



MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

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Meeting Date: June 25, 2020

Agenda Item: 2020 Furbearer Trapping Regulations and Quotas

Action Needed: Proposed

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 45 minutes

Background: The department is proposing two regulation changes to furbearers and trapping as outlined below.

Swift Fox

- Expand the Trapping District 6 swift fox eastern boundary to align with Deer-Elk hunting district 670.
- Change swift fox season close date in Trapping District 6 from March 1 to January 15 to reduce overlap with the breeding season.

Public Involvement Process and Results: If adopted, public comment will be accepted at this meeting and until 5 p.m., July 28, 2020. Trappers from Region 6 were consulted and agreed that the earlier close to the swift fox season is appropriate as well as the expansion of the eastern boundary. The proposal to expand the boundary and shorten the season was discussed with the Fort Peck Tribes Fish and Wildlife Agency, who expressed no concern. Setbacks discussion will begin with a planned series of public meetings where input can be gathered over the next year, although no changes are proposed at this time.

Alternatives and Analysis: Retaining the current swift fox boundary will continue to result in confiscation of swift fox from an area that is now part of the broader population and these foxes will continue to be absent from the quota. Not reducing the season length and keeping the swift fox season end date at March 15 will afford trappers slightly more opportunity but could result in a minor reduction in reproductive capacity of the population.

Agency Recommendation and Rationale: The department recommends the commission adopt for public comment department's furbearer conservation and trapping regulation proposals as outlined above.

Proposed Motion: I move the commission adopt for public comment department's furbearer conservation and trapping regulation proposals as presented, with all other aspects of the to remain unchanged, except for regular calendar rotation, unless addressed in other proposals.