap and will occur on the Thursday and Friday of the week between archery and general seasons.

There are no proposed changes from 2019 in statewide date definitions and there are no proposed changes to the December adoption addressing these dates.

Alternatives and Analysis: Season dates may be adopted as proposed, with adjustment, with additions, with deletions, or no change from 2019 (status quo).

Public Involvement Process & Results: Public comment was taken from Dec. 5 to Jan. 27 and forwarded to commissioners and FWP staff for their consideration.

Proposed Motion: I move that the Fish and Wildlife Commission adopt as final the 2020 and 2021 hunting seasons dates as proposed by FWP, excepting those dates addressed in other species-specific proposals.