



MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

CAC MEETING MINUTES

June 2, 2021

Frenchtown Pond State Park

In Attendance

Members: Lea Bossler, Louie Bouma, Marc Cooke, Clayton Elliott, Matt Fregerio, Everett Headley, Laurie Johnston, Matthew Quinlan, Carey Schmitt, Ron Skinner, Pat Sweeney and Susan Thraen.

Staff: Randy Arnold, Lori Brooks, Vivaca Crowser, Loren Flynn, Joe Jaquith, Ron Jendro, Pat Saffel, Dori Schiele, Mike Thompson

Guests: Commissioner-Tim Aldrich and FWP Legislative Liaison, Ron Jendro

Welcome & introductions

Vivaca Crowser welcomed all in attendance and gave a special welcome to the new CAC members and to guest speaker, Ron Jendro (FWP Legislative Liaison).

CAC Changes and New Member Recruitment

Randy Arnold (*R2 Regional Supervisor*) shared that Director Hank Worsech is looking at a few changes for the CAC related to consistency in operation and diverse membership:

- 15-20 members
- 2-year terms
 - More turnover, fresh ideas/input from new members.
 - Current members could serve more than one term.
 - Standardize the selection process.
 - Summarize the “categories” of interests that CAC members bring to the table.
 - Agendas for meetings need to be similar in format.
 - CAC to assist more with hunting season setting process.
- In the next month or two, the Director would like to implement a chairperson for each CAC. This person would serve as “liaison” with CAC members, other CAC groups and FWP. The particulars of the chair role is still being sorted out, but in general they will help with more direct communication with the CAC members, meeting planning and potentially coordination with other CACs around the state.
- Each region in the state has a Fish & Wildlife Commissioner. The new R2 Commissioner begins a term in October 2021.

Vivaca Crowser (*R2 Information/Education Program Manager*)

- Five CAC member terms are expiring this year. We will see if they would like to renew their terms or if we need to do new member recruitment.

Frenchtown Pond and Parks Program Update-Loren Flynn

- Welcome to Frenchtown Pond State Park!
- Frenchtown Pond is one of seven parks that are open year-round in Montana.
- It is a gravel pit for I-90 that is spring fed.
- The amount of use has been increasing. For example, September/October use is similar to the July use of ten years ago.

Parks Program Updates:

- **Painted Rocks (Bitterroot)**
 - Six campsites are now available for reservations on weekends for the first time this season.
- **Fort Owen State Park (Stevensville)**
 - Still closed until paving is finished.
 - Grand opening to come soon.
- **John Owen FAS at Stevensville Bridge**
 - Access secured and site improvements to come. Great asset to river users and the community.
- **Council Grove State Park**
 - Primitive parks use by statute (pack in/pack out)-no trash cans, which doesn't match with the increased visitation over the years.
 - Increasing recreational use (high dog use, some fishing/hunting).
- **Milltown State Park**
 - Fall construction of Bandman Trailhead to the lower overlook.
- **Placid Lake and Salmon Lake State Park**
 - Issues with camping on some other public lands near Placid Lake and then those campers using park facilities (showers/trash).
- **River recreation partnerships in the Missoula area continue**

Legislative Session Recap-Ron Jendro

Ron gave a recap of the outcome of the 49 bills that were introduced in the 2021 legislative session.

FWP Fisheries Program Updates-Pat Saffel

- **Blackfoot River Corridor Float-In Camping**
 - Addition of four new float-in campsites this year (*Bear Creek Flats, Ponderosa Flats, Goose Rock and Clark's Cliff*).
 - River Ranger, Cannon Colegrove produced a new "Floater's Guide" showcasing the sites, maps, photos and general information about the program. It has been well received.
 - Usage for float-in sites has been increasing greatly-By June 1, 2021, we had already exceeded the entire 2020 season reservations.
- Upper Clarkfork-Decline of Brown Trout possibly due to warming air/water temperatures.
- Georgetown Lake – Kokanee fishing has been great this year; looking into the reasons behind that.
- North Fork Project meeting to be held June 24, 2021.

Trapping Setbacks Subcommittee-Susan Thraen and Wildlife Program Updates-Mike Thompson

Recommendations-

- Commission to hear about changes in "set-backs" from each region at the June 24th meeting, then out for public comment.
- No changes in trapping in Region 2 at this point because the committee could not reach consensus, but work on this topic will continue when other opportunities allow.

Miscellaneous Discussion

- Possibility of inviting Director Worsech to our next R2 CAC meeting in August/September?

Meeting adjourned and next quarterly meeting TBD.