Wickman, Erik

From: michael colpo <lzj@mtintouch.net>
Sent: Thursday, February 8, 2024 9:06 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Cebull amendment - 520 split

MTFWP Commission, My name is Mike Colpo of Big Timber, I am emailing you today for my support for the BMU 520 split. This is a much needed split to allow hunting opportunity to a spring population that has not had much opportunity in the past to hunt late May due to sow quota being filled in low country area of 520 and spring coming late to higher country, I support the boundary and dates of the proposed season for the new BMU. I do not support the 3 sow quota would've preferred a few more, but we will see how bear take is and may have to revisit in the future.

I also support the proposals for extended season statewide for June 15th closure and 2 tooth extraction where it applies. I do not support 580 proposed quota for a few reasons #1 the 520 quota has been in place I believe for now 41 yrs. and if quota is implemented in 580 it may never go away as 520 quota has not done nor been raised. #2 reason for not supporting is conversations as of late with landowners in 580 that can't understand why this would happen as to the numbers of bears observed have gone up especially with sightings of sows with cubs. #3 580 has very limited public access vast majority of land in 580 is very limited private access and mule deer numbers in 580 are very weak according to landowners that are concerned about mule deer.

I also would like to comment on the concern of the 37% sow take is a concern for the future of Black Bear if that number is a true concern then the Department needs to implement an education component to hunters on how to identify a boar and a sow, a compressive education program would give the Department cover for having longer seasons and increasing quotas. Kodiak island has a booklet that they use for this purpose, we also have a test for the difference of black bear and grizzly that has had great success. There are many ways and methods that can be covered to give the hunter the tools in the field to make that decision of whether to shoot or not to shoot to curb some sow harvest. There is a big question of actual black bear population as to how tooth extraction can accurately determine population trends? As we found with mtn lions were estimated in the same manner and we were told for years by the department we didn't have a lot of lions on the landscape those of us that are out there observing knew that was false and now that the Department has done a comprehensive study we found our lion populations are way higher than previously reported hence we have higher lion quotas statewide. So the question that needs to asked and answered are black bear populations along the same line as lion populations? I believe after observations in the field and talking with other black bear hunters statewide we believe the same. I ask the commission to ask the same question and ask for a comprehensive study in the manner lions were done. Thanks you for your time, Mike Colpo

Wickman, Erik

From: Randy Tuhy <rstuhy@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 8:04 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Splitting bear unit 520

Regarding the splitting of bear hunting unit 520:

I am against the proposal as proposed.

1. If you are going to split the unit have the FWP Biologists decide were and how to split it and the quota numbers. NOT an appointed commission person.

2. The proposal is only being introduced by Commissioner Cebals. It is Tabors idea. Look at the proposed change and it is easy to see it is really a benefit to outfitters. Commission Tabor has a direct vested in the outfitting business. I am NOT at all against outfitters . (I have very good friends in the business). I just think a commissioner with direct ties to the business should abstain from voting or introducing rules that affect the business directly.

Randy Tuhy

Wickman, Erik

From: dave daveheine.com <dave@daveheine.com>
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 3:35 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] upland birds seasons

Dear commission:
I am sorry this was supposed to have been sent on Jan 24, 2024

I think it is wonderful that you are addressing some of the issues that surround dog training and bird hunting in Montana. Because of the huge influx of nonresident bird hunters the quality experience has been going down for many bird hunting participants. As many elk hunters have said we need to figure a way to give residents priority over nonresidents. I believe the same holds true with bird hunters. Maybe more flexibility in licensing would keep people from purchasing a season-long license and overstaying their welcome. Would the possibility of a three day license that could be purchased in multiples be a good solution? I do not know but I'm glad you're visiting about this, thank you.

I believe it was in 2017 that California Quail were banned and treatted like feral cats by the Fish Wildlife and Parks Commission. Possessing a live one was prohibited. Hunters in other states wondered why we did this, so do we. Texas is releasing some to see if they will fill a niche that the Bob whites can't seem to make work. Oregon, Washington and Idaho have thriving populations and love these birds. We think they make a wonderful bird for training dogs as they are hardier and fly better than Bob whites. They are not a threat to anything. They are a bird that does not that thrives in areas that are other birds seem to struggle in. The people that we've been around whether it is in the Bitterroot Valley or in other states love this bird. My understanding that the commission just needs to approve a change to the status of this bird for the state and it can happen. Can somebody please do this.

Wickman, Erik

From: Doug Dreeszen <ramsrus@tctwest.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 12:33 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Commissioner Cebull's Amendment to BMU 520

I am not in favor of the proposed amendment to establish a new Bear Management Unit within the boundary of the current BMU 520. The current BMU 520 is assessable to all sportsmen and women who want to hunt black bears in this unit. This unit has been established for many years. Why all at once is there a petition to make a unit within a unit for a few hunters who claim they can't access the back country like everyone else during the black bear regular season?

Why would the Commission want to Rob Peter to pay Paul by taking away three female quota bears from the original BMU 520 spring quota of 12 and give three female quota bears to a select few hunters in this new proposed BMU within the old established BMU. All this is going to do is take opportunity away from the majority of the bear hunters in BMU 520, and make further ill feelings towards changing the season for a few bear hunters.

If Commissioner Cebull's amendment passes, what is it going to be next year. I think this is a slippery slope for the Commission to pass this amendment.

As John Steinbeck wrote in his book in 1937, "the best-laid plans of mice and men often go astray".

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment.

Doug and Patty Dreeszen
Ballantine, Montana

Sent from Mail [go.microsoft.com] for Windows

Wickman, Erik

From: Dale Martin <haydenvalley55@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 3:34 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Split BMU 520

Sirs,

I am against splitting BMU 520 and giving the newly created subunit its own regulations and opening and closing dates.

It is my opinion that this proposal is up for consideration because a group of people want their own area to hunt. There is no biological justification for this change. Approving this proposal will only encourage more and more hunters to try to carve out their own little area for their benefit. Leave BMU 520 the way it currently is, with one set of regulations and opening/closing dates for the entire unit.

Dale L. Martin
2308 Locust Street
Billings, Montana 59101

Wickman, Erik

From: Gregory Alves <alves.greg3@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2024 7:19 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment - Cebull Proposed Amendment Split BMU 520

Good afternoon,

In regards to Commissioner Cebull's amendment proposal, I agree with the creation of BMU 530 (1a) but disagree with the dates proposed (1b).

Sectioning off BMU 530 is a reasonable proposal in order to separate quotas from BMU 520 which encompasses such a large area, including a large portion that does not appear to support black bear habitat.

I disagree with the May 25 spring start date for a couple reasons. The rationale and background states that this push to later in May will help harvest higher elevation boars. Given that high elevation bears typically follow the snow line in the spring, it seems counter intuitive that these bears would still be high at this time (especially in a low snow year in this area). Additionally, I think that having this season push past into June will cause high traffic in this area since most other BMUs will be closed by this time. If this BMU were to start May 15 and close May 31 it would also allow for bears to be harvested earlier relative to ungulate calving in the first weeks of June which could reduce predation on those fawns/calves.

Very Respectfully,

Gregory Alves
406-223-0638
alves.greg3@gmail.com