



Region 5 CAC Meeting
May 29, 2019

Attending CAC Members: Lee Brunckhorst, Lee Deming, Dan Aadland, Jim Ballard, JW Westman, Chris Fleck, Lanie White, Daniel Otis, Steve Regele, Doug Dreeszen, Josh McQuillan, Susan Gilbertz, David Russell

Attending FWP Staff: Kevin Rose, Ron Jendro, Sydney Young, Lee Burroughs, Bob Gibson, Barb Beck, Dianne Stiff, Aaron Kind, Terri Walters, Mike Ruggles

Absent CAC Members: Pat Riley, Philip Hughes, Rusty Butler, Kayhan Ostovar, Craig Hash, Bill Milton, Bradford Grooms, Bruce Hoiland

Welcome and Introductions: Bob Gibson

State Park Feature: Chief Plenty Coups SP – Aaron Kind, Park Manager

- Upcoming Special Events: This year is the 25th Anniversary of the Day of Honor that includes cultural sharing speakers, artists, drummers and dancers. It concludes with a free buffalo feast. Check out the entire schedule of free summer special events on the State Parks website <http://stateparks.mt.gov/chief-plenty-coups/>.
- Education Programs: Last year 1,876 kids went through programs at the park. One of the favorite programs they like to teach is traditional games.
- History: Chief Plenty Coups is the last traditional chief of the Crow tribe (the Apsáalooke). He donated his allotment of land to become a park where people of other cultures could come and learn from each other.

Legislative session: Ron Jendro, Assistant Chief of Enforcement and Legislative Liaison

- Tracked 280 bills this session that dealt with FWP and 77 passed.
Highlights:
 - HB 2 – General appropriations for all state government that the legislature has to authorize. FWP had 12.57 FTE approved that had already been utilized by the agency. For fiscal year 2020 the agency was approved for an increase of about 8.6 million and for fiscal year 2021 an increase of 6.6 million. FWP programs have base funding and/or made whole. Money was approved for boat, snowmobile and ATV replacement. PR funding for Enforcement was reduced to 15-17%.
 - HB 5 – Long-range building appropriations funding approval includes expansion of the R2 and R6 headquarters, building a Lewistown Area office, future fisheries statewide, fishing access site protection statewide, and wildlife habitat maintenance.
 - HB 10 – Funding was approved for replacement of ALS system.
 - HB 43 – This legislation allows for a free landowner elk hunting license and the permit for those who allow public hunting.
 - HB 104 – Allows block management cooperators free prerequisite licenses, the base hunting and AIS prevention pass.
 - HB 291 – An act to establish a voluntary wolf mitigation account. A hunter who purchases a license can donate to this account and this bill is in effect this year.

- HB 411 – Creates a nonresident pass for motorized and nonmotorized vessels that went in effect on May 7 this year. The funding for the AIS program is generated from the bed tax and the hydro-electric fees beginning July 1 with the angler AIS prevention pass for 16 yr. and older \$2.00 for residents and \$7.50 for nonresidents beginning March 1, 2020. The remaining funding is out of the general fund for the next two years.
- HB 497 – An act allowing for additional elk to be harvested. This allows the Commission to approve a harvest increase of up to 3 elk in any license year. That went into effect on May 8.
- HB 608 – An act of decontamination of certain vessels with ballast/bladders that enter the state or cross the continental divide into the Columbia River basin. That went into effect May 10th.
- HB 695 – Appropriate funds to FWP for recreation easement for Big Arm SP.
- SB 24 – Increases the optional light motor vehicle registration fee from \$6 to \$9 for state parks, fishing access sites and trails and recreation facilities. This goes into effect on January 1, 2020.
- SB 333 – Revises requirements for retention of evidence of sex for harvested animals to keeping it with you rather than attached to the animal or keeping the head.
- SB 341 – Establish public access land act. If there is public land locked this would allow an agreement with that landowner to provide public access across their property to public land.
- SB 344 – Allows for pick up of horns and skulls of bighorn sheep. There is a 48-hour reporting time and plugged within 10 days, cannot resell.
- SR 27 – Confirmed the State Parks Board who are Scott Brown, Erica Lighthiser, Mary Sheehy Moe, Betty Stone, Angie Grove (chairman)
<http://stateparks.mt.gov/about-us/parksBoard.html>
- SR 28 – Confirmed Fish & Wildlife Commissioners Tim Aldrich and Shane Colton.
- SR 48 – Confirmed Fish & Wildlife Commissioners Pat Byorth and Logan Brower.
<http://fwp.mt.gov/doingBusiness/insideFwp/commission/members.html>
- SJ 6 – A letter to Congress that Montana is in favor of delisting of the grizzly bear.

CAC members observations/input: CAC Members

Doug Dreeszen – People are unhappy with the Herrera decision and what is FWP’s position. Regulations were not distributed to license providers and there were no legal descriptions.

JW Westman – As a representative of the Laurel Rod & Gun Club members, wanted to pass on that Ken Frazer will be missed but welcome Mike Ruggles. Also welcome to Kevin Rose, and members are looking forward to visiting, and commenting on season setting. At their last meeting questions included ballot Initiative 161 funds earmarked for habitat and how to obtain that information, and where is the money going. Members still do not support shoulder seasons and would like to make sure the data from the criteria for shoulder seasons is presented in a timely fashion. In addition, the Laurel Rod & Gun Club is heavily involved in CWD and brucellosis.

Lee Brunckhorst - Interested in the Herrera case and where will it will end up. Also, any new season changes that affect the upcoming season.

Daniel Otis – The faded licensing issue. A no charge duplicate of the conservation/fishing can be issued at the office plus tags can be exchanged at the office at no charge.

Chris Fleck – Following the Reed Point and Two Bridges access improvements and how that is coming along; are there any modest upgrades or maintenance to any of the access sites on the Stillwater river. Mike will get back to Chris with information.

Jim Ballard – Observation from last winter in his area include a lot more mountain lion sign. He’s found most of the houndsmen do not like to turn their dogs out with subdivisions around. Kevin indicated that the quota

increased to level off the population of lions in Jim's area. Jim participated on a panel for the Montana Masters Hunters Program.

Dave Russell – Dave presented two letters from neighbors to Kevin on bear management and wolf management and would like answers. Barb indicated we'd follow up. Dave discussed a seminar he attended last fall that was presented by a veterinarian on the topic of bibersteinia trehalosi on the rise in beef cattle. Will contact our FWP disease ecologist and get back to Dave regarding elk and cattle. Barb will provide information regarding the Private Land/Public Wildlife group and future meetings to the CAC members.

Steve Regele – Thanks to FWP. Hearing concerns about hogs at the Canadian line; public access/public lands and public access/private lands; hold a forum with FWP and other organizations to discuss nonconsumptive recreational use plus to contribute to habitat, predator management to problem solving. FWP education outreach with Megan's participation at the Arbor Day was greatly appreciated. The forum held on the MT Natural Heritage Program database was well received. Front desk folks at the R5 HQs know what's going on and where, so they are noticed and appreciated. Pryor Gap windfarm is going to be a large windfarm and in an area that is important to nongame species as well as threatened and endangered species. Kevin indicated that FWP has provided information, and is tracking with concerns, but it is largely out of FWP's hands. Question on the state lines with regards to boat inspections and if there are efforts for states to collaborate. Mike indicated there is collaboration with MOU's with other state check stations that Montana accepts. The hours of operation of the check stations are on the website.

<https://mtfwp.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=5d0af93a2b6c4d9390dd5fde8ee8d5cf>

Lanie White – It's been a cold slow spring. They've seen a lot of moose, porcupines and songbirds.

Josh McQuillan – Hearing about the grizzly bear around Red Lodge with dispatch and feel FWP doing fine with monitoring plus dealing with the information; plus elk as one of their deputies hit an elk this last week causing quite a bit of damage to the vehicle; Cooney SP closure – suggesting to place a sign at Boyd. Sydney indicated the boat ramps were pulled because it's a liability.

Lee Deming – People he talks to are still in favor of shoulder seasons; concerns about grizzly bears.

Susan Gilbertz - Rusty Butler still would like to be on the CAC but is on the fire crews this summer. Are there peregrine falcons (answer "yes") and will they attack the Eurasian collar doves? Yes. The policy on Eurasian collar doves is you can shoot them anytime you want as many as you want as they are classified as an invasive species. This fall she'd like to get FWP updates and announcements to her fall students which they can sign up for through the FWP website.

Dan Aadland – Looking into the possibility of a fishing access site on their property on the East Rosebud.

Current hot topics: R5 Program Managers

Fishing regulations – Mike Ruggles

- Fishing regulation proposals – A survey is online to submit public comments whether by mail or e-mail no later than May 31 (<http://fwp.mt.gov/fish/publicComments/regsScoping.html>). Regulation proposals from this process will be presented to the Fish and Wildlife Commission at its August 15 meeting.
- Get any ideas on the best way to get public comment on the tentative fishing regulations to Mike (mikeruggles@mt.gov). He is planning public open houses between August 19 and September 13.

Season setting process – Bob Gibson

- The effort to simplify and rewrite the hunting and trapping regulations continues to move on.
- Clean up of the deer/elk/antelope, black bear and moose/goat/sheep has been done.
- Simplification and break out of the legal descriptions into one book will happen this year. Those will soon be printed and distributed to license providers and then used for a couple of years.
- The hunting regulation season setting process will begin sooner, with only one set of public comments. In addition to the open house concept, there may be a public online forum concept for the public to submit comments, thoughts and debate online.
- Down the road will conduct some reconfiguration of some hunting districts and look at regulations in general.

Grizzly bear management – Barb Beck

- Last fall a court in Missoula gave direction that grizzly bears would go back on endangered species list. With that MT FWP is not in charge of management and that goes back to the US Fish and Wildlife Service. FWP is still a face that will show up on your ranch when there is a conflict along with USDA depending upon the situation.
- FWP believes the grizzly bear has recovered in the greater Yellowstone ecosystem. We were working towards delisting in the Northern Continental Divide ecosystem because of population recovery when the direction was received.
- Probably the grizzly bear will not come off the list for quite a while because of the complicated issue of genetic connectivity.
- FWP will continue its management and conflict management job working with other agency partners and landowners.
- The Governor has established a Grizzly Bear Advisory Council this spring.

ExploreMT – Dianne Stiff

- The 2019 Legislature approved the department's \$10 million request to develop ExploreMT.
- The MT FWP's new business system, now called ExploreMT, is officially in the works and will replace our current automated license system (ALS) and our parks reservations system (Reserve America) in 2022.
- ExploreMT will provide a one-stop shop for buying hunting and fishing licenses and reserving campsites.

Supreme Court Herrera decision – Ron Jendro

- After the Attorney General's office and FWP attorney's review, the directive to our game wardens is that FWP will not be citing Crow Tribal members on Gallatin/Custer forest service lands east of the Yellowstone River.

Wrap-up and adjourn – next meeting will be sometime late August.