

Wickman, Erik

From: Matthew Ladra <mladra@jhmi.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, April 2, 2024 6:36 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Swan River

I am writing this letter to strongly support the return to catch and release only for our Swan River rainbows. As one of the more unique and prolific wild rainbow streams in Montana I see no reason why there should be any need for harvest options given the numerous other opportunities to keep rainbows in the area. The Swan river is why I return to that area of MT year after year and would hate to see that beautiful stream compromised further.

Matt

Matthew Ladra, MD MPH
Director, Pediatric Radiation Oncology
Endowed Professor, Radiation Oncology and Molecular Radiation Sciences
Johns Hopkins School of Medicine
Mobile (650) 714-1044
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Wickman, Erik

From: mtduckhunter@gmail.com
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 12:03 PM
To: commissionerregion1@mtfwp.org; commissionerregion2@mtfwp.org;
commissionerregion3@mtfwp.org; KC Walsh; commissionerregion5@mtfwp.org;
commissionerregion6@mtfwp.org; commissionerregion7@mtfwp.org; FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Yellowstone River Closure Amendment

Dear Commissioners:

I whole hardily support Commissioner Cebull's amendment to the 2024-25 Migratory Bird regulations to keep the Yellowstone River Closure intact.

I also encourage the Commission to direct the FWP to establish joint FWP/Waterfowl Stakeholder committees in each of the Pacific and Central Flyways. These committees will work together, along with the USFWS, to address Montana waterfowl seasons, zones, and limits.

Thank you for your service to the residents of Montana,
Steve

Steve Christian

PO Box 562
Colstrip, MT 59323
Cell – 406/740-1025
mtduckhunter@gmail.com

Wickman, Erik

From: Bell, Crissy
Sent: Friday, April 5, 2024 9:56 AM
To: mtduckhunter@gmail.com
Cc: Wakeling, Brian; Wickman, Erik
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] REPEAL OF BIG GAME MANAGEMENT POLICY

Thank you for your comment!

Crissy J. Bell | *Paralegal*
Legal Unit
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Cell: (406) 594-8071



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From: mtduckhunter@gmail.com <mtduckhunter@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 3, 2024 1:44 PM
To: Bell, Crissy <cbell@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] REPEAL OF BIG GAME MANAGEMENT POLICY

Dear Commissioners,
I support the repeal of this policy.
Thank you for the continued great work w/ Montana's big game animals.

Take care,
Steve

Steve Christian

PO Box 562
Colstrip, MT 59323
Cell – 406/740-1025
mtduckhunter@gmail.com

Wickman, Erik

From: Wild Trout Adventures <mac@glacierflyfishing.com>
Sent: Friday, April 5, 2024 1:28 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Attachments: 4 (d) rule section-4d-rules_0.pdf; Fish Species Identification_2023-03-26_111728.pdf; Swan River Fishing Regulations 2.docx

Dear Commissioners,

As a sportsman, and as an outfitter on the Upper Swan River for the past 34 years the intent of the regulation on the Swan River was to prevent misidentification of fish. Before this regulation was changed, we have watched multiple violations regarding the take of Bull trout, most people think they are a different species such as a Brook or Brown trout. There is no cell phone service on the upper Swan. I was also a part of Cutthroat study on the upper Swan and out of 3000 fin clips of fish that look like Cutthroat none of them are genetically pure. The Swan River's composition of fish species is a cross of Cutthroat and Rainbow. There are no pure strains of these species. They are a derivative of Rainbow trout and Cutthroat which FWP admits must be released which is on page 28 of the fishing regulations. What is even more discerning is that the public process was not made available to the sportsman. They simply went in, admitted there was no public comment, and changed the regulations. Sportsmen of the Swan Valley were not happy. We thought we would have heard of it but we didn't basically we were hoodwinked. Their actions have caused a lot of frustration for the angling community, and it created major distrust for FWP Region 1. Regulations are meant to protect resources not to cause harm to them. I have attached a letter that I forwarded to the Regional Supervisor which was written originally to Nathan Reiner and completely shows that this regulation is in violation of State and Federal law, ESA.

Sincerely,
Mac Vinnedge
Wild Trout Adventures

Wickman, Erik

From: Clayton Elliott <clayton@montanatu.org>
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 8:14 PM
To: FWP Commission
Cc: Ryce, Eileen; commissionerregion1@mtfwp.org; Temple, Dustin; commissionerregion2@mtfwp.org; commissionerregion3@mtfwp.org; KC Walsh; commissionerregion5@mtfwp.org; commissionerregion6@mtfwp.org; commissionerregion7@mtfwp.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MTU written public comments on Swan River Fishing Regulation amendment
Attachments: 2024-04-05 SwanFishRegMTUComments FNL.pdf

To Whom It May Concern:

Please find attached written public comment submitted on behalf of Montana Trout Unlimited and Flathead Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited concerning the proposed amendment to the fishing regulations for the Swan River. Do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or need additional information from me. Thank you in advance for your consideration of these comments.

I look forward to speaking to these on April 17th as well.

Sincerely,
Clayton Elliott

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Clayton Elliott
Conservation and Government Affairs Director
Montana Trout Unlimited
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Butte, Montana 59701
o: 406-543-0054
c: 307-272-6298
www.montanatu.org [montanatu.org]



Wickman, Erik

From: James Freyholtz <freyholtz@blackfoot.net>
Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2024 10:59 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Swan River Fishing Regulations Amendment

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposal. I am a native of the Swan Valley and called it home for over 50 years. I am against the proposed amendment to change the regulations for eliminating the harvesting of rainbow on the Swan River.

First note the information contained in the "Proposed Amendment Language with Department Response" is not entirely accurate. It is indicating that the Swan River was historically catch-and-release for rainbow as well as cutthroat trout. In actuality prior to 2020 the regulations were for catch-and-release of rainbow and cutthroat from "Piper Creek Bridge downstream to Swan Lake", and catch-and-release for cutthroat from "Swan Lake outlet downstream to the Highway 35 Bridge." However, prior to 2020 upstream from the Piper Creek Bridge the western District standard was in effect for harvesting of cutthroat and rainbow. (It should be noted that historically outfitters had operated mainly downstream from the Piper Creek Bridge.) The 2020 regulations changed to allow harvesting of rainbow as per the Western District standard and also changed cutthroat to catch-and-release for the entire Swan River.

Secondly the "Rationale & Background" indicates there was a meeting with "a group of constituents both outfitters and sportsmen" to discuss the issue and concerns; however, I have not yet heard from any of my Swan Valley neighbors (many who like myself are sportsmen) that were part of or even aware of any meetings to discuss concerns with the Swan River fishing regulations. (This gives a feeling of disappointment and one might say belittlement of Swan Valley residents.)

As previously stated I urge you not to approve the proposed amendment. Or at the very least table it to allow for complete and accurate information to be made available to all and thus providing for proper evaluation and comments.

James Freyholtz
Condon, MT

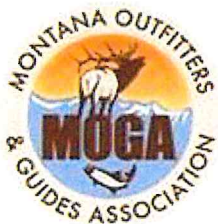
Wickman, Erik

From: moga-will@mt.net
Sent: Wednesday, April 3, 2024 12:54 PM
To: FWP Commission
Cc: Scott Vollmer; 'andy guy'
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: MOGA Support for Fishing Regulation Amendment on Swan River
Attachments: MOGA Support for Fishing Regulation Amendment on the Swan River v2.pdf

Hi Eric,

Thank you again for taking the call and for removing the previous submission, please use this one instead.

Will Israel
Executive Director
Montana Outfitters and Guides Association (MOGA)
Big Hearts Under the Big Sky
O: 406.449.3578
C: 406.439.1205
Email: moga-will@mt.net
MOGA: [Website \[montanaoutfitters.org\]](http://montanaoutfitters.org) and [Facebook \[facebook.com\]](https://facebook.com)
Big Hearts Under the Big Sky: [Website \[bigheartsmt.org\]](http://bigheartsmt.org) and [Facebook \[facebook.com\]](https://facebook.com)
Learn About the Hunter and Angler Defense Fund [HERE \[montanaoutfitters.org\]](http://montanaoutfitters.org)



From: moga-will@mt.net <moga-will@mt.net>
Sent: Wednesday, April 3, 2024 11:48 AM
To: 'FWComm@mt.gov' <FWComm@mt.gov>
Cc: Scott Vollmer <vollmerscott@yahoo.com>; 'andy guy' <flyfishin24@yahoo.com>
Subject: MOGA Support for Fishing Regulation Amendment on Swan River

FWP Commission,

Please see the attached statement from MOGA in support of the fishing regulation amendment on the Swan River. We thank you for your consideration of our position on the amendment and look forward to attending the commission meeting here in a couple of weeks.

Will Israel
Executive Director
Montana Outfitters and Guides Association (MOGA)

Big Hearts Under the Big Sky

O: 406.449.3578

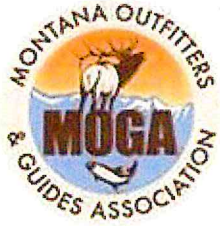
C: 406.439.1205

Email: moga-will@mt.net

MOGA: [Website \[montanaoutfitters.org\]](http://montanaoutfitters.org) and [Facebook \[facebook.com\]](https://facebook.com)

Big Hearts Under the Big Sky: [Website \[bigheartsmt.org\]](http://bigheartsmt.org) and [Facebook \[facebook.com\]](https://facebook.com)

Learn About the Hunter and Angler Defense Fund [HERE \[montanaoutfitters.org\]](http://montanaoutfitters.org)



Wickman, Erik

From: mtduckhunter@gmail.com
Sent: Sunday, April 7, 2024 8:16 AM
Cc: Steve Christian
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Results - Migratory Bird Regs Comments

FWP 2024-25 Migratory Bird Regulations Comments Analysis ^{1,2}																
Reply / Comment	For	% of Total	Residency				Local ³		FWP Region							Other Comm
			MT	%	Non	%	#	%	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Keep Yellowstone River Closure (YRC)	173	89%	132	89%	41	91%	76	94%	0	5	32	9	32	4	50	UT-13, ID-MN-4, SD NE, OR, K
Open YRC	21	11%	17	11%	4	9%	5	6%	0	2	3	1	10	0	1	TX, AZ, \
PF Season Changes	24		23		1				4	7	10	2	0	0	0	IL
CF Season Changes	21		20		1				0	0	3	1	13	2	1	SI
Snow Goose Season Chgs.	3		3		0				1	1	0	0	1	0	0	

¹Tally includes all on-line comments and the additional three written submittals. Four (4) who commented in the wrong agenda item are also i

² Ducks Unlimited and Backcountry Hunters & Anglers - provided Neutral comments that are not included in the above table.

³ Local = Commenters of Yellowstone, Treasure, Rosebud, & Bighorn Counties.

Dear Commissioners,
 Thank you for your service to the sports folks of MT.

The above table was compiled from ~240 comments received. That contrasts w/ the total of 167 individual on-line commenters for the Biennial Hunting Season-Setting Public comment period that covered all MT game animal seasons. Conclusion - MT Waterfowlers and supporters are passionate about waterfowl and waterfowl hunting.

Basic analysis:

1. There is overwhelming opposition to opening the Yellowstone River Closure from Locals, other MT residents & non-residents. 89% against opening!
 - a. Another consideration – there is a large concentration of Block Management cooperators along this corridor as opposed to east & west of it. Why? Perhaps these landowners are most in-tune with the resource and what it provides.
2. Nearly 50 comments were received dealing w/ both Pacific & Central Flyway waterfowl seasons, zone structures, and limits. 2025 is a critical year for MT to work w/ the USFWS to determine if changes can be made to our current seasons. Perhaps this is a good time for FWP to work w/ dedicated flyway waterfowlers to address their ideas and concerns.

Thank you,
 Steve

Steve Christian

PO Box 562
Colstrip, MT 59323
Cell – 406/740-1025
mtduckhunter@gmail.com

Wickman, Erik

From: oehleroutdoors@gmail.com
Sent: Saturday, March 30, 2024 10:12 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Swan River Proposed Fishing Regulation Amendment

Hello, I would like to voice my opposition to the proposed amendment which would implement catch and release for rainbow trout on the Swan River. As noted by the department, this change would reduce harvest opportunity for river anglers and contradict the Statewide Fisheries Management Plan. Concerns noted in the amendment seem to already be addressed by the department or current regulations, and moving to catch and release for rainbow trout would not address the lake trout predation.

If the single hook regulation is accepted, I would recommend the commission to follow the recommendation of the department to implement the single hook regulation for the entire Swan upstream of Swan Lake.

Thank you.

