



Wildlife Division  
PO Box 200701  
Helena, MT 59620-0701  
October 28, 2021

Dear Interested Person:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is requesting public review and comment on the following items. Supporting information on these items can be found on our website under “Wildlife” at <https://fwp.mt.gov/aboutfwp/public-comment-opportunities>.

### **2022 SPRING LIGHT GOOSE CONSERVATION ORDER**

Montana is split between the Central and Pacific flyways and complies with the corresponding U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) frameworks to establish waterfowl seasons. Within the Central Flyway (but not the Pacific Flyway), the federal framework allows for a Light Goose Conservation Order, which enables the take of snow geese and Ross’s geese in the spring when other waterfowl seasons have closed. The conservation order has been implemented within some states to reduce or stabilize the populations of light geese that were damaging their northern nesting areas. A conservation order is a special management action that is needed to control certain wildlife populations when traditional management programs are unsuccessful in preventing overabundance of the population. This is not defined as a spring hunting season because doing so would exceed the 107 days of hunting allowed under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The conservation order, for light geese (snow and Ross’s) only, is proposed and differs somewhat from regular hunting seasons:

- Proposed dates and open area: March 1–May 15, 2022, for the entire Central Flyway within eastern Montana
- No daily bag or possession limits
- Shooting hours: half-hour before sunrise to half-hour after sunset
- Shotguns are not required to be plugged to a 3-shot capacity
- Electronic calls are not permitted (precluded by state law)
- Baiting is not permitted (precluded by federal regulation and state law)
- Lead shot is not permitted (precluded by federal regulation)
- License requirements: A special, free light goose conservation order license will be required so that the number of participating hunters and harvest can be determined and reported to the USFWS as required. No migratory bird license, prerequisite licenses, or federal duck stamp will be required.

### **GRIZZLY BEAR RELOCATION SITES**

Senate Bill 337, passed by the 2021 legislature, requires the Fish and Wildlife Commission to approve all sites where grizzly bears will be relocated by FWP. FWP staff, working with land management agencies, have assembled a list of potential release sites in each of the Cabinet-Yaak, Northern Continental Divide, and Greater Yellowstone ecosystems. All proposed relocation sites are located within established occupied grizzly bear habitat and are located both inside and outside of designated recovery zones. Per SB337, FWP will not relocate a grizzly bear that is in conflict that is captured outside of a designated recovery zone, although USFWS or their agents may. The primary reason for relocating a bear is to move it out of conflict or potential conflict. Bears may also be relocated for population

augmentation purposes such as in the Cabinet-Yaak or for the purpose of genetic exchange. While there are many more sites identified than will be used, it is important to have many alternatives as specific sites may not be available at the time a bear needs to be relocated, so alternatives are important. The list of potential sites includes a mix of sites that have been used historically and new sites.

### **TO MAKE A COMMENT**

For further clarification or additional materials, please call the Wildlife Division office at 406-444-2612 or send an email to [fwpwld@mt.gov](mailto:fwpwld@mt.gov). Comments will be accepted online by using the link below, in writing sent to the address above, and by email to [fwpwld@mt.gov](mailto:fwpwld@mt.gov).

### **EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE**

If you would like to receive further public comment opportunities via email communications, please email [fwpwld@mt.gov](mailto:fwpwld@mt.gov) to be put on our mailing list.

### **COMMENT PERIOD DEADLINE & FINAL ADOPTION MEETING**

Comments on the proposed items will be accepted until **Monday, November 22, 2021, at 5 p.m.**, with final adoption at the **December 2021** commission meeting.

- ✓ <https://fwp.mt.gov/aboutfwp/public-comment-opportunities>