



# MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL.

**Meeting Date:** August 13, 2020

**Agenda Item:** 2021 Fishing Regulations

**Action Needed:** Proposed

**Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation:** 15 minutes

---

**Background:** The fish regulation-setting process is conducted on a four-year cycle with the last four-year review occurring for the 2020 fishing regulations. Every four years FWP seeks input from staff and the general public for ideas and concerns that might be addressed through regulation changes. Regulation changes made the other three years (or “off cycle” changes) must meet one or more of the following criteria to be considered: 1) Clarifications: regulation change is needed to clarify intent of regulation or to correct typos or other errors that led to erroneous information in regulations; 2) Enforcement: regulation change is needed to improve enforcement efforts, to prevent illegal take, or to clarify intent to reduce innocent violations; 3) Conservation: regulation change is needed to conserve or protect the population of any species; 4) Relevancy: regulation no longer has a real management purpose or value and there is little public following, constituency or controversy; 5) Management Plans: FWP has committed to implementing regulation changes if certain events transpire (e.g., changes in fish populations, angling pressure, catch rates, etc.), typically based upon goals or management objectives defined through a publicly vetted process. Since 2021 is an “off cycle” year only proposals that were brought forward by Fisheries and Enforcement staff and meet one of the five criteria outlined above are proposed. The department is proposing 20b regulation changes, with 3 changes based on conservation need. All other proposed regulations clarify regulations in place, address enforcement needs, or relevancy.

**Public Involvement Process & Results:** Many of the clarifications and enforcement needs addressed in the proposed regulations are based on interactions with the public via phone calls and contacts in the field. Most proposals are also based upon actions taken through other public processes, such as development of kids fishing ponds or expanding previously adopted fishing regulations. If endorsed by the commission the department will collect public comment on these proposals and report back to the commission for final action.

**Alternatives and Analysis:** The commission could choose to approve the proposed tentative fishing regulations for public comment; not approve the proposed fishing regulations for public comment; or pick specific proposals to approve or not approve for public comment. The department recommends approving the proposed tentative fishing regulations for public comment.

**Proposed Motion:** I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission approve the proposed tentative fishing regulations for public comment.