

FISH and WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: December 5, 2018

Agenda Item: Wildlife Management Area and Fish Conservation Area Biennial Public Use Rules

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Proposed

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 10 minutes

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Background

Public use rules for Wildlife Management Areas, Wildlife Habitat Protection Areas, and Fish Conservation Areas are adopted by the commission on a biennial schedule. FWP is recommending retaining existing rules with one addition. A copy of the proposed rules with red underlined edits is included in the commission packet. The new rule pertains to camping on the Beartooth WMA, restricting camping to designated areas, and prohibiting camping on the Whitetail Prairie addition of the WMA. This new rule is intended to help manage camping activities, reduce user conflicts for some portions of the WMA, and minimize resource impacts/habitat disturbances.

Public Involvement Process & Results

Upon tentative approval, the public use rules would be made available for public review and comment. The commission would take final action on the rules in February 2019.

Alternatives and Analysis

The original set of rules adopted in February 2017 as well as the proposed addition may be modified or added to in response to comments received during the review period.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

FWP recommends the commission provide tentative approval of the proposed rules, allowing for further public review. The function of these rules, as described therein, is to “protect fish and wildlife habitat, wildlife presence on WMAs, and public use of the WMAs, including but not limited to fishing, trapping and hunting opportunities. All other uses are secondary and must be in accord with the primary goals and objectives of the wildlife management areas.”

Proposed Motion

I move the commission provide tentative approval of the public use rules as proposed.