

Rose, Sharon

#1

From: James Olson <jwodentmt@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 10, 2019 1:42 PM
To: Rose, Sharon
Subject: 01 (Olson)--[EXTERNAL] Re: Stumptown Addn to Garrity Mtn WMA--Draft EA

(Sounds great do it) Jim Olson

In a message dated 11/8/2019 5:39:26 PM Central Standard Time, shrose@mt.gov writes:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) invites public review of its proposal to acquire fee title to approximately 600 acres of privately owned land as an addition to FWP's adjoining 9,907-acre Garrity Mountain Wildlife Management Area (GMWMA). The acquisition parcel is located along the northeastern portion of GMWMA and is 1.5 miles west of Anaconda in Deer Lodge County in west-central Montana. Called the Stumptown Addition, the parcel would provide critical winter range for elk and deer, an important spring calving area for elk, and summer range for bighorn sheep. The addition also encompasses 0.7 miles of Warm Springs Creek and its associated riparian area that is one of the most productive and diverse riparian habitats in the area. The addition would also support a diversity of game species and many nongame species, while precluding subdivision and development. It would be managed for fish and wildlife habitat as well as to improve public recreational access and opportunities. The project is proposed to be funded by the Natural Resource Damage Program, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, FWP's Habitat Montana Fund, and the Montana Fish and Wildlife Conservation Fund.

A draft environmental assessment (EA) has been prepared describing this proposal. The EA may be obtained by mail from Region 2 FWP, 3201 Spurgin Rd., Missoula 59804; by phoning 406-542-5500; by emailing shrose@mt.gov; or by viewing FWP's Internet website <http://fwp.mt.gov> ("News," then "Public Notices").

The direct webpage for this proposal is:

http://fwp.mt.gov/news/publicNotices/environmentalAssessments/acquisitionsTradesAndLeases/pn_0240.html

Comments may be made online on the EA's webpage or may be directed to Sharon Rose at the mail or email addresses above. Comments must be received by FWP **no later than December 11, 2019**. (Please note that this is an extension of the December 9th date listed in the newspaper legal notice.)

FWP will hold a **public hearing** in **Anaconda** on **November 19, 2019** (Tuesday) at 6:00 p.m. at the AOH Hall (321-323 East Commercial Street) to discuss the proposal, answer questions and take public comment.

1

Sharon Rose

Comments Coordinator, Region 2

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

3201 Spurgin Rd

Missoula, MT 59804

Ph: (406) 542-5540

shrose@mt.gov

Montana FWP



THE OUTSIDE IS IN US ALL.

Rose, Sharon

#2

From: b.robbins@bresnan.net
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2019 9:25 AM
To: Rose, Sharon
Subject: 02 (Robbins)--Public Comment: Stumptown Addition to Garrity Mtn WMA

Name: Brian Robbins

City: Anaconda

I fully support the acquisition adding this land to the Garrity Mountain WMA. It is incredibly fortunate for FWP to have the opportunity to purchase this. I urge you to please consider the safety aspects along Warm Springs Creek bottom and only allow archery equipment north of the Stumptown road. Rifle hunting in that area could be potentially dangerous. Great work FWP!

This e-mail was generated from the 'Stumptown Addition to Garrity Mtn WMA' Public Notice Web Page.

Rose, Sharon

#3

From: bdexcess@gmail.com
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2019 11:28 AM
To: Rose, Sharon
Subject: 03 (Andreozzi)--Public Comment: Stumptown Addition to Garrity Mtn WMA

Name: Bob Andreozzi
City: Anaconda
To: Sharon Rose

I have been a resident of Anaconda for over 35 years and have an excellent view of this property from my home north of the property in English Gulch. I strongly supported the earlier purchase of property the FW&P purchased to the west a couple of years ago and I whole-heartedly support the passage of this Stumptown addition.

I have seen over 200 elk use the previously purchased property and know they, deer, and moose use the Stumptown property. In addition to the wildlife use, I have driven by the portion adjacent to Hwy 1 for 30+ years and know that that wetland to the south is very important to the areas moose population.

I always worry about any of that foothill property south of Hwy 1 being developed for homes, with the problems caused by development - loss of habitat, dog disruption problems, and road problems dealing with access and potential poaching.

As a retired Forester with the MT DNRC and as a Consultant, I did the timber inventory for the acquisition of the German Gulch property a number of years ago. It was one of my proudest works as a Consultant and was such a valuable addition to the wildlife management area.

This current acquisition fits in well with the adjoining State Lands partial section as well as the current Garrity portions and provides such valuable wildlife protection of natural systems. I strongly support this acquisition.

My one concern as I read through the EA are the wire fences. A number of years ago a calf moose was entangled in one of those fences and I am sure other wildlife have been affected by them I would like to see as much of them removed. Any left should be "wildlife friendly" as described in the EA.

This e-mail was generated from the 'Stumptown Addition to Garrity Mtn WMA' Public Notice Web Page.

Rose, Sharon

#4

From: otisranch@wispwest.net
Sent: Monday, November 18, 2019 7:03 AM
To: Rose, Sharon
Subject: 04 (Otis)--Public Comment: Stumptown Addition to Garrity Mtn WMA

Name: Bert Otis

City: Emigrant

Dear Fish Wildlife & Parks Commission,

I support the Stumptown Addition to the Garrity Mtn WMA. It looks like a great piece of property to add to the existing WMA. It not only will adds to the hunting opportunities in the area, but has some fishing too. Looks like a win/win in all areas for the public to enjoy.

Bert Otis

This e-mail was generated from the 'Stumptown Addition to Garrity Mtn WMA' Public Notice Web Page.

Rose, Sharon

5a

From: David Stone <davston6@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 8, 2019 5:21 PM
To: Rose, Sharon
Subject: 05a (Stone)--[EXTERNAL] Re: Stumptown Addn to Garrity Mtn WMA--Draft EA
Attachments: image001.jpg

Looks good to me. Will be at meeting.

On Fri, Nov 8, 2019, 4:39 PM Rose, Sharon <shrose@mt.gov> wrote:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) invites public review of its proposal to acquire fee title to approximately 600 acres of privately owned land as an addition to FWP's adjoining 9,907-acre Garrity Mountain Wildlife Management Area (GMWMA). The acquisition parcel is located along the northeastern portion of GMWMA and is 1.5 miles west of Anaconda in Deer Lodge County in west-central Montana. Called the Stumptown Addition, the parcel would provide critical winter range for elk and deer, an important spring calving area for elk, and summer range for bighorn sheep. The addition also encompasses 0.7 miles of Warm Springs Creek and its associated riparian area that is one of the most productive and diverse riparian habitats in the area. The addition would also support a diversity of game species and many nongame species, while precluding subdivision and development. It would be managed for fish and wildlife habitat as well as to improve public recreational access and opportunities. The project is proposed to be funded by the Natural Resource Damage Program, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, FWP's Habitat Montana Fund, and the Montana Fish and Wildlife Conservation Fund.

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Sharon Rose

Comments Coordinator, Region 2

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

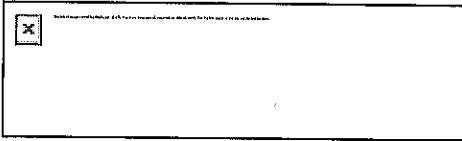
3201 Spurgin Rd

Missoula, MT 59804

Ph: (406) 542-5540

shrose@mt.gov

Montana FWP



5a

#56

For comment/s # 56 See Appendix B at end of this file:

Pg B-5 #/name 6. Dave Stone

Rose, Sharon

#6

From: randysetter325@yahoo.com
Sent: Thursday, November 21, 2019 1:22 PM
To: Rose, Sharon
Subject: 06 (Setter)--Public Comment: Stumptown Addition to Garrity Mtn WMA

Name: Randy setter

City: Anaconda

Beautiful piece of ground. Lots of game use the thick aspen stands. My wife and my 2 daughters. And many friends would like to see this area stay intact. Being so close to home makes this a win for all anaconda residents.thank you.

This e-mail was generated from the 'Stumptown Addition to Garrity Mtn WMA' Public Notice Web Page.

Rose, Sharon

#7

From: Eric Clewis <eclewis@mtwf.org>
Sent: Wednesday, December 4, 2019 2:59 PM
To: Rose, Sharon
Subject: 07 (MWF, Chadwick)--[EXTERNAL] Stumptown Addition EA
Attachments: StumptownEA_MWF_LetterOfSupport.pdf

Ms. Rose,

Please accept the attached comments as the Montana Wildlife Federation's support of the Stumptown Addition to the Garrity Mountain WMA EA. Also, please list my name as the MWF contact for decision notices and other updates for this project.

Thank you,

Eric Clewis

Western Montana Field Coordinator
Montana Wildlife Federation
P.O. Box 1175
Helena, MT 59624
cell: (832) 444-6976
eclewis@mtwf.org
www.montanawildlife.org [montanawildlife.org]



Protecting Montana's wildlife,
land, waters and hunting & fishing
heritage for future generations.

7

Dec 4, 2019

Sharon Rose
Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks
Region 2
3201 Spurgin Road
Missoula, MT 59804

Attn: Stumptown Addition EA

Dear Ms. Rose,

The Montana Wildlife Federation (MWF) is our state's oldest and largest state-based wildlife conservation organization. We were formed in 1936 when hunters joined landowners to restore depleted wildlife in Montana, and for 83 years we have worked on key issues affecting wildlife, habitat and access.

MWF is strongly supportive of the proposed purchase of approximately 600 acres of private land adjacent to the Garrity Mountain Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in Deer Lodge County by the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Natural Resource Damage Program, and the Montana Fish and Wildlife Conservation Fund. This location is an important spring calving area for elk in addition to being critical winter range for elk and mule deer and summer range for bighorn sheep. This property also has many recreational opportunities ranging from hunting and fishing to mountain biking and wildlife viewing.

This addition also adds fisheries values to the Garrity Mountain WMA through protection of 0.7 miles of Warm Springs Creek. This creek, and its associated riparian zone, supports critical habitat for federally threatened bull trout as well as many state species of concern, including westslope cutthroat trout. This area is considered some of the most biologically diverse and directly threatened habitats in Montana.

Our affiliate, the Anaconda Sportsmen's Club, is also strongly supportive of this project. MWF considers this an excellent use of Habitat Montana funds and commends the Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks for preserving this land as a part of our Montana Outdoor Heritage. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Dave

Dave Chadwick
Executive Director

Rose, Sharon

#8

From: Gochanour, Chad
Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2019 1:44 PM
To: Rose, Sharon
Subject: 08 (Gochanour)--Stumptown Road Addition

Good afternoon,

I just wanted to comment on Stumptown Addition South West of Anaconda. I think that this is a great idea I remember as a kid we used to go up on Jeep Hill and at one time we built a cabin up there. And as I got older I used to hunt it all the time also it is a great place I live out in the West Valley and I look at Mount Haggin and all of the Stumptown area and the wild life. And I used to fish and explore what we called the back trails where Warm Springs Creek is that was an awesome area too it will great to finally have all of that back into public hands so generations can enjoy it also.

Thank you

Chad

*Chad Gochanour
Montana Correctional Enterprises MVM
Production Manager
cgochanour@mt.gov
406-846-1320 Ext 2282*

#9

For comment/s # 9 See Appendix B at end of this file:

Pg B-2 #/name 1. Chris Marchion

For comment/s # 10

See Appendix B at end of this file:

#10

Pg B-3

#/name 2. Debbie Jurcich

#11a

For comment/s # 11a See Appendix B at end of this file:

Pg B-3 #/name 3. Tim Ravndal

Rose, Sharon

#11b

From: Ritter, Torrey
Sent: Monday, December 16, 2019 12:33 PM
To: Rose, Sharon
Subject: 11b (Ravndal, T)--Fw: [EXTERNAL] Garrity Mountain Wildlife Management Area

Public comment letter from Tim Ravndal sent to my email address.

-Torrey

Nongame Wildlife Biologist
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks - Region 2
3201 Spurgin Road, Missoula, MT 59804
(406) 542-5551
torrey.ritter@mt.gov

From: Tim Ravndal <thornyacre43@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 11, 2019 4:47 PM
To: Ritter, Torrey; tim.r@redoubtnews.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Garrity Mountain Wildlife Management Area

Greetings

For the record, I am adamantly opposed to the proposed addition to the Garrity Mountain WMA.

I attended the hearing in Anaconda and heard your presentation and comments by the members of the Anaconda Sportsman club.

At that hearing I raised the concern on the way the current management area is being currently closed to "ALL" access from the 1st of December to May. There is recorded sighting of wolves in the area. I personally know there are currently 2 wolves that encompass this area as their territory. I also want to let you know that I have recorded 3 resident female lions in the area. Having permission on the private property in question for predator control I have met the challenge of your closed access and total closure of the area. I have visited with the local game warden on this and he understand the problem of predator control.

Having read the article in the local Anaconda paper I saw and disagree with distortion of the facts. Including discussion about your proposed expansion on the Big Hole Side of the management area is just wrong. There is a growing concern regarding the duty of the department to maintain the public trust. ignoring that Constitutional duty is capricious at the minimum. Without any local government officials at the meeting it is difficult to confirm they are positively engaged in this process.

Historically the chain of Mountain lakes has provided recreational opportunities for the citizens of the area. As I stated at the hearing, this entire area was my back yard growing up. I also want to remind you that I am part of the logging and mining industries. I hauled logs out of the area before all resource management excluding wildlife was shut down. There is a sincere need to keep in mind the potential for future timber management but under this scenario it will continue to be prohibited. Closing the area to multiple use is not in the best interest of the community or the citizens of Montana.

I raised a concern about the removal of private property known as "IN-HOLDINGS" Expansion of the "Pintler Wilderness Area by the State of Montana is not in the best interest of the future beneficial use of our resources. Locking them up is not beneficial to the people of this country. Expansion of wildlife corridors sounds good, but in reality, removes several factors in wildlife management including but not limited to predator control as stated above. Keep in mind that it is statistically documented that only .02% of the American public utilize wilderness areas. The expansion of any WMA is not economically sound or socially justified here in Montana. In case your team is not familiar, please visit many historic documents regarding use and management of designated wilderness areas. Here in Montana the debate continues over "Proposed Wilderness" and management of those areas already designated as "Roadless Areas" qualifying as wilderness is false. Please do not claim that I am falling on a separate issue here that is under the jurisdiction of the federal government. Local government and Montana elected officials have a seat at the table and it is their duty to the people to be engaged.

It was stated that one of the purposes of expanding this area is to help keep wildlife from expanding into the city of Anaconda. Pardon my expression, but are you kidding? Look at the continued escalation of private property/public wildlife management problems. Leaving parts of this puzzle off the table we see a guided mission that is contrary to the foundation of our Montana Constitution.

MFWP representative at the hearing objected to my claim that the removal of private property tax base is detrimental. Citing statutory control over spending of "Montana Taxpayer" funding is not generated revenue. The dependence upon funding from the Federal Government is tax dollars period. Depending on funding from license sales by FWP is in such high demand, proper management of this area is only going to be added to the list. As a business owner I am fully aware of running out of money, and yes...I got the memo that the federal government is broke.

If we are going to give deference to MFWP spending, why were no figures offered at the hearing, nor advertised. Is this another purchase by non profit organizations at a reduced rate and then sold back to the people for full market value? This practice is well documented and is not sustainable with revenue sources expected to carry the load. Omission of all the facts at the hearing and public notices is not transparency nor shows any accountability to the people of Montana.

Another factor that was not addressed at the hearing is ADA. If this is public land and access is guaranteed to the public for access and enjoyment, this expansion and management program is not in the best interest of those needing and are entitled to beneficial use of these lands. I could go on, but I believe that your proposal is not in the best interests of the people.

The current GMWMA management program denies the people access to these lands. Change the management of the area to be more public friendly I could consider offering support. Knowing that the standard response to this is for me to give you management suggestions for your consideration. Having led Montana Multiple Use Association for many years, look at FWP records and they are all there.

I know my comment here is very negative. I want you and your team to know that the continued acquisition of land by government agencies funded by environmentalism is not conducive to our customs and heritage here in Montana.

--

In Liberty,

Tim Ravndal
PO Box 287
Townsend Montana 59644
1-406-439-5860

#12a

For comment/s # 12a See Appendix B at end of this file:

Pg B-5 #/name 4. Rich Day

Rose, Sharon

#12b

From: Mark Thompson <tdi_mt@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 11, 2019 2:15 PM
To: Rose, Sharon
Cc: Rich Day; President GGTU
Subject: 12b (GGTU, Thompson)--[EXTERNAL] Letter of recommendation - Stumptown addition
Attachments: Garrity WMA.pdf

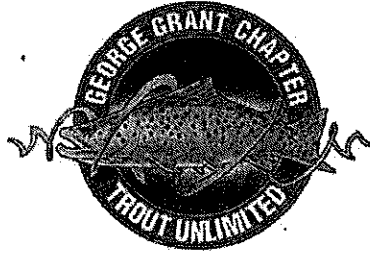
Sharon,

Please find attached our letter of recommendation for the recent suggested acquisition of the Stumptown addition in the Garrity WMA. If you have any questions please let me know.

Cheers.

Mark Thompson
President GGTU
406-593-10589

George Grant TU
PO Box 563
Butte, MT 59703
Cold Clean Fishable Water



December 10, 2019
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Region 2
Funding Recommendation for the Stumptown Addition to Garry Mountain WMA

Dear Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks,

The George Grant Chapter of Trout Unlimited (GGTU) is a leading conservation group in southwestern Montana, representing over 400 anglers in the Butte region. GGTU has been intimately involved in habitat and fisheries issues in the upper Clark Fork watershed for decades. GGTU is well aware of the importance of Warm Springs Creek to the mainstem of the Clark Fork River and enthusiastically supports the proposed 600-acre addition to the Garry Mountain Wildlife Management Area.

The proposed acquisition and addition to the Garry Mountain WMA is an enormous win for conservation. It is not only remarkable, but encouraging in these fractured times, to see numerous partner groups and agencies come together to develop this proposal and present it to the public for comment. The fishery in the Upper Clark Fork River is stressed and projects such as these that protect and promote the River's tributaries are essential to sustaining and recovering trout populations. Roughly 0.7 miles of Warm Springs Creek, and its natural riparian corridor, will be preserved and protected by the Stumptown addition. This proposal will also increase and protect access to public lands. There has been an incredible amount of acreage protected in public hands in the Anaconda area over the past two decades and this project adds to that impressive portfolio. Anaconda now has close to 100,000 acres of public lands within 15 miles of the city limits. GGTU hopes that the FWP and its partners will continue to proactively fund projects like this in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the funding proposal. Please contact me, GGTU president, if you have any questions or concerns regarding our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Thompson", written over a horizontal line.

Mark Thompson
President GGTU
president@ggtu.org
406-491-4255



#13a

For comment/s # 13a See Appendix B at end of this file:

Pg B-5 #/name 5. Gary Ouldhouse

Rose, Sharon

#13b

From: David Stone <davston6@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 18, 2019 7:24 AM
To: Rose, Sharon
Subject: 13b (ASC, Stone)--[EXTERNAL] Stumptown addition to GWMA

This acquisition would be potentially the last parcel to add to the wma. Acquiring this parcel would secure a calving ground ,winter grazing and an important nursery area for the Elk. Numerous whitetail deer use this area also. Development of this area would impact the wma immensely. Also acquiring this parcel would open up fishing access to warmsprings creek which has been closed for years. This piece of property sitting in the middle of the northern boundary of GWMA is very important to it. Therefore,as vice president of the Anaconda Sportsmen Club,I'm and our club is in support of this aquisition.

#14a

For comment/s # 14a See Appendix B at end of this file:

Pg B-5 #/name 7. Aaron Ravndal

From: Aaron Ravndal <ahrav51@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 10, 2019 6:18 PM
To: Rose, Sharon
Subject: 14b (Ravndal, A)--[EXTERNAL] Proposed Stumptown Addition to Garrity Mtn. WMA

Hello Sharon,

Here are some of my thoughts and comments about the public hearing in Anaconda on 19 Nov. 2019.

Since I grew up here in Stumptown from birth and down through the years I've seen changes to the area that were sometimes swift and sudden but most of the time gradual. This latest proposal by FWP's and other entities is an apex of more sudden changes that are coming down the pipeline. I am against this change. My observations of what has changed in the past since the Garrity WMA was acquired in 2001 is that things have been neglected in most all of the areas of management. I see this procurement as more of the same and more control of land that we as citizens get locked out of. As a matter of fact I'm locked out of my own back yard right now.

In the hearing Chris Marchion with Anaconda Sportsman's Club presented a goal to get the wild game...ie. deer, elk, etc. further away from Anaconda and... the farther away from town the better. He states that the elk during the seasons of summer and fall need to be pushed further up in elevation into their natural habitat. Those lower elevations of water, aspen groves and other deciduous trees plus grasses and greeneries IS their natural realm at that particular time of the year and it sustains them. The location of the proposed Stumptown Addition is an island of refuge and shelter under the existing private ownership that allows them to recoup from winter and their calves (young) can gain and grow in strength prior to the upcoming hunting season. (The hunting season is too long in duration and has been been for many years causing undue and unreasonable duress on the animals). Ray Dvorak, the owner, has video cameras in various locations on his property that which capture evidence of a host of different animals including deer, elk, moose, bear, lion, coyote, etc. Because his property is posted ~ 'No Trespassing' it allows wildlife to remain unmolested from law abiding citizens.

Current problems exist in Anaconda with mule deer within the city limits not just during the harsh winter months but year round. Deer are a major staple in the diet of mountain lions. Because deer adapt well to humans they seek safety in the midst of civilization. This problem is true across our state of Montana in other cities and towns such as Glendive, Helena, etc. and not just Anaconda but my point is: that we don't find mule deer in the higher elevations much anymore. They all seem to be in town! In my travels to the back country and specifically Garrity Mtn., my back yard, the mule deer are absent. I believe this to be a M.F.W.P. management problem in that there is insufficient predator control. Wolves are increasing in numbers here in recent years and their main source of food are elk and sometimes moose. Last winter was unusually severe here in February and wildlife carried the burden of the strain of the elements in addition to the stress from predators. Whether it be U.S.D.A. Forest Service, B.L.M., or state government such as D.N.R.C.; M.F.W.P., etc., ... gates are locked (throughout the West) to vehicles and even foot travel is restricted or prohibited. In the case of WMA's in most locale's it ends up being nearly 1/2 the calendar year. These predators with voracious appetites are free from trapping and hunting that could potentially keep them in check.

In the meeting, Chris Marchion made a suggestion, only a suggestion...that a campground or out-house could possibly be utilized in the bottom land parking areas such as where access would be provided for people to fish and recreate along Warm Sprgs. Creek. This might be applicable (in the hearing discussion) to have at a parking area for those with horse trailers. My comment on this is a red flag of abuse to these kinds of public areas. Currently we have a problem in the Stumptown area of people (kids?) throwing garbage out of their vehicles along this Stumptown Rd. and even to the point of some (adults?) dumping garbage and animal carcasses in various places along the road. Our Anaconda-Deer Lodge Co. have placed 'No Dumping' signs with posted penalty consequences, most often times to no avail. Our police patrol out this way along this road but I've not heard nor read of anyone getting pinched for this violation. I bring this up because it used to be a terrible problem in the past, prior to the fences which are currently along the road. People would be drinking and partying in the wee hours of the night wherever they could get away from the main traveled road. This is a concern that deserves consideration!

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I foresee wildfires as a pending problem in the area we are focusing on because of the beetle kill in recent years to pine trees. These woods around here ~meaning from 1 mile west of Anaconda on the East, to Barker Cr. (and beyond) on the West~ = GMWMA . This is presently a tinder box just waiting for the spark or lightning bolt to cause major catastrophe. Again I blame it on government management that looks the other way when people (the public) could be removing much of the hazard with harvest firewood if they were allowed vehicle access to do so.

Weeds are a problem that seems to have raised its ugly head since GMWMA was acquired in 2001. I realize it has become a daunting challenge, now that it has gotten way out of hand. When I hear and sometimes see the efforts that are put forth toward the management of noxious weeds I believe what I'm seeing is some good hearted folks who truly are trying but that its only a drop in the bucket to the vast big picture. I also wonder if their efforts via their supervisors are just for show.

There are other concerns I have that I'll not mention at this time that equate to my misgivings about government control over our society. Thanks to whoever takes the time to read my concerns. AHR

--

Aaron Ravndal
P.O. Box 12
Anaconda, MT 59711
ahrav51@gmail.com
(406) 941 0596

#15

For comment/s # 15 See Appendix B at end of this file:

Pg B-6 #/name S. Joe Romero

#16

For comment/s # 16 See Appendix B at end of this file:

Pg B-6 #/name 9. Richard Clark

Rose, Sharon

#17

From: djurcich@bresnan.net
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2019 1:23 PM
To: Rose, Sharon
Subject: 17 (Jurcich, D)--Public Comment: Stumptown Addition to Garrity Mtn WMA

Name: Dan jurcich

City: Anaconda

I think this would be a great addition to the existing properties surrounding this 600 acres and we will once again have access to fish and hunt this property that has been closed off the last 20 years or so.

This e-mail was generated from the 'Stumptown Addition to Garrity Mtn WMA' Public Notice Web Page.

Rose, Sharon

#18

From: matttaylor518@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, December 10, 2019 4:11 PM
To: Rose, Sharon
Subject: 18 (Taylor)--Public Comment: Stumptown Addition to Garrity Mtn WMA

Name: Matt Taylor

City: Anaconda

Hello i am sending this message in regards to the stump town addition to the Garrity WMA. I support lands being tuned over to public but this is not what i see going on in this area. The land is locked up to any kind of predator control or access for half of the year. I support the land being accessible for use by the public but if you are just buying another piece of land to put a lock on the gate i will not support that. If there is no chance for predator hunters to manage the numbers they will continue to grow. i have had lion tracks right next to my house and if i wanted to find someone with a license and the means to go after it in order to keep it at an arms length from my house i cant do that because the cat would most likely end up on the WMA and it would be illegal to pursue the cat or the dogs. i would also like to say there are most definitely wolves in the area, and they are not managed in any way. the only way to access them is during rifle hunting season when for the most part the people that would want to help manage predator numbers are trying to fill their freezer. I don't believe that protecting the animals that are putting real pressure on the ones you are claiming to be helping is going to solve any of the problems with winter grounds and calving season. I refuse to believe that the few people that would be traveling through the area would be worse for the elk and other prey animals than an unchecked predator population. the way this WMA is going i believe is the wrong direction. To sum up what im saying i do not support the government buying land to lock the public out.

This e-mail was generated from the 'Stumptown Addition to Garrity Mtn WMA' Public Notice Web Page.

Appendix B

Public Hearing for Proposed Stumptown Addition to Garrity Mountain WMA

November 19, 2019 at 6:00 pm; AOH Hall (106 Cherry Street), Anaconda, MT

Agency Attendees:

1. Torrey Ritter--Nongame Wildlife Biologist and Lands Specialist; Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) Region 2 (R2)
2. Julie Golla--Area Wildlife Biologist, FWP R2
3. Martin Balukas--Lands Agent, FWP
4. Greg Mullen--Environmental Science Specialist, Natural Resource Damage Program (NRDP)

Project Introduction by Agency Personnel, and Questions and Answers:

- Torrey Ritter gave a PowerPoint presentation introducing and describing the proposed 600-acre Stumptown Addition to FWP's Garrity Mountain Wildlife Management Area (WMA).
- Martin Balukas and Greg Mullen explained the source of NRDP funding, the process by which that funding is allocated and distributed, and the public process FWP and NRDP are going through to provide funding for the Stumptown Addition.
- One attendee asked about fencing around the property in terms of impacts to wildlife and how we expect to deal with it.
- One attendee asked about the horse corrals and potential access to those corrals for horseback riders and how the public can remain involved towards pushing for that kind of access in the future.
 - Torrey: This EA is just for purchasing the property and some basic improvements for parking. We could visit other development ideas later with another EA. This does not preclude all of these other ideas from being considered in the future.
- One attendee liked the idea of an archery range on the property and was wondering what the process was for bringing up an idea like that in the future.
 - Julie: We talked with that group and we brainstormed some potential hurdles, the big one being restricted access to only when the WMA is open. Once we get the property that's when we can talk with Brady Shortman (WMA Maintenance Supervisor) and amongst ourselves about potential improvements, what to do with buildings, or development down the road. We will leave room in our wording and goals for camping or parking or an archery range, but all those conversations can happen further down the road.
 - Martin: The short answer is someone would come to Julie with a proposal and she can be the filter to pass through those ideas. Then, we figure out the legal and management hurdles. Then, there would be a formalized EA and public process under MEPA.
 - Torrey: There is a management plan for this addition as an appendix in this EA. Torrey provided an example of acquisition and development for an FAS project in R2 and contrasted with this EA which is pretty much strictly for acquisition. As for the fencing issue, fences will be repaired to wildlife-friendly standards where they are still needed or otherwise will be removed as time and resources allow.
- One attendee pointed out that our description of the existing fencing in the EA was incorrect, and that there is 5-strand electric fence along the road, not a high-tensile fence as described in EA.
- One attendee asked several questions about access points and parking areas, especially for those with large horse trailers. Torrey, Martin, and Julie expressed that we will be putting in initial parking areas along Stumptown Road, but additional parking and access would be developed once we get a sense of the levels and types of use in the area. Certainly, we will need to address the accessibility for large horse trailers in the future and will seek public input on that. The main thing right now is to purchase the property. There is value in

purchasing the property, evaluating the public use, and then responding accordingly rather than trying to predict the use ahead of time.

- An attendee asked about the process for development and other uses (implying campground, FAS, etc.) on the WMA in the future, such as changing the actual management plan to accommodate those types of changes.
 - Julie and Torrey explained the process of coming up with a proposal, talking to Julie about it, and going through a different EA and commission process for those changes.
- One attendee asked about the EA process and how expensive and cumbersome it is and who funds it. His concern being FWP getting roadblocked later because we don't have the time or resources to revisit these development ideas.
 - Julie and Torrey responded by outlining the resources necessary to do the EA process and some things that can slow it down. Julie related to other processes on other WMAs.
 - Martin expressed that an EA is a process we go through all the time and that he has never heard of the cost of just the EA process being a barrier. What I would take away from this tonight is that there is interest from the public in how their access is used and managed, and that I would recommend the department wait until we get our feet under us with this new property and then engage in a robust process for addressing these concerns. Julie agreed.
- Some discussion was had around the Miller Lake project and overall government land purchases in the area.

Public Hearing Comments (in the order of appearance):

1. Chris Marchion, Anaconda. *[These comments also appear as #9 in Appendix A]*

- Member of Anaconda Sportsman's Club (ASC); I'm supportive of the proposal.
- Landowner (of the Stumptown property) used to work for RMEF (Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation) and has a conservation ethic.
- Obviously, the public has great interest in this property. It has great wildlife values especially south of the road. But the area north of the road is a good fishery, and we are very interested in opening that up to the public.
- We would be interested in looking at that [the area north of Stumptown Road] as a FAS with a road and outhouse and parking spaces. We should have as an opening that some day we may want to put a campground in there. We are not proposing that now, but don't want to buy this property and then 10 years from now want a campground and somehow be restricted because FWP says "well you can't because it's a WMA."
- We are buying it with NRDP money, which ASC had a major hand in getting along with MWF [Montana Wildlife Federation] and others. To do that, we had to document resources lost from mining activities and the idea was to replace those lost values. So, a potential FAS down there [the area north of Stumptown Road] needs to be on the agenda.
- To make this WMA useable by the public, I don't want to see us buy a bunch more land where the access by the public is down on the Stumptown Road. We deserve to get off the Stumptown Road. There are private landowners that live behind the public land and we need to have as good of access as they do. We need to get at least to the mountain. I would like to see one of those old roads used to get us an access site 1/4 or 1/2 mile back and off the Stumptown Road, so we don't have to park on the road.
- There is an archery club in Anaconda that would like to put together a silhouette range and they would like something close to town and accessible. This fits their bill. I don't know if north or south side of road would be the appropriate place and I don't know if they would need access outside the normal WMA dates.
- So, there are other uses for this property that fit with what the NRDP money is for and can make it more useable and are not antagonistic to the values of fisheries and wildlife.

- We need to have more serious discussion moving forward. We should have someone here from fisheries when the biologist gets on board.
- We would like to see a little better access than we have but that is down the road. Historically, the public had better motorized access through this property than what you are proposing. Maybe seasonal access but just get people closer to other parts of the property.
- *Further into the meeting, Chris talked about initial criticism of Habitat Montana and people's concerns that FWP wouldn't be able to take care of their properties. Chris expressed that it is also incumbent upon the public to ask the legislature to provide additional resources for taking care of these properties. ASC would support spending license dollars on maintenance of WMAs. Gave an outline of the WHIP [Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program] program and potential for additional funding for WMA maintenance regarding weeds. Highlighted success of restoring vegetation on Blue-eyed Nellie WMA.*

2. **Debbie Jurcich** landowner along the NW boundary of the proposed Stumptown Addition parcel. [These comments also appear as #10 in Appendix A]

- The current fencing runs along an alley behind my house, and it has been electrified in the past and I see wildlife caught up in it quite often. So that fence would be made more wildlife friendly? Right now, it is sheep fence along that northern boundary.
 - Torrey: We want to maintain fences in areas where it prevents trespass or off-road travel. We don't necessarily want fences in areas where they would cause issues for wildlife passage. I think it is safe to say that unless we are fencing out cattle or people, we don't want fences anywhere.
 - Martin: There is no contemplation of ever electrifying any of it.
 - Julie: We have put wildlife-friendly fencing in on Spotted Dog WMA. (Julie then described wildlife-friendly fencing.) We will likely do those kinds of improvements as time and money allow.
- When YT Timber owned it, kids could go in there and play and make forts and go fish and that kind of stuff. So, would there be access from that side as well?
 - Martin: When the WMA is open you can access it from anywhere. I don't think from my research that there is legal public access on the north boundary of the WMA. But for [immediately adjacent] residents, you can go in there anytime [the WMA is open to access], especially since that northern portion [north of Stumptown Road] will likely remain open year-round. Do you see moose back there ever?
 - Debbie: Oh yes, lots of moose as well as elk, deer, bears, and mountain lions.

3. **Tim Ravndal**, citizen and representing Redoubt News. [These comments also appear as #11a in Appendix A]

- I wear a couple hats tonight (private citizen and representing Redoubt News). I am primarily involved with Redoubt News because of issues with public transparency with things like this that involve a lot of money from taxpayers. The public needs to know where it's at, what's going on, the timeframe, and how they can be involved.
- Now I am going to change hats. My name is Tim Ravndal and you're talking about my backyard growing up. I am going on record right now adamantly opposing what you are doing.
- Our family had contact with Ray Dvorak who owns the property you are trying to purchase. As of yesterday, Ray had no idea this public hearing was going on. He was not notified, he was not contacted, he didn't know. Now, if he had contacted RMEF or ASC or some group that's one thing. But to have a state agency promoting a hearing and not having that information out is a problem with transparency again.
- I am a houndsman and a lion hunter and I have hunted this area since 1972 when Ray took me on my first lion hunt. We went a long way in managing mountain lion management and I personally was involved in the 1990s when we developed the mountain lion EIS to manage biologically rather than socially. We are losing a lot of opportunity to maintain a balance between habitat and prey base because of things like this that happen where we are losing access more and more every day. You make a de facto wilderness where it is only foot or horseback and in this case a WMA that is closed down from December 1st to May

15th. Guess when mountain lion season opens up? I once told the FWP commission that "if you think I'm causing stress running into an area to hunt mountain lions, how much stress on that elk do you think is being caused by that mountain lion that's eating every other one that he gets to?" It's very factual. It's habitat vs. prey, and we have a lot of habitat that has been locked out.

- I ran my logging business for several years making money off of this. Your plan doesn't talk about future management other than wildlife. If you look at the Elkhorn Wildlife Management Unit [Elkhorn WMA] outside of Helena. Wow. You talk about a de facto wilderness and all the resources are going to waste. If you go up behind Garrity right now and you look at the regen coming in, you got another harvest of timber. But with it locked up in perpetuity as a WMA for wildlife management, you're losing that resource.
- I have to go back to what you were saying about resource damage. What the hell is the damage that Atlantic-Richfield has done to what you're talking about right here? There isn't any. Everything mother nature has cured and fixed in so many ways. If you could show me anything on that land I've walked around on for the last 40-50 years that's damaged by the smelter I'd have to say, "OK, I am wrong." But you're talking about land that has been healed since environmentalism closed the smelter, and we have lost recreation because we have lost access to the land now. And it's getting worse.
- Finally, what in the hell is going on with Anaconda-Deer Lodge County losing all the tax base by turning this over to a state agency that does not pay taxes on this land? Where is the benefit going to come from in that?
 - Martin: I can answer that. You're incorrect. FWP does pay taxes. What you are talking about is State Trust land which is land that is held in trust to benefit public schools and higher education. FWP does pay taxes on land and we will pay the same taxes Ray pays there now. In fact, his buildings will likely cause us to pay more because right now the buildings are not on the tax rolls.
 - Tim Ravndal: You're confusing real property with private property as far as real estate. The buildings are not what I am talking about. Since YT owned that ground the tax base to ADLC is gone. And now you're adding another 560 acres?
 - Martin: FWP does pay taxes on their land, and we will pay taxes on this land.
 - Tim Ravndal: I'd like to see the figures on that because I don't think I've ever seen where FWP does that. FWP is out of control on funding anyway. There, we don't get along on that either.
 - Chris Marchion: Go up to the courthouse, look at what FWP owns in this county, and look at the taxes that we pay. Our sportsman's dollars pay those taxes. They pay taxes on it every year.
 - Martin: That is MCA, [Montana Code Annotated, section] 87-1-603. Right now, the taxes on that parcel are \$616 per year.
 - Tim Ravndal: I stand corrected if that's the case, but I've seen too much of land being locked up out of private where taxes are paid, and government does not pay taxes. Show me a county that pays taxes on anything. They don't even pay taxes on fuel. That's the reality that we live in. But I am on record going against this.
- One quick follow-up on my comment about predation. Wolves have been introduced in Montana. We got wolves in here now. It's a problem. Guess when the season opens to harvest wolves? When this is closed. We need to get in there and access to harvest wolves to protect the wildlife you're trying to save. The whole area is closed Dec 1st to May 15th. That is when trapping becomes productive, and it's wolf control. We don't have any.
 - Martin: Just to speak to something you said earlier in regard to Ray. Just for everyone here, Ray Dvorak is the private landowner and if he was unaware of this meeting that is incumbent upon me. I have been emailing him with updates and I let him know of the commission meeting and all that stuff.
 - Greg Mullen: But you explained to him the process, so he knew this was coming he may just not have known the exact date.
 - Martin: Yes, exactly. It was in the paper though.

4. **Rich Day**, Board member of George Grant Chapter of Trout Unlimited. *[These comments also appear as #12a in Appendix A]*

- We were involved on the last Garrity addition [property purchased by FWP from YT Timber in May 2019] primarily because of the fisheries and better access to one of the better streams for fishing. Those are the two things that drive us.
- We haven't taken a position on this and we haven't really reviewed this yet, but I'll bring it to the board, and I think you'll see some positive comments coming in on this from our board.

5. **Gary Ouldhouse**, President of ASC. *[These comments also appear as #13a in Appendix A]*

- The club [Anaconda Sportsman's Club] stands in support of this project. We think it's a win-win when you look at both sides of the road. South side is added elk winter range, and this will eliminate any kind of subdivision and that's a big thing. On the north side of the road along the creek is the fishing and riparian part of it and that's very important. Just like this lady was referring to regarding the kids being able to play in there, and they can't do that when it was locked up. Thanks.

6. **Dave Stone**, Anaconda. *[These comments also appear as #5b in Appendix A]*

- Vice President of ASC
- I've lived here my whole life and I've had a chance to observe this property and the WMA as a whole. I am fortunate enough to have it right out my window. I can't see where we are going to lose at all by gaining this property. It's a chunk in the middle of the WMA, and it's like a bite out of it right now and it needs to be filled in. We don't want development on that and it's coming really fast in our future. That seems to be the thing now, people come in with a lot of money and they buy everything up and start subdividing. Soon you have houses where you had elk.
- I want to say something on the fencing. The Anaconda Sportsman's Club has always been donating our time to help take out fencing and we just finished up some on the WMA this summer, and we would be available to take care of that fencing too and work on it with volunteers and Julie knows that. I would like to see all the wire removed off the fencing on the north side and just put up a rail to keep ATVs out. Then kids and wildlife can cross it with no danger.
- On the west end of it there used to be a road across the creek that came out on Stumptown Road and I wouldn't want to see that started again. Lock it up and put some rocks in the way because I could see that happening with the ATVs that are out there these days.
- We need to have that in public ownership.

7. **Aaron Ravndal**, landowner along the W boundary of the proposed Stumptown Addition parcel. *[These comments also appear as #14a in Appendix A]*

- There is presently an access somewhat there in the gulch. We are going to go back to 2001 and how all this started. If I go over to Barker Creek and I come up on the back side, the gates there have a sign on them that say no motorized vehicles. But in the gulch where I live there is no such sign. There are old signs from 2018 that talk about Elk B tags not being valid. Those did not go up again this year, so it is just kind of a neglected area. When I went back up there this afternoon, I took photos, and there weren't any vehicles there, but it was just like a big mud hole. I took photos of the actual gate that has a lock on it.
- My point is this whole plan kind of went by the wayside with this whole WMA, and so I am a little gun-shy about what is going to happen with some of these promises in the sky that you guys are making are going to actually go through. I took some photos of the signs Ray [current Stumptown parcel owner] put up there at this access point. It is a problem for the hunters that come in there with horse trailers. They jam them in there. Just a few days ago I saw a horse trailer coming down in the morning. When I went to town, I saw he was going down the road and there was no room for him to park. I just want to point out that particular trail, the people from DNRC can access through there and go up and thin some of the clear-cuts. But that trail is kind of the access to go up behind Garrity on that side of town.

- o Martin: Just to clarify, you're talking about Ravndal Road where you turn left and that's all private and then it's DNRC, correct? There's no FWP-owned land there now, right? That is public access, DNRC purchased an easement to that green gate across Ray's property.
- o Aaron Ravndal: People that go back there are not going to see a sign that says "no motor vehicles." I don't believe there is any authorization for the horse traffic to be there.
- o Martin: That's a DNRC easement. But it will become a DNRC easement across FWP property if this purchase occurs. I guess that is something we will certainly have to deal with. Ravndal Road is a county road is that correct?
- o Aaron Ravndal: If you say so.

8. **Joe Romero**, [These comments also appear as #15 in Appendix A]

- I like this proposal. I think it is a good idea for promotion of wildlife habitat, particularly wintering elk habitat and public access.
- Finding a balance there is an important part for providing fishing access on the north side of the road, and for those that would like to access the south side it would be extremely beneficial in terms of how we do it. I think it would be prudent upon this stage of the game to set aside at least a commentary where we say "you know what, if we are going to do this then we will put in place a plan to develop parking for horses where the corrals are." Which makes sense to me since we are not going to take down the corrals as part of this plan.
- On the north side of the road there should be potential for a campground, just to have it in the language document. Because otherwise...I don't know, maybe I'm just mistrusting of government...but the thought is that I want to know that the possibility is out there that if we decide 10, 15, 20 years from now that if a campground is a prudent idea, we can go ahead and do that on the north side of the road.
- Or whatever it is, whatever is in the public interest is whatever is best for the habitat or whatever is best for the overall picture. I just don't want it to be like "OK, we talked about this but it's not really well documented." Then, 10-20 years from now we haven't done anything because we didn't say it up-front. So, I want to put it on the record that we are talking about those community values.
- As a member of the public, I thank you all for setting this up. It was very informative and I appreciate it.

9. **Richard Clark**, citizen. [These comments also appear as #16 in Appendix A]

- One simple little comment just as an ordinary citizen and that's all I claim to be. I think it would be real sweet to have a nice little area with some access to the creek where the grandkids can go fishing and all that stuff real close to town. And maybe we could see an elk. I don't hunt them anymore, but I love seeing them come down and the deer are always there, and I would rather see that than a cluster of trophy houses, and I say if we get a chance then let's do it. Because we may never get the chance again.