



# MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL.

**Meeting Date:** August 25, 2022

**Agenda Item:** Final adoption of motorized boating restrictions on the Boulder River as proposed by the Boulder River Citizens Advisory Committee.

**Action Needed:** Final

**Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation:** 5 Minutes

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**Background:** On April 1, 2020, the Fish and Wildlife Commission directed the department to create a citizens advisory committee to evaluate boating use on the Boulder River. The commission created this committee in response to a rulemaking petition to ban motorized use on the river. The department recruited and selected a five-person citizens advisory committee representing diverse interests and backgrounds. The committee evaluated several alternatives including no action, a full motorized ban, allocated days for motorized use, horsepower restrictions, seasonal restrictions, and motorized restrictions on specific reaches of the river. The committee's final recommendation proposes closing the Boulder River and its tributaries to motorized vessels, with the exception of motorized vessels powered by machinery of 10 horsepower or less being permitted from April 1 through Sept. 30, from the confluence with the Yellowstone River to the Natural Bridge.

On Feb. 4, 2022, the commission voted to initiate rulemaking on the committee's final recommendation to close the Boulder River and its tributaries to motorized vessels, except motorized vessels powered by machinery of 10 horsepower or less from April 1 through Sept. 30, from the confluence with the Yellowstone River to the Natural Bridge.

The commission previously proposed and approved the committee's final recommendations; however, due to a procedural filing error after the April 19, 2022 meeting, the rule language must be repropoed for final commission action at the Aug. 25 meeting.

**Public Involvement Process & Results:** The proposed rule language will be posted on July 8, 2022. Public comment will be taken, including a public hearing, until Aug. 5, 2022. All public comments will be provided to the commission for their consideration and posted on the website by Aug. 11.

**Alternatives & Analysis:** The department recommends the commission adopt the proposed rule language as it is the same proposed language presented to and adopted by the commission at their April 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Proposed Motion:** I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission adopt the proposed rule closing the Boulder River to the use of any motorized vessels, except any motorized vessels powered by machinery of 10 horsepower or less are permitted from April 1 through Sept. 30 from the confluence with the Yellowstone River to the Natural Bridge.