

**Region 4 CAC Meeting
Minutes
May 4, 2010
Region 4 Headquarters
Great Falls MT**

FWP Staff – Gary Bertellotti, Fred Schultz, Matt Marcinek, Bruce Auchly, Graham Taylor and George Liknes

CAC Members – Robert Facklam, Fred Davison, Doug Deffe', Karl Gies, Dennis Hanson, Jodie Butler, Charles Bocock, Mike Labriola and Judie Suden

Public/Guests – Bryan Thies, Cascade; Ron Moody, FWP Commissioner, Wil Patterson, Lewistown Trails Coordinator, Paul LloydDavies, Great Falls

General Topics for Discussion

Gary Bertellotti opened the meeting. Agenda was passed out to those that were present. Briefed the CAC on our new “video conferencing system”. Department is looking to save travel dollars. When we have more time and can set up a conference with someone will have demonstration on the new system. Since we haven't met for a while we went around the room and everyone introduced themselves to those that were attending. Introduced Matt Marcinek our new Region 4 Parks Manager.

Next item of discussion was replacing departing members and deciding how to set up a system where we would replace half of the existing members every two years (6 slots out of 12). We reviewed the charter and asked for suggestions. Everyone on the CAC will be there 4 years as of June this year. We replaced two members over a year ago for two members who resigned. We also recently have had three members who wish to resign – Joe Schaffer, our Chairman, Great Falls, Deanna Robbins, Roy, and Rocky Harber, Wolf Creek. We went around the room and three folks said they would step down as of this June if that was desired. After a lot of discussion and the goal of keeping some continuity on the committee and trying to get a two year cycle established the following action was taken. Two members who recently joined the committee, Karl Gies and Dennis Hanson would stay 4 years beginning June 1. Three members who said they would resign if needed, Mike Labriola, Charles Bocock and Fred Davison would stay for two more years beginning June 1. The rest of the present members Robert Facklam, Doug Deffe', Jodie Butler, and Judie Suden would also be retained four more years. So now we need to replace the three members that resigned. We have started advertising for those positions already and the deadline to put in is June 1. The three new members

selected would serve for two years with the option of serving four more years so we can establish the cycle we need.

Gary handed out plaques to those present for their four years of service on the committee.

Ron Moody, FWP Commissioner from our area was given the floor to talk to the committee about his new responsibility of being the commissioner on the Private Land/Public Wildlife Council. He discussed the history of the council and that it has been around for 15 years. They have refined their work around three work projects – 1) Funding for access on public land; 2) Unnatural concentrations of wildlife (harboring of wildlife); and 3) Evaluation of existing landowner compensation programs. Ron needs to have a “trap-line” to get input from constituents and he asked the Region 4 CAC to be the start of his trap-line. He is looking for thoughts on the three work projects and passed out his contact information and asked folks for ideas/comments and please contact him. He also passed out a handout for further thought. Jodie S. commented on one of the items – need for better maps, regulations and Block Management access. Seems to be a money issue to get it improved. Karl G. wondered how does block management and other access programs compete with outfitters for private lands? Other topics came and Ron just asked folks to email or call him to give him your thoughts.

Gary lead a discussion on Initiatives 160 and 161. I-160 has to do with trapping on public lands. Main concern seems to be pets caught in traps. Initiative would outlaw all trapping on public lands. Folks wanted to know our stand on this initiative and Gary stated that we have to be neutral when it comes to these initiatives. We did hand out a flyer the department put out – “Wildlife Management and Regulated Trapping in Montana”. This initiative will only affect trapping on public lands not on private lands. Doug D. asked who is the funding behind this initiative – instate or out-of-state resources? We think some of both. Rumor is they may not get enough signatures to get it on the ballot but no one knows that for sure.

Initiative 161 wants to basically get rid of outfitter sponsored licenses. Gary passed out a handout on the initiative and overview of nonresident licensing. Rumor is that this one may make the ballot. Had a lot of discussion on both initiatives and legislative process.

Graham Taylor, Wildlife Manager, led a discussion on wolf litigation and upcoming wolf season. June 15 the judge will take oral arguments for and against delisting. At the May 13 Commission meeting tentative season proposals will be discussed. Charles B. asked what is considered a breeding pair – breeding pair is a male and female and 2 pups as of December 31. Presently we have 37 breeding pairs and we need to have at least 15. Presently wolves have been spotted in Colorado, Oregon, Utah and Washington. FWP is looking at increasing our quotas for the next year to scale down the numbers. We have at least seven packs of wolves on the Rocky Mountain Front. We are not surprised to hear of a sighting of wolves in any part of Region 4.

Gary and Graham lead on discussion on grizzly bear plan for Region 4. We are presently seeing and encountering bears where they haven't been before. The Region put together three public meetings at Shelby, Wolf Creek and Simms. We had good attendance at all

three meetings. Before we even had the meetings grizzly bears were already sighted in these areas. We wanted to keep residents of those areas alert to the fact that bears may be sighted or encountered in their areas and the main objective is to reduce and eliminate conflicts. We won't be trapping these bears unless there is a conflict.

Graham briefed the committee on wildlife concerns and actions the commission took this past spring with our big game regulations and present issues that will come up at the next commission meeting on May 13. He handed the agenda items for Wildlife for the upcoming meeting. Then he highlighted some of the actions taken on the big game regulations.

1. There will be party applications, up to 4 per party, for deer and elk permits.
2. Bonus Point being squared didn't pass but there were strong emotional comments at public meetings.
3. Start of big game seasons – elk, deer and antelope will now be Saturday openers rather than Sundays.
4. They approved an early deer hunting season for youths (12-15). Two days prior to the opening of the big game season.
5. Cow permits are now Elk Cow B licenses. They will operate like Deer B Licenses as you will be able to put in for an Elk Permit – Either Sex and a Cow B license.
6. The proposed waiting permit on tough to draw permits didn't pass. They were looking at a 4 year waiting period for elk and deer for those that drew those tough to get permits.
7. Commission approved an archery only season for Black Bear, Mountain Lions and Wolves.
8. There was a most lively debate on requiring nontoxic steel shot to be used on Wildlife Management Areas but it did not pass.
9. Long discussion on new rules for horn hunting on our Wildlife Management Areas but that did not result in any changes from last year.

CAC Member Discussion Items:

Went around the room for CAC discussion items and comments. Several members stated that their questions were already answered during the discussions we had at the meeting but there were other concerns as stated below.

Doug D. – Stated that landowners he talked to are concerned about much of Region 4 going to mule deer buck only season. Landowners feel the bucks will really get hammered. Graham commented that we have had buck only seasons since the 1940's and it doesn't seem to affect overall population. A lot of folks like to see point restrictions also and that doesn't accomplish much either. The main way to manage deer numbers is with Deer B licenses. If the populations really start to go down the next step would be permit for buck hunting. Also wanted to mention that this last storm we had in

the area could put a hurt on deer if they are in the wrong place. Deer are at their lowest condition right now and a bad storm could cause a kill off.

A landowner asked Doug to find out how long a landowner has to allow public access to a private fish pond that is stocked by the state. George answered that FWP requests reasonable public access if we stock 500-2000 fish. But it is really up to the landowner as there is no set policy.

Doug also had some questions on the Pheasant Enhancement and Upland Game Bird Enhancement programs. He had problems last year contacting landowners and finding some of these properties.

Mike L. said he has heard some good comments on the improved boat ramp at Nilan Reservoir. Asked if conditions had changed on Bean Lake. Same problem exists – lack of water. Nothing has changed.

Charles B. wanted to know what size Christmas trees or other habitat enhancement measures could help develop good perch raising habitat.

Robert F. is concerned about wolves affect on elk on the front. Calf populations appear to be way down. Back Country Horsemen are going to help put in some horse friendly improvements at the Marias River SP/WMA.

Dennis H. stated that landowners up in his area (HD 401/404) are happy with the increased numbers of permits for antelope. Also commented on getting better signage on the Brinkman Preserve. It appears that Biologist Gary Olson and Ken Farthing, Block Management will help mark property lines. Landowner in the area has some concerns about trespass and what is taken in the area (on the Brinkman).

NEXT MEETING: June 16, Wednesday, at the Region 4 Headquarters, 4-8 pm. We will consider applications to replace members who have resigned.

NOTE: Due to time constraints this meeting was moved to 3-5 weeks down the road so applications could be thoroughly reviewed. New date should come out within the next two weeks or so.