

# **FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AMENDMENT**

**FWP proposal to be amended:** 2024 Wolf and Furbearer Regulations

**Commissioner:** Susan Kirby Brooke

**Date Received by Commission:**

**Proposed Amendment:**

I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission amend the 2024-25 Wolf and Furbearer regulations to revert Wolf Management Unit 313 to the historical boundaries of WMU 313 and WMU 316 with a harvest quota of 3 in each unit. These two WMUs will be exempt from the Commission review during the season.

**Requested by FWP:** NO

**Rationale and Background:**

At the FWP Commission meeting in 2022, Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 were changed from two separate WMUs to one (313) and the quota harvest set at 6. This change was intended to distribute the harvest from 2021 when it was 18 in WMU 313 and 3 in WMU 316.

Since the 2022 change, the harvest has been mostly concentrated near the Yellowstone Park Boundary by Gardiner and has resulted in the harvest of multiple wolves from one or two packs that primarily reside in Yellowstone Park. Local Park County and Gardiner eco-tourism businesses rely on wildlife watching, including wolves.

These groups, Yellowstone National Park officials and others have reached out to the Commission and requested changes that would disperse the harvest area. There have been no livestock depredations in or near WMU 313 or 316 for years. The annual harvest in Region 3 has met the legislative objective of reduction in wolf population.

**Department Response:**

The department anticipates no adverse biological effects to wolf populations as a result of this proposed amendment. With no change to the overall quota, the department expects that the season complies with legislative direction for population management. The department would suggest that the amendment to wolf management unit boundaries include the following:

**Wolf WMU 313 Legal Description: Gardiner/Absaroka:** ~~Those portions of Carbon, Sweet Grass, and Park Counties lying within the following-described boundary: Beginning at the intersection of the Yellowstone River and the north boundary of Yellowstone National Park near Gardiner and the mouth of the Gardiner River, then northwesterly along said boundary to USFS Trail #106 (Mill Creek Trail), then northeasterly along said trail to the head of Mill Creek, then northeasterly along said creek (downstream) to Cinnabar Creek, then easterly along said creek (downstream) to the Yellowstone River, then northerly along said river (downstream) to Cedar Creek, and then easterly along said creek (upstream) to USFS Trail #72 (Cedar Creek Trail) at the head of Cedar Creek, then easterly along said trail to the Cedar Bear Creek Divide, then easterly along said divide to Monitor Peak, then southeasterly along the Mill Bear Creek divide to the southwest corner of Section 7, T8S, R10E between the headwaters of East Fork Bear Creek and the headwaters of Thompson Creek, then northeasterly along the Mill Hell-roaring Creeks Divide to the Mill~~

~~Creek Hellroaring Creek Boulder River divide south of Crow Mountain, then southeasterly along the Hellroaring Creek Boulder River Divide and Boulder River Buffalo Fork Divide past Sheepherder Peak and northeasterly along the Boulder River Slough Creek Divide to the Custer Gallatin National Forest boundary near Columbine Pass, then southeasterly along said boundary to its intersection with the Stillwater Park County line southeast of Timberline Mountain, then east along said county line to the divide between Storm Lakes and Avalanche Lake north of Granite Peak, then south to the Custer Gallatin National Forest boundary at Granite Peak, then southerly and easterly along said boundary to the junction with the Montana-Wyoming border south east of Albino Lake, then westerly along said border to the Yellowstone National Park boundary west of Silver Gate, then northerly and westerly along said boundary to its intersection with the Yellowstone River near Gardiner and the mouth of the Gardiner River, the point of beginning. NOTE: "No Shooting Zone" posted around the town of Gardiner.~~

**WMU 313 – Gardiner:** *Those portions of Park county lying within the following described boundary: beginning at the intersection of the Cottonwood-Hellroaring Creek divide and Yellowstone National Park Boundary, then westerly along said boundary to USFS Trail #106, then northeasterly along said trail to the head of Mill Creek, then northeasterly along said creek to Cinnabar Creek, then easterly along said creek to the Yellowstone River, then northerly along said river to Cedar Creek, and then easterly along said creek to USFS Trail #72 at the head of Cedar Creek, then easterly along said trail to the Cedar-Bear Creek Divide, then easterly along said divide to Monitor Peak, then southeasterly along the Mill-Hellroaring-Bear Creek divide to Ash Mountain, then southerly along Crevice-Hellroaring Creek divide and Cottonwood-Hellroaring Creek divide to the Yellowstone National Park Boundary, the point of the beginning.*

**WMU 316 – Absaroka:** *Those portions of Carbon, Sweet Grass, and Park Counties lying within the following described boundary: Beginning at the junction of the Montana-Wyoming border and the Custer-Gallatin National Forest boundary southeast of Albino Lake, then northerly and westerly along said boundary to Granite Mountain, then north one-half mile to the Stillwater County Line, then west along said county line to the Custer-Gallatin National Forest Boundary near Timberline Mountain, then northerly along said boundary to the Slough Creek-Boulder River Divide near Columbine Pass, then southwesterly along the Boulder River-Slough Creek Divide and northwesterly along the Boulder River-Buffalo Fork Divide and the Hellroaring Creek-Boulder River Divide to the Hellroaring-Mill Creeks Divide near Crow Mountain, then southwesterly along the Mill-Hellroaring Creeks Divide to the Bear-Hellroaring Creeks Divide to Ash Mountain, then southerly along the Crevice-Hellroaring Creeks Divide to the Crevice-Cottonwood Creeks Divide, then southerly along the Crevice-Cottonwood Creeks Divide to the Yellowstone National Park Boundary, then easterly and southerly along said boundary to the Montana-Wyoming border, then easterly along said border to the Custer-Gallatin National Forest boundary southeast of Albino Lake, the point of beginning.*