



P.O. BOX 7792 MISSOULA, MT 59807 (406) 529-5754
www.hellgatehuntersandanglers.org

Fish and Wildlife Commission
FWComm@mt.gov

Re: Proposed Commissioner Amendments from Commissioner Cebull

To Whom It May Concern:

I submit the following comments on behalf of Hellgate Hunters & Anglers, a Western Montana-based organization that represents over 500 sportsmen and women across the state. We are grateful for the opportunity to comment on Commissioner Cebull's proposed amendments.

HHA provides the following comments on Commissioner Cebull's Proposed Amendment to the proposed 2024 and 2025 black bear regulations:

1. Set a statewide spring hunting season closure for Black Bear to June 15.

HHA generally does not have an issue with this amendment on a statewide level. However, HHA does have some concerns with relation to potential impacts on grizzly recovery zones, along with historic elk calving habitat. The potential for hunter related conflicts with grizzlies is very high in units in the grizzly recovery zone. This risk is exponentially increased in areas where hound hunting or chasing is allowed. Further, allowing bear hunting activity later into the season could potentially have negative impacts on calving elk. As such, HHA would like to see the Fish and Wildlife Commission take a cautious approach and consider retaining the current season closure date of May 31 in grizzly recovery zones and historic elk calving habitat. Further, HHA generally supports each item in the department response to this proposal regarding quotas, and not changing any units that already extend to June 15.

2. Expand to statewide the Region 1 pilot that allowed hunters to submit extracted teeth instead of having to present a head and carcass. Also require that each hunter submit 2 molars instead of 1.

HHA generally agrees with and supports the department response to this proposal. If the department would prefer a second year of data to determine the adequacy of the pilot program, the commission should follow the department's wishes. HHA also agrees that if this amendment were adopted, physical inspections should remain mandatory in Regions 5, 6, and 7. Finally, the



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48-hour harvest report requirement should remain in effect in any regions where hunters are no longer required to present their harvested bear.

Regarding Commissioner Cebull's remaining proposed amendments, along with the amendments proposed by the other commissioners, HHA would like to make a general comment on this process as whole. The season setting process now allows the commissioners to have a second opportunity to provide input that the public does not have adequate time to vet. The public should have the same opportunity to comment that the commissioners do. The timeline involved in responding to commissioner proposed amendments such as this does not provide the public sufficient time to adequately analyze and understand the proposals. This undercuts the public's ability to participate and has the potential to put the general public on unequal footing with third party interests who may be influencing the commissioners to make changes after the season setting process is finalized.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on these proposed amendments.

Sincerely,

Andrew Gorder
President
Hellgate Hunters & Anglers

Wickman, Erik

From: Laura Fox <laurafox342@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 7, 2023 4:11 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comments on proposed hunting regulations (for Region 7) for meeting 12/14/23. Vice chair Tabor (3)

We are strongly OPPOSED to this change in regulations. We state that our Block Management is private land NOT public land. This change is an attack on private property rights, as no Does would be allowed to be harvested on our ranch., and would affect our management practices. If this change is adopted, we most likely will no longer participate in the Block Management program and will therefore remove many hunting opportunities.

Laura and Philip H. Fox

P and L Cattle Company 12/7/2023

Sent from my iPad

Wickman, Erik

From: Guy Stickney <wallguy31@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 7, 2023 2:37 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Cebull Amendments

Hello Commission,

Here are my comments for the Amendments proposed by Commissioner Cebull:

I oppose the amendment to increase the permits in Hunting District 700. The age class in this Hunting District has been trending down with the bull to cow ratio due to overharvest of bulls. This is my personal observation which matches the data from living in this area for 40 years. The department staff have a good handle on this unit and their recommendations should be followed.

Thanks

Guy Stickney
Miles City MT

Wickman, Erik

From: Mike Mershon <mtnkid82@msn.com>
Sent: Saturday, December 2, 2023 9:04 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] FWP proposal to be amended: Black Bear Regulations

I do not support Commissioner Cebull's Black Bear amendments to extend the black bear season to June 15th statewide while simultaneously removing the need for in person carcass presentation. The extended June 15th date will undoubtedly increase take and potentially largely increase take of females. We have already seen an increase in take with the recent adoption of hound hunting, so we need to be careful and measure what effects a later state wide closure date would have on our bear populations.

Mike Mershon

Wickman, Erik

From: Chris Francis <cjf@c-francis.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 12:28 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support proposed changes to elk quotas and black bear season

Dear Online Comments Commission,

I am writing to urge your support for the following proposals related to elk quotas and black bear hunting seasons.

SUPPORT: Increase either-sex elk quotas for license permit type (LPT) 700-20 from 200 to 250, and in LPT 700-21 from 660 to 800. Since the February 2022, decrease in quotas, the removal of 168 resident hunters and 19 nonresidents hunters has limited sustainable public hunting opportunities and cost local businesses in the 700 Hunting District an estimated \$220,000 in hunting-related tourism dollars. I support the increase in this amendment and urge the Commission to vote in support.

SUPPORT: Set a statewide spring black bear hunting season closure for June 15 and expand Region 1 pilot project. which establishes a policy of voluntary tooth extraction by hunters. A standard spring season statewide closing date of June 15 will simplify regulations, provide accommodation for variable spring weather events, and afford sustainable hunting opportunities.

SUPPORT: Amendment to set the black bear season in bear management unit 520 from May 1 to June 15. A start date of the season of May 1 will allow the season to stay open incrementally longer and, hopefully, allow hunters to access more back country male bears that are unreachable due to snow in the early season. We also recommend the department implement bear ID training so hunters can identify sows to prevent the female harvest from closing the season early.

Sincerely,

Chris Francis
PO Box 15
Gallatin Gateway, MT 59730
cjf@c-francis.com

Wickman, Erik

From: Jim Schell <elkhunter@wispwest.net>
Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 10:19 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support proposed changes to elk quotas and black bear season

Dear Online Comments Commission,

I am writing to urge your support for the following proposals related to elk quotas and black bear hunting seasons.

SUPPORT: Increase either-sex elk quotas for license permit type (LPT) 700-20 from 200 to 250, and in LPT 700-21 from 660 to 800. Since the February 2022, decrease in quotas, the removal of 168 resident hunters and 19 nonresidents hunters has limited sustainable public hunting opportunities and cost local businesses in the 700 Hunting District an estimated \$220,000 in hunting-related tourism dollars. I support the increase in this amendment and urge the Commission to vote in support.

SUPPORT: Set a statewide spring black bear hunting season closure for June 15 and expand Region 1 pilot project. which establishes a policy of voluntary tooth extraction by hunters. A standard spring season statewide closing date of June 15 will simplify regulations, provide accommodation for variable spring weather events, and afford sustainable hunting opportunities.

SUPPORT: Amendment to set the black bear season in bear management unit 520 from May 1 to June 15. A start date of the season of May 1 will allow the season to stay open incrementally longer and, hopefully, allow hunters to access more back country male bears that are unreachable due to snow in the early season. We also recommend the department implement bear ID training so hunters can identify sows to prevent the female harvest from closing the season early.

Sincerely,

Jim Schell
PO Box 775
Livingston, MT 59047
elkhunter@wispwest.net

Wickman, Erik

From: Craig Wagner <craig.wagner60@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 9:37 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] comment on proposed changes to black bear season and registration

I am against a statewide season until June 15th. Black bears start rubbing their winter coats during June so why let hunters shoot them. Also this period is during fawn/calving season. We do not need people running dogs through these areas during this period.

Depending on hunters to send in teeth samples will result in many bears not getting registered. Hunters should be responsible for registering harvested bears

Wickman, Erik

From: Michael Colpo <lzj@mtintouch.net>
Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 7:26 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support proposed changes to elk quotas and black bear season

Dear Online Comments Commission,

I am writing to urge your support for the following proposals related to elk quotas and black bear hunting seasons.

SUPPORT: Increase either-sex elk quotas for license permit type (LPT) 700-20 from 200 to 250, and in LPT 700-21 from 660 to 800. Since the February 2022, decrease in quotas, the removal of 168 resident hunters and 19 nonresidents hunters has limited sustainable public hunting opportunities and cost local businesses in the 700 Hunting District an estimated \$220,000 in hunting-related tourism dollars. I support the increase in this amendment and urge the Commission to vote in support.

SUPPORT: Set a statewide spring black bear hunting season closure for June 15 and expand Region 1 pilot project. which establishes a policy of voluntary tooth extraction by hunters. A standard spring season statewide closing date of June 15 will simplify regulations, provide accommodation for variable spring weather events, and afford sustainable hunting opportunities.

SUPPORT: Amendment to set the black bear season in bear management unit 520 from May 1 to June 15. A start date of the season of May 1 will allow the season to stay open incrementally longer and, hopefully, allow hunters to access more back country male bears that are unreachable due to snow in the early season. We also recommend the department implement bear ID training so hunters can identify sows to prevent the female harvest from closing the season early.

Sincerely,

Michael Colpo
PO Box 1753
Big Timber, MT 59011
lzj@mtintouch.net

Wickman, Erik

From: Terry Search <search@yellowstone-guides.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 10:47 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support proposed changes to elk quotas and black bear season

Dear Online Comments Commission,

I am writing to urge your support for the following proposals related to elk quotas and black bear hunting seasons.

SUPPORT: Increase either-sex elk quotas for license permit type (LPT) 700-20 from 200 to 250, and in LPT 700-21 from 660 to 800. Since the February 2022, decrease in quotas, the removal of 168 resident hunters and 19 nonresidents hunters has limited sustainable public hunting opportunities and cost local businesses in the 700 Hunting District an estimated \$220,000 in hunting-related tourism dollars. I support the increase in this amendment and urge the Commission to vote in support.

SUPPORT: Set a statewide spring black bear hunting season closure for June 15 and expand Region 1 pilot project. which establishes a policy of voluntary tooth extraction by hunters. A standard spring season statewide closing date of June 15 will simplify regulations, provide accommodation for variable spring weather events, and afford sustainable hunting opportunities.

SUPPORT: Amendment to set the black bear season in bear management unit 520 from May 1 to June 15. A start date of the season of May 1 will allow the season to stay open incrementally longer and, hopefully, allow hunters to access more back country male bears that are unreachable due to snow in the early season. We also recommend the department implement bear ID training so hunters can identify sows to prevent the female harvest from closing the season early.

Sincerely,

Terry Search
PO Box 70
West Yellowstone, MT 59758
search@yellowstone-guides.com

Wickman, Erik

From: Michael Kelly <mfkelly1776@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 6:24 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment on Amendment Proposed by Commissioner Cebull

I oppose the amendment proposed by Commissioner Cebull to increase the either-sex elk quota within Region 7.

We did this whole show last year, and I am baffled that we need to -- yet again -- comment on this.

To propose a change to the tag allocations for the fall of 2024 when the HD hasn't even been surveyed to assess population dynamics is reckless.

The bull to cow ratio is below the 2005 Elk Management Plan. I know this because it was discussed ad-nauseum last year when a similar motion was proposed. Your concern is that more cow elk should be harvested to make that ratio more balanced, but your solution is to increase either-sex tags? There are already 2 tag options available for cow elk harvest in the region and something tells me that folks with an either-sex tag aren't going to pass up a bull for the cow next to him.

How can the response by the Department be "does not anticipate any adverse biological effect" due to the proposed amendment? That's it? A whole 2 sentences? Hard to imagine an increase in tags means absolutely no effects.

I said it last year and I'll say it again now; management should not be done this way.

I urge you to dismiss this amendment.

Wickman, Erik

From: Mac Minard <moga@mt.net>
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 2:49 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support proposed changes to elk quotas and black bear season

Dear Online Comments Commission,

Please support for the following proposals related to elk quotas and black bear hunting seasons.

SUPPORT: Increase either-sex elk quotas for license permit type (LPT) 700-20 from 200 to 250, and in LPT 700-21 from 660 to 800. Since the February 2022, decrease in quotas, the removal of 168 resident hunters and 19 nonresidents hunters has limited sustainable public hunting opportunities and cost local businesses in the 700 Hunting District an estimated \$220,000 in hunting-related tourism dollars. I support the increase in this amendment and urge the Commission to vote in support.

SUPPORT: Set a statewide spring black bear hunting season closure for June 15 and expand Region 1 pilot project. which establishes a policy of voluntary tooth extraction by hunters. A standard spring season statewide closing date of June 15 will simplify regulations, provide accommodation for variable spring weather events, and afford sustainable hunting opportunities.

SUPPORT: Amendment to set the black bear season in bear management unit 520 from May 1 to June 15. A start date of the season of May 1 will allow the season to stay open incrementally longer and, hopefully, allow hunters to access more back country male bears that are unreachable due to snow in the early season. We also recommend the department implement bear ID training so hunters can identify sows to prevent the female harvest from closing the season early.

This suite of proposals are well thought out and in alignment with the key points raised by the public during scoping meetings. Conservation, Hunter Opportunity, Crowding and Economic Impact to local and regional economies.

I am writing to urge your support for the following proposals related to elk quotas and black bear hunting seasons.

SUPPORT: Increase either-sex elk quotas for license permit type (LPT) 700-20 from 200 to 250, and in LPT 700-21 from 660 to 800. Since the February 2022, decrease in quotas, the removal of 168 resident hunters and 19 nonresidents hunters has limited sustainable public hunting opportunities and cost local businesses in the 700 Hunting District an estimated \$220,000 in hunting-related tourism dollars. I support the increase in this amendment and urge the Commission to vote in support.

SUPPORT: Set a statewide spring black bear hunting season closure for June 15 and expand Region 1 pilot project. which establishes a policy of voluntary tooth extraction by hunters. A standard spring season statewide closing date of June 15 will simplify regulations, provide accommodation for variable spring weather events, and afford sustainable hunting opportunities.

SUPPORT: Amendment to set the black bear season in bear management unit 520 from May 1 to June 15. A start date of the season of May 1 will allow the season to stay open incrementally longer and, hopefully, allow hunters to access more back country male bears that are unreachable due to snow in the early season. We also recommend the department implement bear ID training so hunters can identify sows to prevent the female harvest from closing the season early.

Sincerely,

Mac Minard
4 Fiddlers Grn
Clancy, MT 59634
moga@mt.net

Wickman, Erik

From: Mark Savinski <Savinski54@outlook.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 12:42 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL]

I am against all of Commissioner Cebull's proposed amendments. Mark Savinski.

Sent from [Mail \[go.microsoft.com\]](mailto:go.microsoft.com) for Windows

Wickman, Erik

From: Ed Johnson <lejohnso76@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 3:51 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Commissioner Cebull Amendments

Dear Commissioners,

I strongly support the proposed amendment from Commissioner Cebull regarding lengthening the spring black bear season statewide until 15 June. Thanks for the opportunity to provide a comment.

Sincerely,
Larry E Johnson

Get [Outlook for iOS \[aka.ms\]](#)

Wickman, Erik

From: moga@mt.net
Sent: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 3:03 PM
To: FWP Commission
Cc: Lyndsey Medsker; moga-will@mt.net; commissionerregion1@mtfwp.org; commissionerregion2@mtfwp.org; commissionerregion3@mtfwp.org; KC Walsh; commissionerregion5@mtfwp.org; commissionerregion6@mtfwp.org; commissionerregion7@mtfwp.org; Mac Minard; Bill Wood; burdett500; Cayuse Hills Outfitters; Chris J. Francis; chrisfaber@montanaoutfittingcompany.com; Dusty Cray; Eric Albus; huntwithcody@yahoo.com; Joseph Haas; Rod Paschke; vollmerscott@yahoo.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MOGA Comments on Commission Amendments

- 1) Amendment to increase either-sex elk quotas for license permit type (LPT) 700-20 from 200 to 250, and in LPT 700-21 from 660 to 800. [Click here to see amendment. \[lnks.gd\]](#)**

MOGA SUPPORTS

Rationale

- On April 4, 2023, Region 7 announced they were reducing the Commission approved rifle quota for HD 700-20 from 250 to 200 (-50) and reducing the archery quota for the HD 700-21 from 800 to 660 (-140). Together these actions removed a total of 190 either-sex permits.
- The notion that HD 700 is managed as a “trophy district” has yet to be determined and has never been formally designated a trophy area. The imposition of the reduced permits in 2023 was a product of Regionally imposed preferences and not a product of formal public and Commission process.
- Results from the 2023 Montana Elk Hunter survey data clearly show there is little appetite for this kind of management. Almost 70% of respondents indicated a desire to hunt bull elk every year vs giving up opportunity to hunt a mature bull.
- The removal of 168 resident hunters and 19 nonresidents for a total of 187 hunters not only takes away sustainable public hunting opportunities, but has also cost rural communities, dependent on hunter-oriented tourism, an estimated \$220,000 in tourism dollars this year alone from local businesses in the 700 Hunting District.

- 2) Amendment to set a statewide spring black bear hunting season closure for June 15 and expand Region 1 pilot project, which allows hunters to submit extracted teeth instead of having to present a head and carcass, to the entire state. This would also require that each hunter submit two molars instead of one. [Click here to see amendment. \[lnks.gd\]](#)**

MOGA SUPPORTS

Rationale

- A standard spring season event and closing date of June 15 will simplify regulations, provide accommodation for variable spring weather events, and afford sustainable hunting opportunities.
- Since black bear harvests are managed based on BMU/HD quotas a standardized closing date of June 15 would only remain if the quota was unfilled. Conversely the closure of BMU/HDs on June 1, when quotas are yet to be filled, is an unnecessary loss of otherwise sustainable hunting opportunity.
- There are many examples but several that most poignantly illustrate the issue:
 - HD 393, HD 690, and HD 680, all have a June 1st closure for black bear.
 - HD 393 is next to Bridger Bowl Ski Area. There are a lot of bears in that area, but access is usually a nightmare in May due to late winter and heavy snowpack. To the east is US Forest Service and it is very popular with public land hunters during the big game season. However, this same country sees little black bear hunting in the spring due to the inaccessibility imposed by a June 1 closing. As a result, black bear quotas are not filled and hunting opportunities are lost and black bear density remains high.
 - Region 5 is a mountainous area with a normally deep snowpack that prevents access for bear hunters, forcing all the activity on the lower lands. Significantly more opportunity, in both time and area, could be had with a June 15 closure.

3) Amendment to set the black bear season in bear management unit 520 to May 1 to June 15. [Click here to see amendment. \[lnks.gd\]](#)

MOGA SUPPORTS

Rationale

- BMU 520 lies along the northern and eastern face of the Beartooth Mountains. BMU 520 has a female harvest quota for the Spring of 12 sows which is typically filled very early in the season.
- By adjusting the start date of the season from April 15 to May 1, this will allow the season to stay open incrementally longer and, hopefully, allow hunters to access more back country male bears that are unreachable due to snow in the early season.
- In addition, since sows are the key to maintaining a healthy population, we recommend that the Department implement bear ID training for hunters to help them be able to identify sows to prevent the female harvest from closing the season so early

Mac Minard

Executive Director

Montana Outfitters and Guides Association

2021 11th Ave Suite 12

Helena, MT 59601

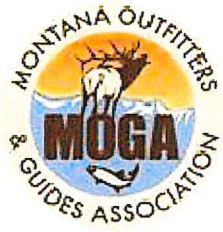
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406 439-2059 cell

moga@mt.net

www.montanaoutfitters.org [montanaoutfitters.org]

www.bigheartsmt.org [bigheartsmt.org]



Wickman, Erik

From: Kyle Vanderstoep <kdvanderstoep@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 2:29 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Commissioner Cebull Amendment - Statewide Bear Plan

Hello,

I would like to voice my opposition to the Statewide bear plan amendment. If a significant opportunity expansion is to be proposed, reporting requirements need to be the same or either increase to measure the changes' effects. Removing the inspection requirement will result in additionally an easy litigation point for people who want to see grizzlies listed forever. Quotas are not meant to be filled every year, they are meant to be a backstop to prevent catastrophic levels of harvest. Dealing with changing weather conditions is part of the requirements of hunting. Please do not implement this amendment.

Thank you
-Kyle Vanderstoep
Bozeman
406 600 9020

Wickman, Erik

From: Cameron Wohlschlegel <cwohlschlegel@stoltzelumber.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 2:17 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Commission Amendment Comments

Fish and Wildlife Commissioners,

I would like to comment in support of the amendment brought forth below.

Cebull's fourth amendment would set a statewide spring black bear hunting season closure for June 15 and expand Region 1 pilot project, which allows hunters to submit extracted teeth instead of having to present a head and carcass, to the entire state. This would also require that each hunter submit two molars instead of one.

Last year HD 130's bear season went until 6/15 while the surrounding HD's closed 5/31. As stated in the amendment there are many areas that are not accessible due to snow pack in many parts of the state. Especially mountainous and back country areas. Expanding the season while maintaining quotas for units that need them makes a whole lot of sense. I've been saying the season need to be like Idaho's and go until 6/15 for years now. Glad someone is finally bringing it forward.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

Cameron Wohlschlegel

Wickman, Erik

From: Doug Stickney <doug.stickney@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 12:53 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Quota changes for 700 elk

Commissioners,

I strongly oppose commissioner Cebull's amendment increasing the elk quota for HD 700. The bull to cow ratio has been consistently dropping and the elk population is not at the objective of the new EMP. I also do not think this amendment should have been brought forward by a region 5 commissioner.

Thanks,

Doug Stickney

Sent from my iPhone

Wickman, Erik

From: Jerad Werning <jeradwerning@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 11:00 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 502 elk 520 bear

I support separating 502 out from 555 for either sex elk permits, different landscapes as well as ownership. 502 has limited public lands/access. Also landowner permits should only be allowed on landowner deeded land. Many landowners don't hunt or harvest animals on the land they used when applying using landowner preference.

Black Bear May 1st start is an excellent idea that I have suggested for years. This should allow for more mature males be harvested over females. This should also be implemented in 510 Pryor Mountains area. All seasons should go till June 15th if quota is not met.

Wickman, Erik

From: Leon Helstad <vleonx44@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 10:30 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Elk amendment 700 unit

There is way to many archery hunters in the 700 unit now, if you do anything reduce the number of bull tags. Every hunter I talked to expressed this. I had a cow rifle tag in 700 and was successful but hunted very hard to find a cow so I do not think that increasing those tags is a good idea either. If there is a big population of elk it is on the private lands. The public lands are very over populated with hunters for the amount of elk in my opinion. Leon Helstad

Sent from [Mail \[go.microsoft.com\]](mailto:go.microsoft.com) for Windows

Wickman, Erik

From: Ian Wargo <IWargo@rpa-kal.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 10:11 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] December 14 Commission Meeting: Commissioner Amendments

Commissioners,

I would like to express my support for Commissioner Cebull's Amendment to the Black Bear Regulations to extend the hunting season to June 15th Statewide. As a resident of Northwest Montana, the May 31st closure date in many of our black bear units in the northwest severely limits accessibility due to deep snow conditions. Simplifying the regulations and providing better access to areas that experience deep snow is a much-welcomed amendment.

I would also like to express my support for Chair Robinson's Amendment to eliminate the Deer B license for Either Sex Mule Deer LPT 699-20 in HD 600 & 670 and LPT 699-21 in HD 640 & 670. Deer densities in these districts have already been significantly reduced since this regulation change has been proposed. Adding additional take on mule deer with LPT 699-20 and 699-21 is too aggressive of a proposal given the current population declines that are being experienced with mule deer. If increased take could eliminate CWD from the landscape I would be in support of this regulation change, but increased take has only slowed the spread of CWD and has never eliminated it. The Departments focus should be on long-term solutions for CWD, not band-aid fixes. Thank you Chair Robinson for your amendment.

I appreciate the Commission's ongoing commitment to our state's wildlife.

Sincerely,



Ian Wargo, P.E., L.S.I. | Project Manager

p: 406-314-6413 | **c:** 406-253-9879 | **e:** iwargo@rpa-kal.com

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Wickman, Erik

From: Pat Wallace <jpwallace50@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 9:59 AM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Cebull Black Bear Amendment #4

I want to express my support of Mr. Cebull's proposed amendment to make the statewide spring black bear season closure June 15, allow hunters to submit 2 molars to FWP, and expand the Region 1 pilot project.

John Patrick Wallace
406-542-2079

Wickman, Erik

From: Pete Lineberger <psline@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 9:47 PM
To: FWP Commission
Cc: Pete Lineberger
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 5 Cebull amendments

Vote NO on all 5 Cebull amendments.

Pete Lineberger
Spokane, WA
(509) 869-1084
psline@hotmail.com

Wickman, Erik

From: Justin Schaaf <jschaaf71@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 5:36 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Cebull Amendment- HD 700

To whom it may concern,

Below are my public comments on Commissioner Cebull's Amendment.

In response to the first bullet point in the amendment, I strongly **oppose** the proposed increase in both the 700-20 and 700-21 licenses. As shown by the most recent survey, we are below the districts objective of 30 bulls:100 cows. If we are not going to follow guidelines on managing wildlife, then what purpose do they serve in the first place.

As to the second bullet point, I would hardly say that elk numbers in HD 700 are increasing. Between 2010 and 2020 numbers have stayed fairly steady between 1100 and 1500 total elk counted. This statement also doesn't take into account the proposed elk objective for HD 700 in the new Elk Management Plan that proposes an objective of 1600-2400 elk. We are effectively below objective going into the 2024 Hunting Season. The last thing we should be doing is increasing either-sex elk permits by 25% if we are effectively under objective.

For the last bullet point, I don't think it I wise to use economic factors as a basis for decision making when the topic at hand is a publicly owned resource. If we are going to begin to go down the economic path, I suggest we take a look at our overall tools of hunter distribution. Publicly accessible lands have become so overcrowded that, while we might be at a peak for economic activity at the moment, we are very close to having the floor fall out underneath us due to people giving up hunting all together because of the overcrowding.

Lastly, I oppose the amendment because it circumvents the public process of public meetings regarding these proposed changes. Having a public comment period during hunting season and the holidays is hard enough but adding last second amendments that dramatically changes the district I've been applying for over the last decade feels disingenuous.

I urge you to oppose the amendment to increase 700-20 and 700-21 licenses.

Justin Schaaf
Glasgow, MT 59230
406-230-2822

Wickman, Erik

From: Tyler Lindbloom <tyler.lindbloom@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 4:41 PM
To: FWP Commission
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment re: Cebull Amendment 5 to Unit 520 Black Bear season dates

This public comment regards the following amendment:

"Proposed Amendment:

I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission adopt the following amendment to the proposed 2024 and 2025 Black Bear Regulations: 1. BMU 520: Set spring season to May 1 – June 15."

My public comment is as follows:

I have hunted Spring Black Bear in Unit 520 exclusively for the previous 3 seasons. Two years ago, I was able to kill a good boar on April 29th in the backcountry although "green-up" has yet to take effect and bear sign/movement was sparse. Last season, my hunting partner and I were significantly hindered from accessing/hunting our desired areas due to deep snow on the north slopes during the first week of May. I am in full support of the proposed amendment stated above by Commissioner Cebull. I believe this would disperse hunting pressure across the unit because more country would be accessible both by hiking trails and access roads during the latter half of May. Specifically, this would improve vehicle access along Iron Mountain Road and the southern extents of Derby Gulch Road, both accessing Gallatin National Forest in Unit 520. Also, the Meyer's Creek/Dead Indian area would be much more accessible under the new season dates.

Thank you for your consideration,

Tyler Lindbloom
07/31/1997-50, Billings MT