

#1

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, May 02, 2024 7:39:03 AM
Last Modified: Thursday, May 02, 2024 8:37:52 AM
Time Spent: 00:58:48
IP Address: 67.44.224.2

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Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Stephen J Christian
City/Town:	Colstrip
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	mtduckhunter@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Conservation Leases

Dear Commissioners,

I support the 10 conservation leases negotiated by the FWP with the landowner companies. Thank you for using MT sportsman's \$\$\$ for conservation of grassland resources.

Steve

#2

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, May 03, 2024 9:01:58 AM
Last Modified: Friday, May 03, 2024 9:08:09 AM
Time Spent: 00:06:10
IP Address: 164.159.62.2

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Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Tom Radandt
City/Town:	Libby
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	tomradandt0@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Conservation Leases

I urge the commission to support the incorporation of the 10 conservation leases. it is important to have access to quality habitat to hunt. this improve local economies was well, by encouraging people to go to these places. we need to provide incentives for private landowners to promote wildlife.

#3

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Saturday, May 04, 2024 6:54:52 PM
Last Modified: Saturday, May 04, 2024 7:01:51 PM
Time Spent: 00:06:59
IP Address: 64.25.140.143

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Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Thomas Mccloskey
City/Town:	Superior
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	thomasjmccloskey@outlook.com

Q2

Please comment on Conservation Leases

i propose the commision adopt the 500000 acre agreement

#4

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Monday, May 06, 2024 4:06:59 PM
Last Modified: Monday, May 06, 2024 4:10:08 PM
Time Spent: 00:03:08
IP Address: 75.216.235.228

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Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Mike Lang
City/Town:	Malta
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	nasml1949@gmail.com

Q2

Please comment on Conservation Leases

Please send me comment info about the "contract" in regards to praire dog habitat. I has been changed from a lease to a contract.

#5

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Thursday, May 23, 2024 9:43:11 AM
Last Modified: Sunday, May 26, 2024 7:57:50 AM
Time Spent: Over a day
IP Address: 74.207.178.151

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Q1

Contact information:

Name:	John Wornom
City/Town:	Billings
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	john_wornom@yahoo.com

Q2

Please comment on Conservation Leases

Ducks Unlimited comment on proposed MTFWP conservation leases
Submitted by John Wornom, DU volunteer and state policy chair, Billings, Mont.

Ducks Unlimited appreciates the efforts made by the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission to find pragmatic solutions and opportunities that serve both the habitat needs of abundant waterfowl and wildlife populations, and successful, economic partnerships with farmers, ranchers, and the hunting community. We support the work done by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and programs like Habitat Montana to conserve working lands habitat permanently with tools like conservation easements that allow landowners to voluntarily sell an easement as an exercise of their private property rights while still ensuring grazing and agricultural use on their land in the process. We are also in support of other options afforded landowners like the more recent habitat conservation lease program from Montana FWP with agreements for 30 or 40 years and the inclusion of priority areas important to our members like prairie pothole wetlands and prairie grasslands that ensure important breeding and nesting habitat for waterfowl.

Our comments today are in support of the conservation leases listed for comment ahead of the June 20 commission meeting that focus on the wetland/grassland complex priority of the program, and that utilize the state hunting licenses fees like the state migratory bird stamp, and Pittman Robertson Wildlife Restoration funds, both programs funded in part by the contributions of hunters, waterfowl enthusiasts and conservationists like the 8,000 plus members of Ducks Unlimited in Montana. The Hartman, BC French and MJ French proposals are of particular interest for their wetland and grassland habitat that can be conserved in harmony with the owners and traditional uses like cattle grazing. As we often say, cattle and ducks get along great. We are glad to offer our support for these three conservation leases and look forward to future conservation opportunities with willing landowners, Montana FWP, and our members who are passionate about ensuring habitat on the landscape for future waterfowlers and for all who realize the benefit of productive grazing lands, clean water, ground water recharge, soil health and carbon sequestration, and landscape biodiversity.

Since 1937, Ducks Unlimited has conserved and restored more than 15 million acres of the most critical habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife across the continent. Ducks Unlimited is proud to count more than 8,000 Montanans in their membership helping accomplish its habitat mission. Wetlands are among the most productive ecosystems on the planet. They are invaluable not only to waterfowl and wildlife, but are integral for water storage and filtration, carbon sequestration, and resilient cattle grazing and forage production. We are proud to partner with Montana FWP in our habitat efforts and we are privileged to provide opportunities for voluntary, incentive-based conservation practices with Montana farmers, ranchers, and private landowners.

#6

COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 9:37:33 AM
Last Modified: Monday, May 27, 2024 10:27:30 AM
Time Spent: Over a day
IP Address: 72.175.53.185

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Q1

Contact information:

Name:	Montana Wildlife Federation
City/Town:	Missoula
State/Province:	MT
Email Address:	jeff@mtwf.org

Q2

Please comment on Conservation Leases

MWF is grateful for the opportunity to comment on this slate of proposed Temporary Habitat Conservation Leases in Eastern Montana.

MWF has always supported Habitat Montana and the funding required to make this popular program as effective as possible. Two years ago, we opposed the diversion of these funds from permanent Conservation leases and fee title acquisitions to temporary habitat leases because we believed it was a fiscally irresponsible change in the program that does not get the bang for the buck that permanent conservation leases do, for a similar cost.

Funding permanent conservation leases is why Habitat Montana was created and should be used exclusively for conservation efforts. With temporary habitat leases now being a part of how Habitat Montana funds are spent, we believe that temporary leases are better than no permanent leases. We also support using Habitat Montana funds for these leases when these funds would otherwise be unused. What is very concerning to most Habitat Montana supporters is that, with such a large portion of these funds being dedicated to temporary leases, Habitat Montana will lack the funds to work on permanent conservation leases when willing sellers would like to enter into such an agreement. This could lead to higher costs for lesser conservation outcomes and result in some willing sellers putting their properties on the market when they would prefer to have them permanently conserved.

Having reiterated those points, MWF supports each of these temporary conservation easement agreements because, although temporary, each one conserves important habitat or migration corridors while providing a level of public access consistent with such agreements. Each property has been evaluated sufficiently, and the habitat values protected on each one represent an area that could otherwise be developed. Conserving these high-priority native and restored habitats while keeping working agricultural lands as working lands will ensure that wildlife habitat remains as is. Montana's agricultural heritage reflects our pride in the importance of working family ranches and conservation.

Individually, each of these properties and their owners is a large part of the conservation ethic deeply rooted in our culture. The Public Trust doctrine and Montana's status as an opportunity state would be in great peril without landowners such as the Greggs, Pfaffingers, Tookes, Fogles, Heberles, and the Maus family stepping up and helping to conserve the quality habitat that exists on their land. Public access during the hunting season is an important aspect of these leases and it is our hope that lessees allow access beyond the minimum amount when access days during the rest of the year remain. For cooperators in Block Management, maintaining the high amount of satisfaction in public access and quality of habitat is attainable through coordination with the public, and MWF will always support landowners who provide access through Block Management.

In closing, the Federation supports conservation leases of all types. We will continue encouraging landowners and FWP to consider permanent conservation easements, including this slate of temporary CE applicants. While we always prefer to conserve lands when a willing seller proposes an easement permanently, we firmly believe that 30 or 40 years of protection is far better than none. Habitat Montana is popular partially because of its permanence, and we hope FWP continues to work on offers from willing landowners as has been done in the past. We will continue fighting for every penny Habitat Montana needs in the legislature. We are very grateful for the opportunity to weigh in on this issue.
