

Wickman, Erik

From: Matthew McCauley <mmccauley57@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 6:32 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland season date structure

Hi,

I would like to comment against moving the upland season date to September 15th. I would like the opportunity to come hunt this year the first week of September.

Thanks,
Matthew McCauley

Wickman, Erik

From: David Shimek <superdtoo@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 4:14 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Game Bird amendment 1

I am fully supportive of delaying the opener for nonresidents . There is too much pressure by nonresidents coming to Montana. FWP needs to do more to help out the resident hunters. North Dakota doesn't allow nonresidents to hunt their version of block management the start of the season to save the best hunting for residents.

I would also like an amendment proposed to increase nonresident fees to \$200-\$300 for a nonresident upland bird license. It costs me \$120 to fill my truck with one tank of gas . This isn't a big ask for nonresidents to do their part.

I would also like to see the youth hunt be extended to 17 years old. It is ridiculous that right now kids in high school don't fall into the youth hunting category. Kids have very limited time to hunt with school and sports. It isn't too much to ask to allow families with multiple kids to be able to hunt together through high school.

Thanks
David Shimek
Shepherd MT

Sent from my iPhone

Wickman, Erik

From: Joe Anastasio <joe.p.anastasio@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 3:34 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment on Proposed Amendment to Upland Game Bird Regulations for Nonresidents

Hello-

My name is Joe Anastasio and I am a resident of Maryland who has enjoyed upland bird hunting in Montana in the past as a nonresident. I am writing to express my displeasure with the proposed amendment to adjust the nonresident upland season to a September 15 start. I ask you to consider a few points:

1. This proposal will reduce the number of nonresident upland hunters to your state, impacting revenue to many small town businesses.
2. If the concern is an overuse of the resource by nonresident hunters then I believe this could be much more effectively (and fairly) be governed by limiting the duration of a nonresident upland hunting license (say a 5 day license) or limiting bag limits for nonresidents.
3. Implementing this change just a few months before the 2024 season may unfairly impact existing travel plans.
4. If this rule must be implemented, then it should only apply to public land. Excluding nonresident hunters from private land is an unfair restriction on Montana landowners.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Joseph P Anastasio
717-580-3532

Wickman, Erik

From: Brian Carroll <bscarrolldvm@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 1:00 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on Upland bird season regulation changes.

I would like to preface my comments by stating that I am a nonresident upland hunter and have purchased a nonresident base hunting and upland bird season license, conservation license, state lands recreational use permit, and subscription to Montana Outdoors and have hunted upland birds in Montana every single season since 1997, 26 seasons in a row. I have enjoyed and expressed my appreciation for the privilege to do so to MT. FWP, BMA participants, private landowners, and merchants all across eastern MT at every opportunity. I will continue to come and hunt as long as I am able and allowed to do so.

Amendment #1 Change Nonresident start to 9-15:

Won't affect me personally as I never come prior to last week of September mainly because danger to dogs and man associated with hot temperatures. The other reason is I think juvenile Sharp Tails and Huns should be protected until they are slightly more mature and educated to avoid predators including hunters. I would be in favor of backing everyone off for 2 more weeks. That said, if resident hunters feel they need a head start on state lands and state managed Block management areas you could certainly change the regulation. However, what if a private landowner wishes to allow a nonresident (family member or not) to hunt their place? What about federally owned lands? I think I should have equal right to hunt those as residents.

Amendment #2 Training season start date change for nonresidents:

I think it does nothing.

If your intent is to reduce out-of-state presence by moving the nonresident hunting season back to 9/15 you will negate that effect by allowing training on wild birds by nonresidents 9/1. They will just buy training permits and come "stake out" their spots 2 weeks early.

I feel it pretty naive to think that you can decrease the out of state dog training by imposing a license requirement with a \$10 fee. Those that come to train on wild birds drive \$100,000 rigs filled with dogs and expensive equipment, hired help, etc. to benefit from the open habitat and wildlife. \$1000 license would not deter them as the commercial guys will merely pass it on to clients, and it is a relatively small addition to the cost of a 2-week trip for a DIY trainer with a few dogs. I know that from years of personal experience.

Brian S. Carroll D.V.M.
Oklahoma City Equine Clinic P.C.
400 NE 70th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73105
(405) 843-1099 office
(405) 630-5579 cell



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[\[avast.com\]](http://avast.com)

Wickman, Erik

From: Christine Dickinson <quietpaths@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 12:38 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Black+Bear+Season+Setting+Comment

Greetings,

I would like to voice my concern and opposition to the proposed hunting changes for Black Bears. We live in NW Montana and the pressure on bear populations is quite obvious, especially with so many new residents who don't understand wildlife, or even how to live with large forest animals.

Black Bears are an important part of the experience of being in MT. I am a fifth generation Montanan. My mom, who was an avid fisherman, taught me some pretty basic rules dealing with black Bears, and they didn't involve shooting them.

It is concerning that FWP hasn't had a good analysis done in a long time addressing bear populations. You need to know about accidental death, road kill, poaching, and simply "shoot, shovel and shut up."

We can't keep doing things as has always been done. The climate is changing. We need to give our wildlife the best possible chance of survival, and not be the reason species have to struggle. It will happen eventually to the black bear, with all the pressure on habitat. You reduce the number of a large mammals and the balance of nature is disrupted. Stick to the science: Stop the process of killing. But you know this already.

It's very obvious that Commissioner Tabor has a vested business interest in extending the bear season. He should remove himself from such seats of decision and FWP needs to grow a spine in such suggestions which are clearly not in the bears' interest.

I'm tired of having to write protests in the defense of our wildlife here in Montana. These species have rights too. Those of us who appreciate the wild Bears beyond wanting to shoot them, should be heard too. Bears have a right to live here. There a better way.

Wickman, Erik

From: Chuck Schwartz <cschwartzconsulting@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 11:42 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Bird dog training

I am a retired wildlife biologist living in Montana for 25 years. I think Montana should consider closing all bird dog training on public land. Most of those training bird dogs are professional trainers who can more than afford using pen raised birds for training rather than harassing broods of wild birds pre-season. Secondly scattering broods of young pheasants and sharptails increases the chances of mortality from predation. Young birds rely on the adults for protection and all the eyes of the brood to detect the presence of danger. Scattering young broods likely increases mortality. Also very young birds are vulnerable to being caught and killed by the dog. This is especially true for pheasants which are not as mature this time of year. If the commission cannot make it illegal to train dogs on wild birds on public lands then I support moving the season back the 2 weeks as suggested. This at least gives the young birds a chance to grow some. I also support opening the season to nonresidents later as proposed. Montana has been discovered and the number of nonresident hunters has increased to the point that the quality of hunting has declined.

Thanks

Chuck Schwartz
Certified wildlife biologist
Bozeman Montana
Sent from my iPhone

Wickman, Erik

From: Charlotte Heldstab <savegrizzlies@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 11:07 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Black Bear Season Setting Comment

Please do not extend the proposed black bear hunting season. This is so inhumane and not necessary. All of us up here where I live in the mountains outside of Whitefish are thrilled to see even one black bear each summer. They cause no harm to anyone.

Also, please completely do away with hound hunting. This is not "fair chase" for the bears. It's just a lazy way for hunters to kill a bear and then be able to brag about it.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Charlotte Heldstab
Whitefish, MT

Wickman, Erik

From: Rob Lowe <roblowe.mt@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 10:01 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Bird season and dog training dates

Yes yes and YES! Great move to give residents an opportunity without the increase in competition. Other states do similar things, we should too. Great move to reduce competition, pressure on birds before season starts, and give residents their fair shot at our birds.

Wickman, Erik

From: Larry Campbell <outlook_EDA0C41E69E34535@outlook.com> on behalf of Larry Campbell <lcampbell@bitterroot.net>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 9:55 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Black Bear Season Setting Comment

There should be no spring hunting of black bears. Killing mother bears leaves the cubs to die a slow death. The ground is often soft and muddy and trails often turn into canals of snowmelt leading to avoidable erosion and stream sediment, especially with strings of stock used by outfitters.

Hound hunting is not fair chase and should be outlawed.

I have an affinity for black bears and have been fortunate to have many close encounters ever since childhood, when my mom chased one off our cabin's porch where my brother and I slept, with a broom.

For the bears,
Larry Campbell

Sent from [Mail \[go.microsoft.com\]](mailto:go.microsoft.com) for Windows

Wickman, Erik

From: Carol Fox <7207carfan@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 7:55 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] proposed amendments to 2024 Upland Game Bird Regulations

I SUPPORT the two proposed amendments to the 2024 Upland Game Bird Regulations that would change the hunting season for non-residents and the dog training season. I am a MT resident and bird-hunter. These changes will help reduce early season pressure on upland game bird populations and state land leases and users and offer a reasonable preference for resident bird-hunters comparable to what has been the norm in neighboring western states for a long time.

Thank you for your consideration of my input,

Carolyn Fox
2111 9th Ave.
Helena, MT 59601

Wickman, Erik

From: Michael Bazala <mikeb103@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 8:20 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland bird regulation amendments
Attachments: IMG_8360.jpeg

Dear committee,
I just wanted to provide comment on the proposed upland game bird amendments.

I am in favor of both of the proposals. As a bird hunter and father of a young bird hunter I have been in disbelief last couple seasons at the influx of out of state hunters during the opening week. Out of all of the hunters that we encountered last season, only 1 other hunter was from Montana. Most of the non-resident hunters we encountered had dog boxes with several dogs. We live in Livingston and like to spend the opener in eastern Montana where the sharp tail and hun populations are much greater. There were several times this last season where we would show up to a BMA or state section just at shooting light and there would already be non-resident hunters there unloading dogs. Hunting with my daughter and not being comfortable with other hunters I don't know, we would move in to another place less desirable.

With the added pressure of pre-season dog training in the late summer, a lot of the birds we encountered acted more like late season birds flushing extremely early or with no pressure. This is especially difficult when you're trying to get your 12 year old hunter into birds at a range she can identify the species and make a shot. Thank you for considering these amendments to the regulations. I think they both support our resident hunters and give non-resident hunters an opportunity to still enjoy our hunting opportunities as well.

Sincerely,

Michael Bazala

Wickman, Erik

From: Andrew Poalino <ajprugby@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 7:22 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2024 Upland Game Bird Regulations

Good evening,

I wanted to voice my opinion, that I support the 1st & 2nd amendment regarding 2024 Upland regulations. As a MT resident, it was hard to find solitude during the first two weeks of the season. Especially from non resident pressure, which has increased tremendously over the past few years. Myself and many residents would be greatly appreciated with these current adjustments to upland hunting.

I'm grateful for the economic impact that non residents bring, but something has to change.

Respectfully,

Andrew Poalino

Sent from my iPhone

Wickman, Erik

From: craig underwood <craig.underwood@icloud.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 6:29 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] FWP Amendment 1 & 2, Upland Game Bird / Bird Dog Training

I fully support the two amendments delaying the start of nonresident hunting and dog training. As a hunter / falconer in region 6, we have seen a dramatic increase in nonresident hunting & dog training in the past several years. This increase has negatively impacted the access to fields by residents. I can't imagine that there won't also be a negative impact on bird populations, especially when drought years occur. Although the majority of nesting is finished by September 1, the recent increase in hunting pressure will help decrease populations. With the continued decrease in CRP acreage, hunting & dog pressure is focused on constantly decreasing acreage. Thank you.

Wickman, Erik

From: Brewer Butler <brewerbutler@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 5:42 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Amendments to Upland Regulations

FWP,

I appreciate your changes to the upland regulations concerning non resident crowding. Why not leave the first week of pheasant to just residents as well? It is just so crowded in certain areas of the state on pheasant opener and the crowding I find is almost exclusively non-resident based. I could not hunt my traditional spots the last couple years as there has been not one but 3-5 trucks in a relatively isolated location all nonresident where traditionally there I have rarely had competition.

I like that you all are also prolonging the bear season to June 15th state wide. The past few years have been awful snowy/cold in that first week of the season where I hunt in Paradise Valley. Thank you for valuing the input from your hunters and outdoorsmen and women.
Brewer Butler

Wickman, Erik

From: Jonathan Gitter <jgitter89@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 5:02 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment for Upland Game Bird/Bird Dog Training

Hi,

I live in Scobey, MT (Daniels County) and **HIGHLY** support FWP Amendment 1 and 2 for Upland Game Bird / Bird Dog Training.

This is my first year living in Scobey and experiencing a fall bird hunting season. I can honestly say I was shocked by two things. The quality of hunting here and the number of out of state hunters. After talking to my neighbors they also expressed concern about the latter of the two listed.

I was fortunate to get most of my hunting on private land after experiencing only three weekends of public land hunting in Daniels County. I could tell the areas I hunted had immense pressure from hunters training their dogs before opening day and hunting after. Birds were very easily spooked or weren't there at all. Many out of state hunters at the local bars in Scobey brag about bringing 5, 10, 20, even 30 dogs up here to hunt and train. How can I compete with just me, maybe a buddy or two, and my one dog?

I'm very fortunate to know folks that allow me to hunt on private land but hate having to call in a favor to do my favorite type of hunting. I moved from a state that has zero public land and consider myself lucky to live in a state that has so much of it. I want to use more of it but out of state competition is fierce. It feels like they're commercially hunting.

Unfortunately many out of staters hunt for extended periods of time (30 + days). I can only hunt on the weekends and competing with those who can take that much time to hunt hurts my chances as a resident. I would make another recommendation to limit out of state licenses to a maximum of two weeks instead of the whole season.

Thank you for the two proposals, I support them fully!

-Jon

Wickman, Erik

From: po hall <buffapo8@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 4:49 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] black bear season

Black Bear Season Setting Comment

Now here is a blatant conflict of interest if ever there was one! Pat Tabor profits from his own decisions allowing a longer black bear hunting season! there is no reason to extend the season. and there are no studies on habitat or population on which to base this decision. Killing black bears does NOT increase elk population either. there is also no purpose for hound hunting and training either, and that should be ended. a spring bear hunt would leave even more mothers dead, and then the cubs die too. there should be people on this commission who are not hunters and trappers so these decisions reflect the desires of the rest of Montana's population. !!

Wickman, Erik

From: Lisa Davis <sensualkitten06@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 4:44 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Bear hunting

Black+Bear+Season+Setting+Comment PLEASE DONT EXTEND BEAR HUNTING ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU LET THE HUNTERS USE BAIT AND HOUNDS TO MAKE THE BEAR HUNT EVEN MORE CRUEL!! I WANT NO HUNTING IF BEARS AT ALL!! ITS NOT A SPORT TO MURDER ANIMALS

Wickman, Erik

From: Margarita McLarty <mclarty1@outlook.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 4:42 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Extending Spring Black Bear Season

Black Bear Season Setting Comment

To the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission

I am writing to urge you NOT TO EXTEND the Spring hunting season for harvesting Black Bears in any of the areas of Montana that you folks set regulations for. With our increasing human population, and corresponding presence of people and dogs on our trails, we need to limit, not expand the presence of hounds and hunters in order to mitigate potential dangerous encounters. Spring bear cubs would become more vulnerable to losing their mothers with an extended season. The proposal is not well reasoned nor does it benefit our wildlife or our residents. It appears to be designed to enhance the profits of outfitters at the expense of the rest of us. PLEASE abide by your mandates to care for and preserve our public wildlife.

Thank you for your consideration,

Margarita McLarty

Don & Margarita McLarty
Mclarty1@outlook.com
1.406.333.4746
85 Chicory Road
Livingston, Montana 59047

Sent from [Mail \[go.microsoft.com\]](mailto:Mail [go.microsoft.com]) for Windows

Wickman, Erik

From: chrishyle55 <chrishyle55@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 4:19 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland bird season amendmebts

I fully support the proposed amendment to start upland bird season for non-residents on Sept.15, and to start the bird dog training season for non-residents on Sept first. Thank you for considering the impacts that the hordes of nonresident bird hunters are having on our game bird populations and the recreational opportunities for residents.

Respectfully Yours

Christopher M. Hyle
109 Star Lane
Butte, MT 59701
1 (406) 560 6683

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

Wickman, Erik

From: Mike Larson <mike@bigtimberworks.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 3:39 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] upland bird amendments

I am in full support of FWP changing the season dates for out of state dog trainers and hunters. You guys are doing a great job. Keep it up

Mike Larson

Michael D Larson
Co-CEO
Big Timberworks Inc
mike@bigtimberworks.com
406-539-6845

Wickman, Erik

From: Gregory Siekaniec <siekaniec@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 3:17 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland Game Bird Seasons

Dear Sir or Madam,

If you are considering making adjustments to the opening dates for upland bird seasons please do not differentiate between residents and nonresidents. If you feel the need to change the opening date of the upland bird season due to biological or conservation concerns then adjust it for all hunters. If there is no biological or conservation reason then please consider leaving the date as it is presently.

Also, field training season for dogs should align with the opening date for hunting. Again, if the decision is being made for biological or conservation purposes then the same concerns should dictate the opening dates for all activities.

Opportunities to hunt upland birds have become much more limited recently due to posted lands and State School Lands being intensively utilized for cropping and grazing. Losing more days afield may add to the continued loss of hunters that is already experiencing significant declines.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment.

Gregory E Siekaniec

Wickman, Erik

From: nfbass (null) <nfbass@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 2:23 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland game bird

My name is Kent Bass. I am a non-resident Montana property owner that someday soon will be a Montana resident. If you don't like non-resident comments on the subject, I totally get it and don't really blame you. I just want to say that I am a conservationist first, a Montana wildlife viewing fan second and lastly a hunter. Every year my friends and I end up at my property the first couple of weeks of September to Upland gamebird hunt. Most years we start our first hunt and say "what are we doing here in this heat?" We can't take it, our dogs can't take it, but we can't help ourselves from coming and trying it each year. What ends up happening is, we spend the week shopping, dining, fishing, golfing and just generally spending a lot of money in Billings and Lewistown. The local restaurants, bars, golf courses and Sportscenter in Lewistown LOVE us. We are in the area to hunt, but the Upland gamebirds do not need to worry about us. It is a great time to hang out with friends and enjoy the beautiful scenery central Montana has to offer. Like many men, my friends and I usually need an excuse to go on a trip together and for us it is bird hunting. We don't do very much bird hunting those first two weeks but we do enjoy ourselves and are glad to be there. I feel like moving the season back for nonresidents would short the local businesses out of a lot of money even though we have very little impact on the local upland gamebird population. As far as the bird dog training season delay for nonresidents, I don't feel like those guys are affecting anything negatively. I think, pushing them back two weeks would only cost the local economy money. Please give me a call if you would like to discuss this further. Good luck with your decisions.

Thanks

Kent Bass 850-933-8167

Wickman, Erik

From: GREGORY WINDTBERG <bergmt@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 1:44 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland game bird changes

I support commissioner Lesley Robinson changes to the upland game bird season. Amendment 1 Change opening day for non res hunters to Sept 15th Amendment 2 Chance dog training in the field to Sept 1st. Please support the residents that live here and not the out of staters that come here and wipeout our bird population. Thank you.

Wickman, Erik

From: Robin Fladager <rfladager@procoopag.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 1:42 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland Game Bird / Bird Dog Training

I want to give my full 100% support of FWP Amendment 1 and FWP Amendment 2 sponsored by Chair Robinson.

--

Robin Fladager
Agronomist

PRO Co-op
80 Highway 5
Scobey, MT 59263
O:406-487-2742
C:406-783-7647
rfladager@procoopag.com
CCA# 512462

Wickman, Erik

From: Ben Schaefer <benschaefer18@outlook.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 1:30 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] FWP proposal to be amended: Black Bear Regulations

I am for the Black Bear Regulation changes for the 2024-2025 hunting seasons. For many years I and other black bear hunter I know have talked about somehow trying to change the ending date of the season to June 15th or even possibly July 1st (like our neighboring state of Idaho in some hunting units). At times it has been difficult to access areas where I like to black bear hunt due to the amount of snow that area has received the previous winter. I am glad that the Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks has acknowledged this difficulty and are trying to change the ending date of the season. Thank you for all the hard work you do, and I look forward to enjoying the outdoors that Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks is helping to preserve for future generations.

Wickman, Erik

From: oknute@gmail.com
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:09 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland bird hunting amendments

I fully support the new upland bird amendments! Thank you! I would personally go one further and limit the number of dogs that can be trained during the training season to 1 or 2. Commercial training of dogs should not be allowed at state/hunter expense there are a lot of birds killed during the training season and we are being taken advantage of.
Sent from my iPhone

Wickman, Erik

From: Cody Carestia <spurin48@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 11:39 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Black Bear amendment

In response to Brian Cebull's proposed black bear regulations:

I do not feel the black bears across entire state can be regulated by the same blanket regulations. Concerning the proposal that "any BMU without a quota or sub-quota ... would close with regular public notice after May 31 if the cumulative spring harvest to that point exceeds 37 percent of female bears". Bear habits are not the same statewide. For example, Southwestern Montana has bears emerging from hibernation much later than other parts of the state. Also, statewide, some years the bears are out later than others. Given that the harvest is dependent on availability there is flaw in this proposal. If it's a late year for the bears to come out such as it was in 2023 and the bears have only been out for 2 weeks prior to May 31, it wouldnt take much to have a swayed harvest percentage between one sex or the other when not many bears have been harvested. If only ten bears have been killed and 4 of them were females season closes, that harvest isn't based off of the entire huntable population. 37% after a certain harvest number has been met might be more appropriate. If 37% of 100 bears are females your accomplishing the goal by clsoing things a that point. I just used 100 as an example, I dont know how we pick the number since we don't have the information on populatuions to do so accurately. I think the proposal is a good direction, just not detailed or studied enough to do things right.

Wickman, Erik

From: C Diane Simmons <diane@skykomishsoftware.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 11:04 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Bird Reg Changes

It is great you are bumping back non-resident Hun/Grouse seasons & training dates.

But what about pheasant season??? That is where you see the most pressure on the resource.

Diane Simmons
Ennis, MT

Wickman, Erik

From: Thomas Lindsley <Thomas@BBMContracting.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 11:00 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland game bird comments

Hello,

My reaction to the suggested hunt dates for Upland Game Bird for non-residents is, WHY?

One of the main things that Montana has going for it is tourism and hunting tourism specifically. Why would we (yes I am a land owner in Montana) exclude a population of hunters that literally pours money into state coffers each year with little impact on social or emergency services?

That's my two cents.

Thank you

Thomas S. Lindsley, CISEC, QSP
Principal BBM Construction and Consulting
License #823424
1-916-717-8169

Wickman, Erik

From: Jim Darr <trailcreek430@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 10:38 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed bear regulations

I think these changes are long overdue. I support them 100%. Jim Darr, Gardiner

Wickman, Erik

From: Phil DeAngeli <phil.deangeli@titlefc.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 10:14 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2024 Upland Game Bird Regulations, Amendment 2

The only concern identified is for non-residents training dogs. The solution is to limit the application of this proposed amendment to non residents.

There are enough barriers to having a well-trained dog to start the season without adding this unnecessary limitation.

Phil DeAngeli
3533 Gabel Road, Billings, MT 59102
Phone 406.970.7710

Wickman, Erik

From: Trevor Nichols <tnichol24@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 10:07 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for first and second amendments to upland season and training dates

Dear Commission,

I wanted to thank you for your service and write in support of the amendments proposed by Commissioner Chair Lesley Robinson to prioritize start dates for upland hunting and training residents ahead of non-residents. This amendment serves to support the taxpaying residents of the state of Montana and prioritizes our ability to hunt and train in this great state with just that little head start over non-residents. This has worked well in South Dakota and I fully support its implementation here.

Thank you again,

Trevor Nichols

Wickman, Erik

From: Larry Hayes <larryhayes@montana.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 9:52 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland bird season

Agree with moving nonresident opening date to September 15.

Lets residents have an opportunity to avoid early season pressure.

I talked with hunters last year that come on first of September and stay until mid October. I don't know how they deal with possession limits.

Larry hayes

Sent from my iPad

Wickman, Erik

From: Gary Snow <gsnow7@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 9:47 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Nonresident, upland, bird, seasonal change

I am in favor of the proposed Upland, Bird opening date change for non-resident

Gary Snow

Wickman, Erik

From: Garrett Backman <garrettbackman@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 7:17 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Dog training and upland amendments

Agree strongly with the amendments and would push to have nonresident pheasant season pushed back a week or two also to give residents a chance before everything in region 6 gets over pressured

Wickman, Erik

From: Sarah Stewart <sarahbstewart@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 6:10 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments on BLACK BEAR SEASON SETTING Proposal

Our main comment is to request the Commission deny extending the spring black bear season in Region 1 BMUs
(Bear Management Units) 140, 141, 150, 170 to April 15 - June 15

In addition, we have the following comments-

1. There should not be spring bear hunts. They are just in opposition to our general American model of wildlife treatment. FWP is pledged to follow the NAM. A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [statement \[u40499013.ct.sendgrid.net\]](#) claims the NAM's purpose is wildlife for everyone.

"The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation has seven basic tenets that support the notion that wildlife is a public trust, an American birthright, and that wildlife species need to be managed in a way that their populations will be sustained forever."

This means that the Commission is bound to consideration of all Montanans in decisions, not just special interests like hunters and people who shoot for pleasure. In addition to this, black bears are classified as game animals and should be treated as other game animals and only hunted in the Fall. It is very, very wrong that so many cubs are killed either directly or indirectly. It is against good animal stewardship, with an obvious point being that one does not know if a black bear is male or female from a distance and cubs need their mothers for at least 18 months.

2. The FWP proposal violates federal law by allowing hound hunting in occupied grizzly habitat.

3. We also believe that The Hound Hunting and Hound Training Seasons have no reasonable and legitimate purpose and should be ended altogether.

4. Killing black bears does not increase elk populations. There is simple no real evidence of this except for sickly calves and further studies have not taken place. Removing sickly elk calves is not a reason to hunt black bears.

5. Furthermore, there is no updated study of black bear habitat and population on which to base hunting seasons. There is no limit or quota for black bear killing.

Finally, we remain very concerned that Commissioner Tabor and his family directly profit from the expanded hunting bear hunting proposal. This is unethical and wrong.

For the reasons above we strongly recommend that the Commission deny extending the spring black bear season in Region 1 BMUs
(Bear Management Units) 140, 141, 150, 170 to April 15 - June 15.

Sincerely, The Stewart Family
PO Box 143

Gardiner MT 59030

Wickman, Erik

From: Chuck Chitty <chuckchitty@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 5:37 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment against shortening the MT upland season length

Shortening the length of Montana's non- resident upland bird season is NOT a good idea and will have a detrimental impact on a lot of small businesses and Montana based outfitters who bring a lot of tourism dollars to the state. The more informed and intelligent decision for the Montana DNR to make would be to shorten the length of time that ANY SINGLE NON-RESIDENT HUNTER OR DOG TRAINER can come to Montana and hunt upland birds each year or train dogs.

Specifically, no more than a three day non resident upland bird hunting license should be sold/available, per annum, from the Montana DNR. That way all of the Montana based small businesses and outfitters that are focused on upland birds can continue to have a good business, allowing a lot of different hunters to enjoy the Montana experience from all over the world, without any single hunter or dog trainer from outside the state accounting for too much of the total annual harvest of upland birds.

If there is any aspect of my feelings on this matter that are unclear, I welcome you to call me and I will explain my position in greater detail. As with all wildlife resources, spreading the privilege around among a larger group of non-residents is a superior decision than shortening the season length and, in doing so, still permitting a small group of aggressive non-residents to choke off the success of local small businesses and the obvious positive impact of tourism dollars.

Respectfully,
Charles B. Chitty
423-645-3544

Chuck Chitty
mobile: 423-645-3544
chuckchitty@gmail.com

Wickman, Erik

From: 4065800856@vzwpix.com
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 5:19 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL]
Attachments: text_0.txt

Wickman, Erik

From: Michael Armao <michael@verstand.ai>
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 4:37 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Amendment: Upland Bird Non-Resident Starting Date Change

To the MT Fish and Wildlife Commission:

With respect to the proposed amendment that moves the start of the season for non-residents to 15 September, I would like to request the proposal be withdrawn/dismissed. The rationale behind the request is that there is very little (if any) hard evidence linking resource constraints, habitat damage or depleted bird populations to the presence of non-resident hunters in early September (any correlation is likely to be spurious one). As a data professional, I can only surmise that anecdotal and statistically invalid observations are being used to support such a proposal. If the proposal is accepted, the state of Montana can expect significant economic damage from a drop in tourism revenue—impacting Montana resident owned outfitters, restaurants, hotel/motels, gas stations, sporting goods stores, etc. Specifically, the commission and Montana's economic authorities should expect significant reductions to non-resident hunter licensing revenue since a 15 September start will put the state in direct competition with the openers of states such as North Dakota and Idaho.

While I understand the concern regarding professional dog trainers bringing in numerous dogs and the disruption that can cause to native bird species, this amendment does not do anything but negatively impact the well-intentioned non-resident sportsman and numerous Montana businesses.

Respectfully,

Michael Armao
Jefferson, MD

Michael Armao

Verstand AI, Chief Executive Officer
mobile: 202.386.2725
email: marmao@verstand.ai

Wickman, Erik

From: Travis Tangen <gttangen@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 3:39 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed 2024 upland game changes

It was recently brought to my attention that the state of Montana is considering pushing the start date of the 2024 Montana upland season back two weeks for out of state hunters. As someone who lives in Colorado, but often hunts in MT during those first two weeks of Sept for Sharptail grouse and Hungarian partridge, I sincerely hope you will reconsider. We typically hunt during those weeks with an Orvis endorsed Montana outfitter. Those hunts cost us over \$4000 dollars for 3 days of hunting and 4 nights lodging, not to mention tips, extra hotels in Glasgow, etc. Between gas, food, cocktails, extra lodging, etc, I typically spend between \$5,000-\$6000 that goes directly into the Montana economy, and that doesn't include the \$110 I pay for an out of state Montana upland bird hunting license. Nebraska still opens their season on Sept 1st, and the only thing this proposed change will do will be for me to transfer that \$5000-\$6000 into Nebraskas economy instead. While Nebraska doesn't have nearly the quality of hunting Montana does, I will still get to hunt the first two weeks of September, and I'll spend my money there instead of Montana.

I concert hope you reconsider this short sided decision and realize the state of Montana will lose hunters, money, and people will hunt other states instead.

Travis Tangen
Concerned out of state hunter

720-512-1982

Sent from my iPhone

Wickman, Erik

From: Travis Tangen <gttangen@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 3:39 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed 2024 upland game changes

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I concert hope you reconsider this short sided decision and realize the state of Montana will lose hunters, money, and people will hunt other states instead.

Travis Tangen
Concerned out of state hunter

720-512-1982

Sent from my iPhone

Wickman, Erik

From: JEFFREY BOYLE <jeffreyboyle@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 3:09 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Amendment #2

Commissioner,

I oppose Amendment #2 of the 2024 Upland Game Bird Regulations. I believe this amendment will not stop over crowding from Nonresident hunters and Commercial Dog Trainers. However, this amendment does target local businesses. Please, Consider a 3 day hunt limit for nonresidents before making a decision to harm established Montana Small Businesses. Thank You.

Jeff Boyle
11 Lariat Loop
Bozeman, MT 59715
406-580-5333

Wickman, Erik

From: Kip Fladland <fladlandkip69@icloud.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 2:58 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Amendment

Seems odd that the State that relies on so much outdoor activities, such as hunting, would LIMIT the availability to do so to out of staters. Those who can actually afford to hunt in this state. And think of all the outfitters and landowners that will lose annual income due to the limiting of out-of-state hunters.

Kip Fladland

Wickman, Erik

From: Mark Korte <mkorte@tetoncountymt.gov>
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 8:07 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed upland bird season changes

To Whom it may concern –

As a 33 year resident upland bird hunter of MT I am in full agreement that some type of limit needs to be imposed on the recent flood of non-resident bird hunters in parts of MT. Times have changed and the huge increase of websites and videos touting the bird hunting opportunities in MT coupled with FWP's own promotion of a finite resource have brought us to the limit on the health of our sport. One of the greatest resources of our state is solitude. Our present approach in marketing our hunting opportunities has backfired horribly. *We need to start putting the health of our resource ahead of the \$\$\$ involved.* This proposal will put our non-resident opening day more in line with neighboring states and hopefully bleed off some of the pressure our first in line opening needlessly brought to our resource. I am very glad to see MT FWP backing this proposal and I welcome MT FWP's future efforts to export this approach to other aspects of our sporting heritage. Please don't stop here.

Thank you for considering my thoughts in your decision.

Mark Korte
801 8th ST NW
Chteau, MT 59422
406.750.9509

Wickman, Erik

From: Sheri Daggett <jdaggett435@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 8:04 AM
To: FWP Commission
Cc: JD
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Moving Nonresident Upland Season to September 15th

I have mixed feelings about this proposal. I have certainly witnessed the influx of nonresident bird hunters and how they home in on all the Block Management and Public Lands in NE Montana. At the same time I have a brother that was born and raised in Montana but now lives in another state. I also has a friend that lives out-of-state that bird hunts. Perhaps a week delay in letting nonresidents hunt birds would be better than two weeks. I strongly believe there should be some delay of the season for nonresident bird hunters. There are just too many of them anymore.

John Daggett
Glasgow Montana 59230

Sent from [Mail \[go.microsoft.com\]](mailto:go.microsoft.com) for Windows

Wickman, Erik

From: Lindsey Shartell <lmsharte@mtu.edu>
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2024 11:43 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland Game Bird Amendment

Hello,

I'm a bird hunter from Minnesota. I've made 4 trips across 4 years out to northeast MT to start my hunting season. All before the proposed Sept 15 nonresident opener. If this change would have been in place I'm not sure I would have ever made those trips! If it does change I'm not sure I would be able to make it out there. I enjoy being back in my home state for the ruffed grouse opener and season. I did notice increased pressure from hunters early Sept in 2023. Is this believed to impact upland bird populations? Are you assessing populations in relation to nonresident hunter numbers/pressure? Or is the reason for the change just to reduce pressure to provide better opportunities to residents? I could see this change resulting in economic loss to small towns during early Sept as hunters like myself would not be making the trip. While I really enjoy hunting in early Sept in MT if the reason was bird conservation I would be supportive of the change. If the reason is simply in response to perceived pressure and providing opportunity for residents only, I do not support it. We found many places to hunt and had a great trip this past year, there are plenty of opportunities for all.

Thank you.

Wickman, Erik

From: Peg Brownlee <pegster153@hotmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2024 11:25 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Black Bear Season Setting Comment - OPPOSED to extension

To the Commissioners:

I would like to express my objection to the extension of the black bear hunting season. It is not warranted, and could lead to increased cub-killing. Particularly objectionable and detestable is hound hunting of our bears. I support preservation and non-harassment of bears. Their environment is stressful and fragile enough without a longer time of being hunted.

Thank you for considering my comment.

Peg Brownlee
Florence, MT

Wickman, Erik

From: Chad Hoover <chad@hooveroutfitting.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2024 11:09 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Season change

Commissioners,

Please reconsider the amendment to adjust the bird hunting season dates.

This quick and devastating change added as an amendment gives very little time for the public to give a response. This decision would immediately cost my business substantial dollars which will affect the solvency of the business.

Employees, leases and local businesses will all be affected. The season is short due to inclement weather conditions.

Extending the season is not an option.

Please consider listed options.

1. Use the 2024 season to research the problem. Most people have already made plans. My clients are booked.
2. Consider which areas actually have problems. Private lands are not seeing a problem. State lands are experiencing crowding. Potentially limit those areas.
3. Make only the three day hunt available to non-residents. Make it illegal to hunt birds with dogs unless you have a valid bird hunting or guide license. Test this in 2024 to see if this fixes the problem and allow businesses to exist.

Respectfully,

Chad Hoover

Chad Hoover

406-490-6864

chad@hooveroutfitting.com

[https://urldefense.com/v3/__http://www.hooveroutfitting.com__!!GaaboA!qSix2YI6XIMV26fWUCvo3H_aCm_GbrR4h__EyG1x3uTuYqn_KgOrTnP1680dKUvnVZLQU9NBZ3il1eiTI4\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/__http://www.hooveroutfitting.com__!!GaaboA!qSix2YI6XIMV26fWUCvo3H_aCm_GbrR4h__EyG1x3uTuYqn_KgOrTnP1680dKUvnVZLQU9NBZ3il1eiTI4$)

Wickman, Erik

From: Joseph Yannuzzi <j.yannuzzi5423@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2024 9:30 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Black Bear Season Setting Comment

I strongly oppose extending the black bear hunting season. The FWP proposal violates federal law by allowing hound hunting in occupied grizzly habitat.

No study of black bear habitat has been taken or produced to verify such a need for a hunt. The killing of any predator be it wolves, lions, or bear has not and never will increase ungulate populations and killing these predators under the guise of sport, recreation or conservation is contradictory to real conservation and violates every sound principle of ecology.

Wickman, Erik

From: Robert Miller <bobbersonthelake@cvalley.net>
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2024 8:58 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UPLAND GAME BIRD SEASON SETTING

Lesley Robinson, Commission Chair (Region 6 Commissioner)

As a retired wildlife biologist from the Missouri Department of conservation, I am disappointed to see the Montana commission considering setting hunting seasons politically instead of from the science of population surveys or research.

I have been hunting Montana sharp-tailed grouse for thirteen years and have found great population numbers, even in years the surveys indicated lower numbers. I attribute this to the quality habitat the ranchers we hunt on provide. We so enjoy the early September opener because of usually great camping weather. The local businesses and ranchers welcome us with open arms because of the business we bring them. They have mentioned, if not for us they would hardly have any upland hunters because most locals do not hunt sharp-tailed grouse, primarily pheasants. Our group begins our hunting on the September 1, opening and return for the pheasant opener. If the sharp-tailed grouse season is delayed until September 15, we probably will only be able to make one trip, thus reducing the income source for local businesses and ranchers.

If the reason for the delayed opening of grouse season, to September 15, is to prevent population declines, and studies show it necessary, then I would greatly support the change. However, I would not understand the need for just non-residents to be restricted.

Setting wildlife hunting seasons politically instead of research based is a slippery slope no commission should begin. Once that precedence has been set, it becomes very difficult to return to wildlife management by research.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and the hunting opportunities Montana provides.

Bob Miller, retired Missouri biologist

Bob Miller
1005 Elm Court
Keytesville, MO
65261
660/412-3450

Wickman, Erik

From: shawn Ray <shawnkray@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2024 8:03 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL]

I do not support the change in fall upland game hunting change. Keep the way it is.

Sent from my iPhone

Wickman, Erik

From: Barak Dar <barakd58@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 9:41 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland Bird Non-Resident Starting Date Change

As a non resident hunter, I would like to comment that hunting in eastern MT, I do not see many hunters before pheasant opener on the first weekend in October. Limiting non residents hunting sharp-tail grouse and partridge in early September is unnecessary. As a minimum, the FWP should apply the new season dates only to public land and exclude hunting on private land. Alternatively apply the delay on regional basis so that less popular areas are still accessible to non residents starting Sept 1st.

With respect,
Barak Dar
1300 Willowbrook Dr
Wayzata, MN 55391

Wickman, Erik

From: Jeff Jackson <jejack26@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 7:21 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland season changes

I think the season delay should also be applied to pheasant. Over all there it a resource problem of over harvest by people coming to our state a ignoring possession limits. Either people are ignorant or do not care. I had a guy from idaho tell me he couldn't believe you could kill 60 sagehens in montana. I tried to explain the possession limit was 4 total.

Wickman, Erik

From: Elizabeth Pfaff <epfaff4@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 3:06 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Black Bear Season setting comment

Black Bear Season Setting Comment:

1. Request the Commission deny extending the spring black bear season in Region 1 BMUs (Bear Management Units) 140, 141, 150, 170 to April 15 - June 15.

Commissioner Tabor and his family directly profit from this proposal.

There is a blatant conflict-of-interest when commissioners profit from their own decisions. Specifically, Pat Tabor's family runs Swan Mountain Outfitters, which offers spring bear hunts. They offer four five-day trips to hunt and kill black bears in the spring, each trip at \$4,200, which amounts to a total of \$16,800. The BMUs proposed for extension are in Swan Mountain Outfitter's area. Passing this proposal is corrupt self-enrichment at the expense of Montana's wildlife. When Tabor lost his outfitting permit for multiple violations, he transferred ownership of the business to his son.



Clients of Swan Mountain Outfitters

Pat Tabor, third from left

2. The FWP proposal violates federal law by allowing hound hunting in occupied grizzly habitat.

This proposal purposefully excludes the Ninemile watershed north of I-90 from grizzly bear habitat in which hound hunting and hound training of black bears is prohibited. The Ninemile is occupied grizzly bear habitat and has had numerous confirmed observations of females with cubs. It is a designated Demographic Connectivity Area. This is a crucial linkage corridor for grizzlies to get to the Bitterroot mountains and connect between grizzly protection zones. Allowing hound hunting in the Ninemile watershed is in direct conflict with grizzly bear recovery.

3. There is no updated study of black bear habitat and population on which to base hunting seasons. There is no limit or quota for black bear kills.

Why is there an extension of the black bear spring hunting season being proposed before a study of black bear habitat? This study is necessary to update 2011 estimates of the black bear population in Montana, and to counteract the uncertainties in current estimation of population trends through the use of age-and-sex metrics, data gathered from hunters. As FWP Molly Parks noted, before this study is completed, "There may be a lag if we're seeing a population decline or increase." In other words, FWP does not know how many black bears there are yet wants to increase their slaughter anyway. Human development and overhunting/poaching threaten the black bears' future. Yet inexplicably, there is no quota for black bears.

4. The Hound Hunting and Hound Training Seasons have no legitimate purpose and should be ended altogether.

These activities allow hounds to chase, tree and kill black bears from May 2 to June 15. This amounts to nothing more than willful mutilation and deadly harassment of bears for recreation. This 'training' is simply an extension of hound hunting bears at their most vulnerable time. All kinds of wildlife with newborns are at risk when hounds tear up the forest from April 15 through June 15, terrorizing any animals they come upon. The carnage is an abandonment of the reason that ignores Montana's hunting ethics. It's simply reckless destruction and gives Montana's wildlife management a black eye.

5. Killing black bears does not increase elk populations.

If the reason for excessive, wanton killing of black bears is to produce more elk, a 2002-2006 study conducted by FWP and the University of Montana, [Cause-Specific Mortality of Rocky Mountain Elk Calves in Westcentral Montana, \[u40499013.ct.sendgrid.net\]](#) notes that predation is often compensatory and additive. This means that poor nutrition predisposes young to predation. It's reasonable to assume that elk calves the bears prey on are already suffering from malnutrition and likely would not reach maturity. The study also recommended "to investigate mortalities promptly and to assess the nutritional condition of individuals killed". FWP has not conducted such investigations.

6. Spring Bear Hunts Should End

A. Spring bear hunts threaten public safety, dogs. People do not expect hunters and hunting hounds in the spring, which puts the public and their dogs in unnecessary danger. Hound hunters use packs of radio-collared dogs to pursue a bear until the exhausted, terrified animal climbs a tree or fights the hounds. Hound dogs are often injured or even killed.

B. Spring bear hunts kill an unknown number of cubs. It is impossible to know from a distance if a bear is a female and has cubs. The likelihood of a

female bear with cubs being killed is high. Because it is illegal to kill bears v cubs, it stands to reason that most bear killers do not report cubs. Black bear cubs are dependent on their mothers for at least 1.5 years after k Cubs orphaned and left to starve to death, or killed, are not recorded. All wi killed in Montana should be recorded. Otherwise, there is no baseline knowledge to inform management, especially needed now with accelerating habitat loss from multiple factors and an overall decline in the populations o many species. Spring bear hunting is a glaring example of lack of managen at best, and willful mismanagement at worst.



An Oregon man rescued a dying bear cub. Cubs that lose their mothers prematurely will suffer and h high mortality rates. This cub's mother was likely killed.

C. Spring bear hunts defy the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation (NAM). FWP is pledged to follow the NAM. A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [statement \[u40499013.ct.sendgrid.net\]](https://www.fws.gov/press/2017/04/041704013.ct.sendgrid.net) claims the NAM's purpose is wildlife for everyone. "The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation has seven basic tenets that support the notion that wildlife is a public trust, an American birthright, and that wildlife species need to be managed in a way that their populations will be sustained forever." The Commission must consider all Montanans in decisions, not just special inter

D. Black bears are classified as game animals and should be hunted in fall only, like other game animals. Commissioners have a responsibility to uphold the public trust and the proper management of publicly owned wildlife. Spring bear hunts undermine both these mandates. Added to the fall bear h spring bear hunts make almost six months of bear killing per year. Montana cannot sustain this extended killing. Black bears are classified as game ani Like other game animals, they should be hunted in the fall. The legislature c not require spring bear hunts. The Commission is charged with enacting reasonable hunting season times and lengths.

Wickman, Erik

From: Trevor Nichols <tnichol24@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 2:53 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Concerns surrounding amendment to Black Bear regulations and reporting

Hello Commission,

I am writing to express my concerns with the proposed amendments to black bear regulations and reporting. The most concerning portion of this amendment to me is the expansion of the region 1 pilot program statewide. This was not an amendment requested by FWP and in the response I know FWP had hoped that the program would be piloted an additional year. I fear this is in haste and further takes management of our wildlife out of the hands of biologists that are most qualified to make wildlife decisions. I would like to see the pilot extended another year now requiring the two teeth and additional changes due to the loss of evidence in the pilot program last year. I see no reason why we cannot wait another year and see if the changes allow for biologists to recommend an expansion of the program to the commission. Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,

Trevor Nichols

Wickman, Erik

From: Perk Perkins <perkinsp@orvis.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 1:48 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Changes to Upland Bird Hunting Regulations

I oppose both of these regulations as they are not grounded in conservation or protection of wildlife. They are political. I have bird hunted as a non resident in Montana for 20 years and do not see the purpose of these changes. If you want to give the residents preferred treatment, I suggest you do it by making certain public hunting areas off limits to non residents for the first part of the season.

My opinion is not personal as I do not hunt before Sept 15 anyway.

Leigh H Perkins Jr

ALS# 4/17/953-14

Sent from my iPhone

Wickman, Erik

From: Tony Reinhardt <mttroutoutfitters@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 1:45 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Upland Bird Amendments

Commissioners,

The first amendment sponsored by Chair Robinson is wholly off the mark. Delaying the upland opener for non-residents for two weeks will do very little to address the concerns regarding overcrowding/too many hunters in eastern/north eastern Montana. The first two weeks of the upland season are nowhere near as busy as the time period around the pheasant opener. The week before pheasant opener and the following two weeks are the highest traffic times of the season. If you are looking to appease residents who feel they are being displaced by non-residents then it would be far more impactful if you limited hunting to only residents in the week before and the week of the pheasant opener. Residents only for Sept. 1-15 will hardly be noticed by the majority of upland hunters. In addition, this amendment would have serious negative effects on upland bird outfitters in Montana. They will be losing non resident clients for 2 weeks of their season.

A better alternative would be to limit the time period of a non-resident license. 2 separate 7 day license periods, or even unlimited 7 day license periods for non residents. This would likely lead to a revenue increase for FWP. Many non resident hunters would not be affected with this strategy as most hunt for 7 days or less. The local communities would still be able to collect most of those non-resident dollars. For those more dedicated non-residents they would have the ability to purchase additional licenses.

Montana has become extremely popular in the upland world in recent years. A quick look at You Tube reveals a steady stream of videos about upland hunting Montana. The license cost is reasonable, the season is long, bag limits are generous, and most importantly there is more public access (including BMA's) than any other pheasant/sharptail state. It is no surprise that many choose to come to Montana to upland hunt for weeks or months, especially since it is the only state with so much access and such a long non-resident license. A different approach is needed, however the proposed amendment is not the solution.

The second amendment regarding dog training is only moderately better. Yes, it will help prevent the many commercial dog trainers from beating up on upland birds when they are barely able to fly in August, but I believe the bigger issue is enforcement of existing rules. How many trainers are even properly licensed for state lands? Is the fee to operate a commercial business on state lands substantial enough? How many trainers are "hunting" (guiding) on BMA's with clients and client's dogs under the guise of training? FWP staff is stretched extremely thin in eastern Montana which leads to non-compliance or outright illegal actions. I don't begrudge anyone from running a legitimate business, but these dog trainers come from all over the country with many dogs to "train". They return home and market these dogs as trained on wild birds which yields a premium price of several thousand dollars. The state of Montana should charge these trainers accordingly for the ability to operate on public lands.

I am a Montana resident and avid upland bird hunter. I appreciate your time and consideration.

Tight Lines,

Tony Reinhardt
Montana Trout Outfitters

Wild on the Fly Adventure Travel

6108 Raelene Ct.

Missoula, MT 59803

406-544-3516

<http://mttroutguides.com/> [mttroutguides.com]

Wickman, Erik

From: Dave Loschinsky <dave@l6fam.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 12:42 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Feedback on nonresident upland season

Hello

Wanted to comment as a nonresident. I do many hunting, fishing, and vacation trips throughout your great state.

Over the last 15 years I've made many great friends - many of which are outfitters or native residents.

I watched the elk hunting in Gardiner slow down and become less of an economic impact to that area. As I see the delay of upland bird for nonresidents, i worry of the impact to hotels, restaurants, guide businesses, etc.

I don't have a strong frame of reference for public lands as I hunt mostly private ground for upland. But I do worry this will artificially compress public land interest to the back half of Sept and add more pressure to the birds and hunters.

I know what you all do is difficult and you have many interests to represent.

Perhaps there's a way to not hurt guides and other business by permitting outfitted or private land upland instead of delaying it completing and concentrating the pressure.

Best wishes for a great 2024. I'm excited to spend a few weeks in your state this year as I always do!

Dave Loschinsky
901.826.2768

Wickman, Erik

From: Richard Miller <silentp2all@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 12:36 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to amendment #2 of the upland game bird regulations.

I am strongly opposed to the Amendment to #2. upland Game Bird regulation. It will only benefit a small group of nonresident hunters and hurt a large group of residents hunter's.
Sent from my iPhone

Wickman, Erik

From: Gary Scheuch <bigskycoug@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 11:17 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland Bird Non-Resident Starting Date Change

Dear MTFWP,

I am in favor of the amendment to adjust the upland bird starting date for nonresidents from Sept. 1 to Sept. 15.

Thank you.

Gary Scheuch
ALS# 06291966-02
Missoula, MT

Wickman, Erik

From: Gary Scheuch <bigskycoug@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 11:15 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] FWP Amendment-Bird Dog

Dear MTFWP,

I am in favor of the amendment to adjust the starting date for bird dog training by nonresidents from Aug. 15 to Sept. 1.

Thank you.

Gary Scheuch
ALS# 06291966-02
Missoula, MT

Wickman, Erik

From: Anthony VonRuden <anthonyvonruden@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 9:39 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland Bird Amendment

I am commenting in regards to the proposal to move the non-resident upland opener to September 15th.

This will do absolutely nothing to reduce the number of hunters and will only increase crowding as it will consolidate all of the non-resident hunting pressure into a narrower window. Reducing hunting opportunities for everyone.

It will also impact small business who rely on out of state hunters for revenue.

Limiting non-resident upland licenses to (2) seven day licenses and increasing non-resident license fees would more than double revenue for MT FWP and greatly reduce and spread out hunting pressure creating better bird survival and more opportunities for resident hunters.

Wickman, Erik

From: Erika Jaegers <ej@trutrak.net>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 9:27 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Spring Black Bear Hunting

I respectfully request to deny the extension of the spring black bear season in BMUs 140, 141, 150, and 170.

Reason:

The practice is cruel and unnecessary and benefits only a small number of people (outfitters mostly) while the vast majority of citizens prefers to enjoy the bears unharmed, and also have a right to enjoy nature in the spring without fear for their own pets' safety.

Sincerely,
Erika Jaegers

Wickman, Erik

From: gjdurkin@bresnan.net
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 8:15 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2024 Upland Game Bird Regulations

Please note, I am opposed to Amendment #2 of the 2024 Upland Game Bird Regulations as proposed.

This will not stop over-crowding of hunting areas and will only hurt local hunting guide businesses. Instead, consider a 3 day hunt limit for out of state hunters as an alternative.

Please protect MT small business owners , The Local Guides!!

I am a hunter and I Vote....

George Durkin
3225 Augusta Drive
Bozeman, MT 59715
406-599-2746

Wickman, Erik

From: Chad Hoover <chad@hooveroutfitting.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 7:59 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland Change

Thank you for taking my email. I have been doing my best to understand the problem and I have been communicating with people in the area.

As you mentioned people in that area are tired of the dog trailers and tent camps on state lands. It is difficult to understand my association as a private land outfitter. I do not experience the problem and landowners want me working with them. We do not have a scientific problem. Birds are abundant. I do not even see more than a few hunters driving in the area.

As I understand it they are dealing with dog trainers and hunters staying too long. This issue is a simple fix with three day hunting licenses. I really do not understand why dog training on our wildlife during August would ever be allowed in the first place.

The amendments in place still allow an enormous presence of nonresident commercial dog trainers on September 1. For residents hoping to get a relief from nonresident hunters this will not help them. The birds will still leave the area due to pressure. There will be twice the pressure on September 15. Many tourists will spend their money in other states.

1. Limit days nonresidents can hunt.
2. Stop nonresident commercial dog training
3. Limit state lands access to nonresidents.

I am nauseous over this decision process. There is no background work to study the problem. I built a successful business from an idea, relentless effort, and zero help from anyone 13 years ago. I employ people. I have tremendous fuel, grocery, leases, and other expenses in that community. I spend the money I make raising a family in Montana. One in ten businesses make it. One amendment with a week to comment and the business is destroyed? Please consider alternatives to these amendments.

Respectfully,
Chad Hoover

Chad Hoover
406-490-6864

chad@hooveroutfitting.com

[https://urldefense.com/v3/__http://www.hooveroutfitting.com__!!GaaboA!oFvfqd3NxbNNQRwQDPylaOoj9GXjDi-R5nciT23mdVPkXaDFsu_Mksn_hyesXueB7s5OXoP0ddPwTiQxikD7\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/__http://www.hooveroutfitting.com__!!GaaboA!oFvfqd3NxbNNQRwQDPylaOoj9GXjDi-R5nciT23mdVPkXaDFsu_Mksn_hyesXueB7s5OXoP0ddPwTiQxikD7$)

Wickman, Erik

From: Matt E. Ekstrom <mekstrom@m-m.net>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 7:57 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland Game Bird Season Setting

To whom it may concern,

This amendment will not stop over crowding from Nonresident Commercial Dog Trainers. This amendment will destroy businesses. FWP should Consider 3 day hunting limits for nonresidents at a minimum.

thank you

Wickman, Erik

From: Stefanie Forcella <forcellastefanie@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 7:28 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] First Amendment: Upland Game bird season

Please note that I am against this amendment.
Stefanie

Wickman, Erik

From: calvin johnson <cmfencing89@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 6:23 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] First amendment ,second amendment

Sent from my iPhone

This has the potential to destroy tourism in September. This amendment will destroy business. They should consider 3 day hunting limits for nonresidents at a minimum.

Wickman, Erik

From: nathe27 <nathe27@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 10:03 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] I, as a landowner and lease holder of public lands, applaud your efforts to get ahead of a worsening problem here in the Northeast. It is becoming more difficult every year to manage the increased pressure of a population of hunters whom hav...

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S22 Ultra 5G, an AT&T 5G smartphone

Wickman, Erik

From: nathe27 <nathe27@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 9:55 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] I am in complete support of any effort the FWP makes to limit the disturbance of wildlife for the purposed of training dogs. It is invasive and destructive to the brooding of many species of birds, not just game birds. Also, it adds incre...

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S22 Ultra 5G, an AT&T 5G smartphone

Wickman, Erik

From: cassandra rideg <9milefarmandmerc@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 4:32 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Changes in Black Bear Season Proposal

Dear Montana FWP and Commissioners;

Please know that the following proposed changes to the bear hunting season directly impact my family, my neighbors and all wildlife in the Ninemile Watershed. This valley is home to, and a travel corridor for many species of wildlife, including three of which are on the Endangered Species List, the grizzly, the wolverine and the lynx!!!

Montana FWP, you are not following the guidelines of hound hunting and training. It is prohibited in occupied grizzly bear habitat. We have resident grizzlies in and traveling through Ninemile Valley every year, despite what Montana FWP upper management is stating. This is evident in photos from residents and extensive research data from Montana biologists. We also have had a sow with three dispersing, sub-adult cubs ten or so years ago. There is no denying this fact. One of the male cubs had to be dispatched of because, morel mushroom pickers habituated the bear to human trash.

We were supposed to be part of a Montana FWP black bear population study this past fall and it was postponed. There was some concern about black bear hibernation survival rate because the previous berry crop failed so miserably. In fact this past summer, I have seen no black bears, only grizzlies! Now I think that I know why the study was canceled. Another problem with this change, is that it may kill sows with cubs. Dogs can not be discriminate between solitary bears and sows with cubs. Bear hounds are also not discriminate where they chase bears. They inevitably will travel through private properties, livestock and near pets. They have the potential to be a real public nuisance with trespassing and noise. We do not want this in our valley!!!

Grizzlies actively use Reservation Divide as a frequent travel corridor that can not be lost. The FWP Management is not following the facts. They are being sneaky and deceitful when it comes to any predators. There has been little to no depredation in Ninemile Valley. To allow hound hunting of black bear would disruptive to grizzlies, wolverines, lynx and all wildlife and not to mention the residents of this valley. This would be especially devastating if done in the spring when sows with cubs are on the ground.

Groups in the valley have hosted bear biologists talks in the community. These talks have displayed to the public just how often these grizzly bears travel through our valley. So stop trying to pull the wool over our eyes and denying the facts! Bear issues here in the Ninemile have become next to nonexistent. We overall, support all of our wildlife and not just deer and elk. The neighbors posts pictures of these grizzlies. As stated above, not too long ago we had a sow with three independent cubs. On three separate occasions I had a sub-adult grizzly at my place this past summer.

I am not against black bear hunting if the carcassis for consumption. I however, want to live with the wildlife and not let it be exploited and destroyed by commercial trophy hunters and hunting organizations. As it is now, wildlife is slowly disappearing here. Montana has become terrible stewards of our wildlife. Please look into the research again and be reminded that these grizzlies, wolverines and lynx are to be protected under the Endangered Species Act until further notice. Stop attempting to violate the Endangered Species Act.

Thank you for reading.

Sincerely,
Cassandra Rideg & Family
Ninemile Valley
Huson, Montana

Wickman, Erik

From: Matthew Suek <matthewsuek@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 4:17 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] FWP Amendment-Bird Dog

As a Montana resident in Billings, I support the amendment to delay bird dog training for nonresidents to September 1st.

I do not support the amendment to delay nonresident hunting to September 15th. I foresee this as a future measure to protect the resource, but Montana has not reached that threshold yet.

Thank you for the consideration.
Matt Suek

Wickman, Erik

From: jrmcgill1@verizon.net
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 2:47 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Black Bear Decisions

Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission,

Growing up we had a resident black bear family who frequented our bird feeder. At that time there was not much in the way of protecting wildlife, so we didn't even realize that "a fed bear is a dead bear". Maybe we lucked out as did the bear family because they never seemed to be aggressive toward the food in the bird feeder, and they never tried getting into the house or garage. In fact, we would watch them in awe. They were so docile and funny, actually. I could watch them for hours as they foraged for food and scratched. Those are the memories that still come to mind fifty years later.

Black bears are not a threat. They are not a nuisance in the wilderness setting. They have no impact on the elk population. They are not predators. They do not kill livestock. They just live. They just survive. They are very peaceful creatures who definitely don't deserve to meet their deaths at the hands of blood thirsty hounds. And what about the cubs? It's just an absolutely sickening vision. Extend the hunting season on black bears? In the Spring, when they are most vulnerable? What about nursing mothers and cubs? No one can even tell the sex of a black bear until it would be too late if she was being savagely chased by dogs. It's as if a complete yahoo thought this one up. It makes no sense, and there is no need.

Why is there black bear hunting in the Spring? Surely, one doesn't need studies done to know that mothers are killed which inevitably leads to cubs starving to death, or being killed by other predators. Does no one in the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission have any virtues when it comes to the treatment of these bears? I would think that would be a prerequisite in obtaining a job with the Commission. It makes no sense.

I cannot fathom what kind of human could want to inflict so much suffering on literal teddy bears. Obviously, humans with no heart, no conscious and/or one that stands to gain a lot financially. What if the changes to the hunting of black bears came in the form of changing the season to strictly Fall? What if no dogs were allowed to be used for the sole reason that it is definitely a form of torture? Can you think of too many worse ways to spend your last moments? Is this what you would want for your pets? Your family? Yourself? Why should it be accepted as a normal part of hunting? It's not normal when the hunter doesn't even do any of the work! It makes no sense.

Please consider the fate of the bears. Please consider what it must be like for them to be killed for the entertainment of some unscrupulous people who use hounds to do their dirty work. Please consider the fact that the bears are not a threat. Mostly, please consider the cubs and nursing mothers. This is the need, and it should make sense.

Sincerely,
Rachel McGill
Lakeside, Montana

Wickman, Erik

From: Brooke Shifrin <bshifrin@greateryellowstone.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 1:13 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2024-2025 Season setting- black bear proposals
Attachments: FINAL GYC comments- black bear season setting- 1.23.24.pdf

Dear Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission-

Please accept the attached comments from Greater Yellowstone Coalition regarding the 2024-2025 black bear proposals. Thank you for considering our recommendations.

Best,
Brooke



BROOKE SHIFRIN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COORDINATOR

bshifrin@greateryellowstone.org • 208-556-2813 • she/her/hers

Get to know GYC at greateryellowstone.org

[\[greateryellowstone.org\]](https://greateryellowstone.org)

Wickman, Erik

From: Janice Leach <jeleach48@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 1:01 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment re: Regulation proposals 2024 Season

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed date change for dog training. I applaud the change being considered by shifting the beginning date for training dogs on wild birds to September 1.

That said, continuing to allow **commercial dog training on public lands** during the Upland Bird season should be addressed too. An argument can easily be made that **publicly funded** conservation-access programs in the State of Montana are being abused by **commercial, for-profit enterprises** and that their activities negatively affect resident and non-resident upland hunters attempting to share, or compete for, those same public resources.

The State of Montana is unique in that it finances a wealth of access programs for the public - a fact commercial operators are only too aware of and have exploited. That statement is irrefutable. Stated another way, because of a lack of regulation restricting the practice, resident and non-resident upland hunters - for whom these programs were designed to serve - have been forced to compete for access on **public lands** against commercial, for-profit businesses. It's not much more complicated than that.

When you are charging a dog owner \$3,000 per dog for "tuning up Fido" for the upcoming bird season in Texas or Wisconsin, or whether you are selling "started dogs trained on Wild Montana Upland Birds" for thousands of dollars each to buyers in Illinois or the Carolinas, you are not making the drive all the way to northeast Montana, trailering a dozen or more dogs, for a week or so of casual training and a wee bit of relaxed hunting. Nope. You'll be hanging around for weeks at a time - and having these folks lingering in the area for well over a month isn't at all uncommon. If someone in Helena doesn't believe that's a problem, and it most definitely is, they need to spend time on the ground in northeast Montana during the fall and judge for themselves. And if they don't know what to look for or who to talk to, I'd be happy to point them in the right direction.

Tom Leach

Wickman, Erik

From: Clayton Elliott <clayton@montanatu.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 12:12 PM
To: FWP Commission
Cc: Ryce, Eileen
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MTU written comments on Commission Agenda Item: Swan Lake lake trout removal
Attachments: 2024-01-21 MTUComments SwanLakeLTRemoval Commission FNL.pdf

To Whom It May Concern:

Please find attached written public comment on behalf of Montana Trout Unlimited (MTU) on the proposed management action regarding lake trout removal efforts in Swan Lake. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have questions or need additional information from our organization.

Thank you,
Clayton

--

Clayton Elliott
Conservation and Government Affairs Director
Montana Trout Unlimited
clayton@montanatu.org
2802 State Street
Butte, Montana 59701
o: 406-543-0054
c: 307-272-6298
www.montanatu.org [montanatu.org]



Wickman, Erik

From: Dave Perkins <PerkinsD@ORVIS.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 11:42 AM
To: FWP Commission
Cc: commissionerregion1@mtfwf.org; commissionerregion2@mtfwf.org;
commissionerregion3@mtfwf.org; KC Walsh; commissionerregion5@mtfwf.org;
commissionerregion6@mtfwf.org; commissionerregion7@mtfwf.org; K. Walsh
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Amendments on Upland Game bird season

Commissioners,

I am writing to express my concern for the amendment to adjust bird hunting dates and with the hope that you will reconsider implementing that.

This quick and devastating change gives very little time for the public to respond. It will immediately cost many local outfitters in Montana that my family's company, The Orvis Company, promotes. Those outfitters will lose substantial dollars. Most of them have already booked September hunts and have collected deposits or full payment from out-of-state hunters. Montana employees, landowners who lease their land to local outfitters, and local businesses such as motels, restaurants, and small town stores will all be adversely affected. Shouldn't landowners be able to determine how their property is hunted? Extending the season at the back end is not an option because of inclement weather. The hunting is poor at season's end and I believe local, as well as out-of-state, hunters hunt less frequently.

On a personal note, as a resident of Wolf Creek, I would also greatly feel the impact as I have out-of-state family and friends who join my wife and me and our three setters throughout September. September is the prime month for hunting sharp-tailed grouse and Hungarian partridge. Hunting for these birds diminishes significantly as the season goes on.

I hope you will consider the following options:

1. Use the 2024 season to research the problem. There needs to be a thorough analysis. How much early season pressure is truly generated by out-of-state hunters, or Dog Trainers? Most hunters and outfitters have already set schedules and made commitments. Clients of most outfitters have booked and paid for September hunting dates by now. If you absolutely have to do something, test this concept on specific game management areas and not across the state.
2. Stop all dog training on public land during August. These young birds should not be disturbed prior to September
3. Make it illegal to hunt birds with dogs, with or without a gun, unless you have a valid bird hunting or guide

license to limit the number of trainers coming from other states.

Test this approach in 2024 to see if it fixes the problem. It would reduce the negative impacts on local outfitters and other small businesses that benefit economically from the hunting season.

If you proceed with your amendment, you would still allow the enormous pressure and impact of non-resident commercial dog trainers on public land. Changing the season will not help residents hoping for relief. The birds will still leave the area due to the pressure created from pre- and early season training. If hunters don't relocate to other states, there will be twice the pressure starting September 15. Stop non-resident commercial dog training. Do not penalize all the other hunters who want to enjoy a day in the field.

There is no study of this problem. Your amendment, with only a one-week comment period, will destroy many local Montana outfitters that provide commerce to the state, and hurt resident hunters like me who invite out-of-state family and friends to enjoy Montana.

David Perkins
1905 Craig River rd

Wolf Creek, MT, 59648

Cell: 802 558 6078

email: perkinsd@orvis.com [[webmailvt.orvis.com](mailto:perkinsd@orvis.com)]

Wickman, Erik

From: Bill Messer <wamesser@me.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 11:22 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Thank you for this opportunity to comment. I've enjoyed upland hunting in Montana for about 15 years. I bring my own dogs—2-4. I have seen in the last few years commercial dog trainer with dozens of dogs I hope that any addressing of this i...

Sent from my iPhone

Wickman, Erik

From: Home Emails <paulson810@midco.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 10:15 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Amendment—Upland gamebird

I am not in support of moving the opening in date to September 15 for non residents. It's usually too warm in the early weeks of the season, so residents are not gaining much valuable hunting time.

However I would suggest and support a nonresident license that was good for 2 - 5 day periods, similar to what South Dakota has done with nonresident small game (pheasant) licenses. I would also support non residents to be limited to one license per season.

Eric Paulson
Cold Spring, MN

Wickman, Erik

From: Randy Tuhy <rstuhy@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 10:03 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Black Bears

I am concerned about the proposed changes to the spring Black Bear season. I am pretty sure if the harvest data were closely examined (I Have) you will find that the harvest rate of female bears goes up the later the season goes. Extending the season ending date will only up the chances of females being taken.

I am in favor of moving the opening date in area 520 to May 1 but it should still close upon quota fill or MAY 31 which ever comes first. It rarely if ever goes to May 31 anyway.

If any area has a quota (510-520-proposed 580 and I am sure the Snowies are being considered) on sows the law should be changed back to CUBS at SIDE (either young of the year OR yearlings). There are sows being shot with yearlings standing next to them way too often. I personally watched a sow with two yearlings standing within 50 feet of her get killed. I know it was legal but should not have been. I also know the yearlings were old enough to survive on their own but the object is to try and avoid killing females.

The proposals are to supposedly to simplify regulations. By changing the closing date to June 15 but closing any BMU without a quota or sub-quota by regular public notice at any point after May 31 if the cumulative spring harvest to that point exceeds 37% female bears is supposedly simplifying regulations someone needs to REALLY think about that statement. It is only complicating them!

While I by no means claim to be a bear expert I have spent many many days a year for over 40 years spring bear hunting and average seeing and watching over 25 bears every spring. (I keep track)

Randy Tuhy
rstuhy@gmail.com

Wickman, Erik

From: Matt Ekel <matt.ekel1@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 9:49 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment on non resident upland bird changes

To whom it may concern,
I would like to reach out and stress my strong disapproval of the proposed changes to non resident upland bird seasons.

I would support some actions/ restrictions that would limit non resident hunting opportunities if it were aimed at increasing bird numbers (habitat work etc) however this measure seems to limit demand and I believe such efforts are in vain.

Thank you,
Matthew Ekel

Wickman, Erik

From: Mikel P Lund <mikelp@nemont.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 9:45 AM
To: FWP Commission
Cc: humber.danielsco@hotmail.com; gary44linder@yahoo.com; danielsco@nemont.net
Subject: [EXTERNAL] proposed amendmentsto upland game bird and bird dog training seasons

FWP Commission,

As a resident of Daniels County, all my life, and a Daniels County Commissioner, I personally support these proposed amendments.

Lund Farms Inc., farms within the State Land reserve, and borders and farms within the Fort Peck Indian Reservation.

The extreme hunting pressure, experienced this last fall, from out of County hunters, was quite obvious.

We did have good bird populations going into the season, but now appears that we have severely lost population.

I believe that a shorter season would be beneficial for population recovery.

If we are not progressive in preserving our bird populations, the season may regulate itself with the lack of birds to hunt.

I fully support both amendments.

Mikel P. Lund



Virus-free. www.avg.com [avg.com]

avg.com

Wickman, Erik

From: Home Emails <paulson810@midco.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 7:06 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] FWP Amendment— dog training

I support the later start (September 1) to nonresident dog training.

Eric Paulson
Cold Spring, MN

Wickman, Erik

From: Damon Molinario <molinario@3rivers.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 7:21 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Amendments to upland bird season

Good morning,

As a landowner in north central Montana I would like to comment on the proposed amendments to the upland game bird hunting season. After researching and talking with other land owners in the area I do not feel the proposed amendments will solve the current issues at stake here. I feel like they would do more harm to the local economy and to local outfitting businesses (which are owned/operated by Montana residents). By postponing the season open by two weeks for non residents the state and resident businesses will lose two weeks of crucial income. Also, by postponing the commercial dog training season for non residents by two weeks will not eliminate the problem of state lands being overrun by these people.....it will only defer it to a later date.

My proposed solutions that I feel would be much more effective would be to:

- 1.) Limit the days a nonresident can hunt.
- 2.) Limit access to state lands for nonresident hunters.
- 3.) Eliminate nonresident commercial dog training on state lands before the hunting season. It makes no sense to be training dogs on hunting grounds immediately before the opening of a hunting season, this is only going to flush the birds off of the hunting grounds which will reduce the number of birds harvested and could also drive hunters away which then hurts the economy.

I feel these 3 options would better address the influx of nonresident hunters and tent camps along with dogs that is causing the complaints with local residents.

Please consider these alternative options and thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Lifetime resident and farmer in Montana, Damon Molinario

Sent from my iPhone

Wickman, Erik

From: Christopher Servheen <servheenc@mtwf.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 2:44 AM
To: FWP Commission
Cc: Frank Szollosi
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment on opening Ninemile to hound hunting/chasing
Attachments: Hound hunting in Nine mile.pdf

Attached please find MWF's comment on the proposal to open the Ninemile to hound hunting and chasing of black bears.

Chris Servheen

--

Christopher Servheen, Ph.D.
IUCN Bear Specialist Group - Co-chair, North American Bears Expert
Team <https://www.globalbearconservation.org> [globalbearconservation.org]
President and Board Chair, Montana Wildlife Federation <https://montanawildlife.org/>
[\[montanawildlife.org\]](https://montanawildlife.org/)
<https://montanawildlife.org/about-us/where-we-stand-2/> [montanawildlife.org]
chrisservheen@gmail.com
406-240-6506
he/him/his

Wickman, Erik

From: Cale Updegrave <caupdegrave@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 10:36 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland Bird Nonresident Proposal

I am emailing in regard to the proposed start date for nonresident upland game bird hunters to Sept. 15.

I disagree with this in its entirety. While this shortens the amount of days the nonresident hunters can hunt, it doesn't do anything to fix the pressure issue. This will only concentrate the amount of hunters into a smaller window and put more negative pressure on the birds. Not only does this not address the pressure issue, it also affects the small businesses across the state that rely on out of state hunter traffic for revenue. Restaurants, gas stations, bars, hotels, campgrounds are all going to see a decrease in business from bird hunters, which a lot of them rely heavily on. Surely there is another option that can be discussed, I highly suggest reconsidering this issue with another plan.

Cale Updegrave
White Sulphur Springs, MT

Wickman, Erik

From: Marcus Kehoe <marcusmbk@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 9:32 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] I'm pro push back

Hi FWComm,

As a resident hunter, I'm pro-pushback on the nonresident hunter start date.

Although, I would like to be able to take my pops (a non res) out for the opener. I'm wondering, do we get a plus one — or is it too bad for dear ol' dad?

Thanks,
Marcus

Wickman, Erik

From: Richard Tramp <tramprichard@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 9:19 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Commission to consider amendments on upland game bird, black bear regulations

I like the amendments for upland bird and bear. In particular the upland bird. We have alot of out of state hunter pushing our resources.

Thank you
Richard Tramp
Townsend, MT

Wickman, Erik

From: Todd Stedry <todd.stedry@affinitysales.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 8:35 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland Bird Non-Resident Star^{ing} Date Change

As a non-resident hunter I am against the proposal to move the upland hunting season opener to September 15th. I believe this proposal does not correct the core issue which is overcrowding. As a non-resident my options for annual trips to Montana will be narrower which will likely lead to even more hunters competing for the same access at any given time.

In addition, this will have a negative impact on local residents that depend on non-resident hunters to keep their doors open.

Thank you.

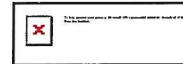
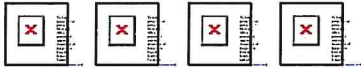
Todd Stedry



Executive Vice President
Midcentral

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Wickman, Erik

From: Peter Shinn <carpenterpls@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 8:35 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Bird and bear amendments

I would support the bird and bear amendments as proposed.
Peter Shinn

Wickman, Erik

From: S Sackman <bobandsharla@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 6:27 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Upland game bird amendment

> I am a landowner in Montana. I am leaving a comment to say that I am against moving the nonresident upland opener to September 15. I am against this change as nonresident hunting helps our ranch financially. I feel there are other ways to help over-hunting. I believe there will be just as many nonresident hunters as before. The only change will they be they are here during a shorter period of time.

>

> If this date is pushed back, it will adversely affect my business. Thank you for your consideration.

> Bob Sackman

>

Wickman, Erik

From: S Sackman <bobandsharla@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 6:25 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland game bird amendment

I am a landowner in Montana. I am leaving a comment to say that I am against moving the nonresident upland opener to September 15. I am against this change as nonresident hunting helps our ranch financially. I feel there are other ways to help over-hunting. I believe there will be just as many nonresident hunters as before. The only change will they be they are here during a shorter period of time.

If this date is pushed back, it will adversely affect my business. Thank you for your consideration.

Bob Sackman

Sent from my iPhone

Wickman, Erik

From: PJ RUBIN <pjrubin@mac.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 6:15 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Birds season reduction for NR Hunters

I think this proposal is short sighted on a bunch of different levels. It will have a tremendous impact on the hard working guiding community in the state and will condense the out of state traffic exacerbating the issue.

As a non-resident hunter i thoroughly enjoy spending time and money with several guiding outfits in the state . Honestly i also find it quite sad that we are arguing about block management land and public land land either owned collectively or by others, crowding is a function of growing humanity and requires efforts to solve not whining.

PJ

Wickman, Erik

From: Dakota Long <throwitlong509@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 5:32 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oppose

Just wanted to say that I oppose changing the non-resident upland game proposal Dakota Long

Wickman, Erik

From: Jessica Karjala <jessica.karjala@footloosemontana.org>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 4:14 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Footloose Montana Comment on Black Bear Season and Regulations Proposal for 2024 and 2025
Attachments: Footloose Montana Comment on Black Bear Season and Regulations Proposal for 2024 and 2025.docx

Please see attached. Thank you.

Jessica Karjala
Footloose Montana, Executive Director



4068809594

PO Box 8884

Montana 59807

<http://www.footloosemontana.org> [footloosemontana.org]

Wickman, Erik

From: Kari I Gunderson <cnd2543@blackfoot.net>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 4:00 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Black+Bear+Season+Setting+Comment
Attachments: Kari Gunderson.Spring Black Bear Hunting Extension Comments.pdf

Dear Fish & Wildlife Commissioners,

Please see my attached public comments regarding your proposal to extend spring bear hunting season.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Kari Gunderson, PhD.
Swan Valley, MT (Region 1)

Wickman, Erik

From: rich little <ralittleholdings@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 3:38 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 2024 upland bird regulations

To Whom it may concern,

I am adding a comment to the 2024 upland bird regulations.

Shortening the bird season for non-residents has the potential to destroy tourism in September. It unfairly harms small businesses and outfitters who rely on non-residents for business during bird season. This will not do anything to stop overcrowding but harm the residents and small businesses of Montana. Perhaps you should consider a 3 day hunting limit for non-residents?

Thank you,
Rich Little

Wickman, Erik

From: Greg Munther <gmunther12@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 3:24 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland Bird regulations

I SUPPORT moving opening season for hun, sharptail and sage grouse hunting for non residents to September 15 because:

Accessible lands with suitable habitat continues to shrink forcing more upland bird hunters on less land.

Non resident bird hunters have nearly doubled in the last 5 years

Moving the date to Sept 15 aligns favorably with North Dakota's opening

This regulation must be applied statewide so non residents dont just move to an area with no such restrictions

I SUPPORT restrictions on non resident bird dog trainers

I would rather see non resident bird trainers prohibited on public lands until Sept 15 so that non resident bird dog trainers would not be in the field "training" when non residents are prohibited from hunting

I would rather see non resident bird dog trainers be prohibited from training on wild birds on public lands in Montana,,,,,period.

The trend of non resident long term dog trainers to stay continually to opening day of hunting season must be interrupted.

Greg Munther
Missoula

gmunther12@gmail.com

Wickman, Erik

From: moga-will@mt.net
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 3:16 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] FWP Amendment-Bird Upland Game Bird

Commissioner Robinson,

Hello! I just took over as the ED for MOGA and wanted to check in with you about the FWP Upland Bird proposal that was submitted last week.

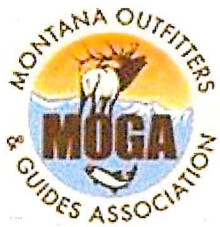
There are some negatives associated with this proposal that we'd like to high light:

1. Falls outside of the dept agreement of a 30-day period for public comment. Is it possible to move this proposal to the meeting in April?
2. Negative economic impact on small businesses throughout the state.
3. Private property owners who live out of state and not allow them to hunt for the first 15 days of the season.
4. Negative financial impact on outfitters/ guides whose livelihood are dependent on being able to take NR hunters out on guided trips for the first 15 days of the season.
5. Establishes the precedent of creating a resident vs nonresident hunting period. If implemented it has potential to be applied to other animals and further negatively impact the Outfitter and Guide industry in Montana.
6. The issue as we understand it is oriented around NR dog trainers and upland bird hunters overcrowding public lands in region 6 and though it would limit the number of NR upland bird hunters in that region for the first two weeks of the season it does and equal amount of financial damage to the Outfitter and Guide industry across the state. We have many Outfitters who have built their businesses around this season, and it would have a significant negative impact on their livelihood to cut off 15 days of opportunity for upland bird guided trips.

We are fielding many calls right now from Outfitters and Guides who are deeply concerned about this proposal and there are some creative ideas that are being floated around to better manage the issue better than shutting down 15 days of the season for them to operate.

Do you have some time this week to discuss these issues?

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



Wickman, Erik

From: Mary Gerlach Danhof <mfmgerlach@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 3:13 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL]

Black Bear Season Setting Comment

I am writing to voice my opinion on the proposed spring bear hunt. I believe there are no good reasons to support, and numerous reasons to oppose a spring bear hunt. Thus, I am requesting that the Fish and Wildlife Commission protect Montana's black bears, and deny the extension of the spring black bear season in Region 1 BM 140, 141, 150, 170 to April 15 - June 15.

Commissioners should not have a conflict of interest in deciding a proposed hunting extension. Commissioner Tabor clearly does. Swan Mountain Outfitters, owned by his family, stands to benefit financially from this extension.

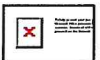
Before extending the black bear hunting season, should we not complete a study of the population? This has not been done since 2011. We don't have a good estimate of the population, yet we know that they have lost habitat.

Hunting hounds are inhumane and in fact barbaric. Chasing an animal that has only recently come out of hibernation, and may have cubs until it is exhausted, should not be allowed.

Fall is hunting season, and hikers and other recreationalists expect hunting and wear hunter's orange so that hunters will see them. In the spring, we do not expect and do not prepare for hunters. Spring hunting creates a dangerous situation for the unsuspecting recreationist. Black bears are game animals, and should only be hunted during hunting season, in the fall.

I am a native Montanan who supports the hunting traditions that our state holds dear. I oppose this spring bear hunt.

Mary Gerlach Danhof
1783 Midfield Street
Bozeman, MT 59715
406-581-8762



Virus-free. www.avg.com [avg.com]
[avg.com]

Wickman, Erik

From: William Taylor <wet3d@icloud.com>
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 3:09 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upland Game Bird Season Opener

To whom it may concern,

As a non-resident hunter, I am opposed to altering Upland Game Bird Opening Day for non-resident hunters to 15 September. I believe this proposal does not correct the core issue which is overcrowding, but merely funnels an equal number of hunters into a smaller window of available hunting opportunities.

I thank you for your time and consideration, William Taylor