

## ***FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET***

**Meeting Date:** December 7, 2017

**Agenda Item:** 2018 Off-Cycle Fishing Regulation Changes

**Division:** Fisheries

**Action Needed:** Proposed

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### **Background:**

The fishing regulation process is based on a four-year cycle, where the first year of each cycle is dedicated to actively soliciting ideas for changes from the public. During the following three years of the cycle (“off-cycle” years), ideas are only solicited internally from FWP biologists, fish managers and enforcement personnel. Proposals developed during off-cycle years are proposed to the Commission only if they meet certain criteria: achieve certain enforcement needs, provide clarification for regulations, are important for the conservation of a fish species, are making changes to regulations no longer relevant, or fulfill direction provided in management plans. The fishing regulation proposals for 2018 are an off-cycle year; the next year with full public involvement will be 2020. The Commission already approved a package of regulation changes for 2018 at their October 2017 meeting. Two additional changes are proposed here that were unanticipated at that time.

### **Public Involvement Process & Results:**

After the proposals are approved (or changed) by the Commission on December 7, they will again be posted along with a notice of a 30-day public comment period. Following public input, the tentatives will be revised if necessary and final proposed regulations will be submitted to for Commission approval in February 2018.

### **Alternatives and Analysis:**

The proposed regulation changes for 2018 list each proposal individually, and indicate if they are a new regulation or a change or deletion of an existing regulation. A rationale is then provided for each proposed change.

### **Agency Recommendation & Rationale:**

Both regulation changes proposed here are based on the management plan criterion (managing a put-grow-take fishery on Newlan Creek Reservoir per the Statewide Fisheries Management Plan, and responding to management triggers for walleye established in the Upper Missouri River Reservoirs Management Plan 2010-2019). Adoption of these regulations will occur too late for inclusion in the 2018 Montana Fishing Regulations booklet, and therefore public notification of the regulations will be done by means of signage posted at public access points on both reservoirs.

### **Proposed Motion:**

I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission adopt FWP’s proposed regulation changes for the 2018 fishing season and that all other aspect of the regulations remain unchanged.