



MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL.

Meeting Date: April 1, 2021

Agenda Item: Montana Chronic Wasting Disease Management Plan

Action Needed: Proposed

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 15 minutes

Background: The current Montana Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Management Plan operates under the 2014 Decision Notice by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks regarding the department's surveillance and response to CWD detections in the state. Approved by the commission and implemented in fall 2017 following the first detection of CWD in free-ranging wild deer in Montana, this plan builds on prior plans and adds logistical details for implementation. This plan includes adjustments based on experience gained through surveillance, testing, management, and outreach efforts since 2017. The intent of the plan remains to: 1) limit the spread of CWD since detection in Montana; 2) maintain or reduce the prevalence of CWD in specific locations once detected; and 3) improve communication and outreach on CWD among the public, other agencies, and the department.

The department anticipates minor edits to this plan in preparation for final approval in June, as the likely edits use an evolving approach to the assessment and prioritization of surveillance areas. The commission recently adopted commission rule language to address updated carcass disposal guidance and the commission is considering proposed administrative rule language to address the use of scents while hunting as addressed in the last revision of the plan.

Public Involvement Process and Results: The department has not met with the citizen advisory panel during the past year due to challenges with the pandemic, but the panel has supported the plan to date. This draft will be made available for public review and comment through May 3, 2021.

Alternatives and Analysis: The department will review and amend the CWD Management Plan as appropriate in accordance with comment we receive from the public, and a final plan will be presented to the commission for consideration in June.

Agency Recommendation and Rationale: The department recommends that the commission approve for public comment the Montana Chronic Wasting Disease Management Plan.

Proposed Motion: I move that the commission vote to adopt for public comment the Montana Chronic Wasting Disease Management Plan as presented by the department.