



**Region 6 Citizens Advisory Council**

**DATE: Tuesday, August 30, 2022**

**TIME: 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

**PLACE: Culbertson, MT Town Hall, Ike's Pond, and Culbertson Bridge FAS**

**Region 6 CAC members present** - Lars Anderson, Ken Forbregd, Ron Garwood, Perri Jacobs, Don Kaveshan, Fred Perry, Tyler Tarum and Pam Wilson

**Region 6 CAC members not present** - Scott Azure, Tami Burke, Jay Crandall, Miles Hutton, Brian Olson and Aaron Wittmer

**FWP Regional Staff** - Steve Dalbey, Heather Dulaney, Dave Fuller, LaWana Grewe, Drew Henry, Marc Kloker, Tim Potter, Scott Thompson, Todd Tryan and Ryan Williamson

**FWP Helena Staff** - Charlie Sperry

**Public Guest** – Gene Marchwick

**Drew Henry** welcomed everyone and gave an overview of the agenda.

Staffing Updates:

- Katie Iverson, the new access manager, is busy getting boxes open for Upland Game Bird and deer/elk archery seasons.
- We have hired two fisheries technicians; Jordan Frye is in Fort Peck and Dawson Schott is in the Havre office.
- Lars Sorenson was hired as the new technician at the hatchery.
- Ziggy Chamberlain was hired as a maintenance worker. She has been transitioning her focus to help block management get boxes open.
- Pat Callahan is the new groundskeeper in Havre.

Office update: We have a new ask in front of the Montana Legislature for more funding for the Glasgow headquarters to add office space since we are in desperate need of room. Also, trying to improve the office space in Havre. The Havre office currently has 800 sq. ft. We came across a couple of great options. North of Havre, adjacent to the Milk River, looks the most promising. It also includes a great FAS opportunity.

The Director's Office is in Glasgow tomorrow. He will meet with the staff in the afternoon. There will be a public Q&A from 6:00p.m. - 8:00p.m. at the Cottonwood Inn.

Introductions of all members present.

In the members packets we placed the one-page summary of FWP's Vision and Guide. We want to them to know what we do hinges on our mission and core values.

We are looking for balance. What does recreation look like now and in the future?

Incidental trapping - the Director's Office has two questions. Is it an issue in R6? If yes, what are your ideas to mitigate how it happens?

We have two CAC members, Tami Burke and Brian Olson, who will not be renewing their positions. The search for new members will have to go through a public process. Marc Kloker will get PR information out about applying for the council.

### **Steve Dalbey: Fort Peck Reservoir Fisheries Management Plan process:**

In April, a survey was sent out for the Fort Peck Reservoir Fisheries Management Plan to determine satisfaction with the direction of the current plan. There were 200 responses from resident anglers and in general, there is strong support for the direction of the current plan. This plan continues to place the primary emphasis on walleye and maximizes hatchery production while working to enhance the multispecies fishery. Tournaments will be one issue where FWP is working to strike a balance between tournament and non-tournament interests.

### **Fishing regulations- proposed changes and process:**

Strong support of:

- Keeping the limit of walleye 5 daily, 10 in possession.
- Keeping northern pike the same
- Continuation of stocking Salmon
- Lake Trout natural reproduction. – some neutral
- Bass natural reproduction

*Fort Peck fishing is “World Class.”- Fred Perry*

Most popular to fish for in Fort Peck are ranked as:

1. Walleye
2. Salmon
3. Lake Trout
4. Northern Pike

### **Angling Tournament Related Questions:**

- Support of maintaining the current number of tournaments. Sixteen are allowed on Fort Peck; twelve open water and four ice fishing.
- 55% Strongly oppose increasing the number of tournaments.
- Oppose decreasing the number of fishing tournaments.
- Oppose creating of a separate sub-category for these three smaller fishing tournaments.
- Increasing number of large fishing tournaments if 3 smaller tournaments are not included in count of 12...strongly oppose!
- FWP has no say in how the water level is managed. It is managed by the USACE.
- Plan recommends a study into angler related catch and release mortality of lake trout.
- Eliminate stocking 50,000 advanced Chinook Salmon.
- Study limiting factors to burbot (ling) populations.
- One ice tournament date will be moved to an open water date.

Tournaments with a 10-year history are grandfathered in. Tournaments are on a rotation. If not drawn, then a bonus point is earned.

We will be putting more pressure on a tournament director to make sure nonresident anglers are complying with the law. Proposal would require them to verify that all nonresident watercrafts show proof of an AIS inspection prior to launching and to purchase the AISPP Vessel Pass.

Public comment period for these proposed changes is October 21<sup>st</sup> through November 18<sup>th</sup>. FWP will host four public meetings during the comment period. Once it goes through the comment process, it will then go to the commission for approval.

Changes for Eastern District fishing regulations:

- Icehouse shelter removal by March 1<sup>st</sup> will change to within 5 days from receipt of notification by FWP and exceptions for water bodies listed below.
- Changing to add use of cisco as dead bait on Fort Peck with exceptions.
- Yellow Tag paddlefish- snagging for 7 days/week on the Missouri River below Ft Peck dam to the ND border unless closed earlier by FWP.
- Allow bow and arrow harvest for Chinook salmon on Ft Peck Reservoir from October 1<sup>st</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Home Run Pond - Eliminate the 14 yr. old restriction, making it open to the public. Only 1 rod per angler

*The CAC is the cornerstone of the public process. – Steve Dalbey*

### **Tim Potter: Recreation Management in Region 6 – Slideshow Presentation w/handout**

In this new role my goal is to provide access and protect resources. I also want to get the website more user friendly to find information easily.

- R6 Outdoor recreation opportunities:
  - 1 State Park
  - 16 Fishing Access Sites
  - 12 Wildlife Management Areas
  - 208 Block Management Areas
- Brush Lake had a huge increase from 2019 to 2020 in visitation. It increased more through 2021 and had a slow decline so far for 2022. It is only open from May through winter (January-ish). About 60% of the use is by non-residents.
- FAS visitation increased from 2019 to 2020 but declined again through 2021.
- BMA's use has been greatly increasing since 2019.
- PALA- access to inaccessible lands through private lands. We are dabbling into yearlong access.
- What Does This Mean for Us?
  - Benefits – Outdoor recreation provides tax revenue, job creation, plays a role for small businesses. Important for health and wellness.
  - Costs and Consequences – Currently we have just 2 FAS' that collect fees. It may cause issues with overcrowding and residents not welcoming of it. Impacts to natural resources.
- What are we doing?
  - Reorganization of the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division means setting a recreation plan for Region 6. Rules will need to be consistent across the state.
  - There is money available for communities to use for trails and shooting ranges.

### **Drew: Wayfinding project**

You will notice signs, especially for FAS', along Hwy 2 that lack our agency name. There aren't any indications as to who manages the site and who to contact. We are asking ourselves, how much pressure can these sites handle?

*I am amazed at the number of floaters and kayakers downstream down to School Trust FAS. I really appreciate them keeping it clean. I have concerns about road usage and wear and tear of the narrow road.*  
- Ron Garwood

(Tim) *Dave might be able to work on the section that is ours.*

### **Charlie Sperry: Assistant Administrator - Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division Update**

Recreation management: People are looking for access. What might be some access opportunities for R6?  
Classification of site development - Amenities: electrical, room to camp, bathrooms

Trails include water trails like float canoes, kayak, and solitary overnight trips. Then there are trails for hiking and biking. It is savvy to go into rec use with eyes wide open. Montanans are being more thoughtful. They are asking how much is enough. We need to be taking care of the resources.

Drew: What might be some issues with recreation? We would need FTE to patrol and maintain sites.

Perri: People don't know what road etiquette is. Terrible speeding on her gravel road by her house.

Tim: Working on a new program to educate the public of responsible recreation

Marc: I did a press release on How to be a Good Steward of the Land, a few years ago.

### **Ike's Pond**

Ken Forgbregd gave some background of Ike's Pond as everyone enjoyed lunch by the pond.

The land was donated by Butch Finnicum, who passed away this last month. Much of the construction was completed by Vess Hurley who dug out the pond and built the path. They also received a \$58,000 tourism grant. It is open to skating, fishing, and recreating. The pond is run by volunteers for maintenance and most of it is done by Ken. The pond is used by schools for various events. There has been talk about putting blue gill and perch in the pond next year. Waiting and hoping for more habitat to grow in.

Ike Goodson used to own the property, which is how it acquired its name. They have more grants by MT DOT to pave the parking lot and by the latrine. Tim Potter mentioned a Trails Grant available through FWP. Ken is aware and they have the paperwork to put in for it. The cost of the pond is around \$325,000 so far.

### **CAC Round Table:**

#### **Pam Wilson:**

- Elk hunting- Locals upset about the number of licenses given to out-of-staters. It used to be more limited in the Bears Paw.

(Scott) *-10% limit of draw permits for NR, however, Bears Paw has a cow only season for general elk available to those NR who draw a combo.*

(Drew) *Scoping phase of Elk Management Plan*

- Recreation on Bear Paw Lake with more people using it for non-fishing use, paddleboards and kayaks. How to keep track of traffic at Bear Paw Lake? Rocky Boy starting to utilize the lake more. Basketball teams, fishing events and learning how to fish. Seeing use from some other states that have never had the opportunity. Road around the lake is dangerous and they could use widening. Charlie: Cannot use funds on roads that are not FWP, it could affect federal funding in the future.

### **Perri Jacobs:**

- Thanks to Drew and Marc for information about 454 agreements. It was a legislative decision so people shouldn't get mad at FWP about those. Talk to your legislature.

(Tim) *PLPW is tracking this issue.*

- It's nice to have bear proof cans in the Little Rockies
- Wildlife: While at a conference in Wyoming, I was told Grizzlies have been sighted on the CMR per John Stuber. If confirmed, FWP should let hunters know for when the season starts. No one seemed to have heard.

(Scott) *If true there should be a partnership with the CMR.*

### **Lars Anderson:**

I would like to see the history of the ranch on BM map to give hunters a flavor of the landowner, just for balance. Had a suggestion for BM boxes, put QR code on the box and sign in by using the app. Help to speed up the process and view map.

(Tim) *It has been discussed about linking it somehow to the new MyFWP app.*

### **Fred Perry:**

Fishing was great at Nelson up until a couple weeks ago. Fort Peck fishing was good. Seeing good groups of sage hens. I've seen Sharptail and Sage Grouse, 50-100. Pheasant population seems to be down. Good quality antelope but not quantity. Mule deer living in town of Malta, though not as many as the last few years.. Impressed with Ike's Pond project.

### **Ken Forbregd:**

Starting to see late young pheasants. Whitetail numbers seem down. Fishing is really good on the river for walleye and sauger, LOTS of goldeye. Fortunate to have received some moisture.

(Steve) *There was a Fish kill on Rock Creek in the Milk in July, has not been identified. It was a broad and acute kill. He could only narrow it down to two rain events on July 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. Potential something was applied to the landscape and washed in by the rain.*

**Don Kaveshan:**

Seeing a lot of garbage at Rock Creek. Speeding on the dirt roads is getting bad. I just want to give kudos to all active full-time FWP employees!

**Ron Garwood:**

Plenty of doves and turkeys at his place. He seen 38 at one time, in a group. Whitetails down a bit and moving around. With the EHD hit, he found a lot of dead bucks last year. Has seen a mule deer doe with triplets. Fishing is good on the river. Would like to see a limit of 1 trout instead of 2 on the river. Fisherman that he talked to thinks numbers are down. Lucky to live here and the Missouri is great.

**Tyer Tarum:**

Deer, antelope, moose, and birds look good.

The group then drove to the Culbertson FAS to check it out. The bottom of the boat ramp was washed away and is need of repairs.

