

# FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AMENDMENT #2

**Date:** July 31, 2024

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

**Commissioner:** Susan Kirby Brooke

**Date Received by Commission:**

**Proposed Motion:**

I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission amend the 2024-25 Wolf and Furbearer regulations to include a Commission Regulation incorporating sections of MCA 87-6-401, Subsection (d) (2) which would apply to the hunting of wolves, a non-game species in need of management, specifically "A person may not while hunting, use any electronic motion-tracking device or mechanism, as defined by commission rule, that is designed to track the motions of a wolf and relay information on the animal's movement to the hunter. A radio collar attached to a dog that is used by a hunter engaged in lawful hunting activities is not considered a motion-tracking device or mechanism for the purposes of this commission regulation."

**Requested by FWP:** NO

**Background:**

The current statute makes it unlawful to use telemetry in the hunting of game species in Montana but does not apply to wolves since they are defined as "species in need of special management". This has raised the concerns from stakeholders who believe even though it is unlikely hunters have utilized any type of motion tracking to hunt wolves, it could be in the future and would not be illegal. Hunting wolves using telemetry does not embrace the principles of fair chase.

This new Commission Regulation would simply apply the existing statute in MCA 87-6-401 "Unlawful use of equipment while hunting.

(1) a person may not:

(d) while hunting, use any electronic motion-tracking device or mechanism, as defined by commission rule, that is designed to track the motion of a wolf and relay information on the animal's movement to the hunter. A radio collar attached to a dog that is used by a hunter engaged in lawful hunting activities is not considered a motion-tracking device or mechanism for purposes of this subsection (1)(d).

**Department Response:**

The department does not anticipate any influence on wolf harvest or wolf populations as a result of this amendment. There is no information that indicates that this practice currently occurs and restricting the practice is not likely to influence the department's ability to manage wolf populations or reach population objectives.