

September 2011

Hello, everyone!

Are you ready for hunting or have you already begun? It's the season for outdoor sports and enjoyment as well as filling the freezer for another year.

It also is time to think about hunting regulations for the next two years. Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission will be holding their meeting on December 8, 2011, for proposals for 2012/2013 hunting. Here are the items on the preliminary December agenda:

1. Proposed 2012 Black Bear Quotas
2. Proposed 2012 Spring Turkey Quotas
3. Proposed 2012/2013 Deer, Elk, and Antelope Seasons, Quota Ranges, HD Boundaries
4. Proposed 2012/2013 Moose, Sheep, and Goat Seasons, Quota Ranges and HD Boundaries
5. Proposed 2012/2013 Black Bear Seasons, Quota Ranges, and HD Boundaries
6. Proposed 2012/2013 Mountain Lion Seasons and HD Boundaries
7. Proposed 2012/2013 Bison Hunting Seasons and HD Boundaries
8. Proposed 2012/2013 Upland Bird Hunting Seasons
9. Proposed 2012/2013 Game Damage and Management Season Quotas
10. Proposed 2012/2013 Hunting Season Dates

Any and/or all of these issues may be of interest to you, but the primary issue we will discuss here is mountain lions.

Region 3 biologist and the houndsmen held a meeting this spring and Region 3 FWP personnel have made a proposal for changes to some HD boundaries. These proposals come from discussions with houndsmen who hunt these areas and FWP personnel who are willing to work with the houndsmen. Please keep in mind that these proposals are preliminary to the season setting process for the next biennium and no approval has yet to be given. FWP wants to get this in the Houndsmen hands now, though, so that the Houndsmen can look it over and speak to the biologists for any suggested tweaking. These changes are for the Boulder/Elkhorns/Whitehall area and the biologists are Vanna Boccadorri in Butte and Tom Carlson in Townsend (See info on page 3.)

If you hunt these areas, please feel free to contact Roland Deane or one of the biologists with your comments.

Houndsmen in other parts of the state need to talk to their biologists and possibly to Roland as well. If you feel you have issues needing resolved, the first step is to talk to your local biologists, talk to Roland, and be prepared to

attend the December 8, 2011, FWP Commission meeting to work toward any changes.

We know that no one likes to miss a day of lion hunting early in the season, but if you really want to keep the ability to hunt and a viable population of huntable game, you may have to give up the time to be a part of the process to change the regulations by attending this once every two years meeting. Change can only happen with input and that input needs to come from hunters who are in the field. Roland cannot propose changes in parts of the state without backup from those hunters in that part of the state.

Josh Cook writes "MSHA is considering a bill to be introduced during the 2013 Montana legislative session which would legalize chasing and possibly hunting black bears with hounds. Houndsmen support seems to be high. If any members have access to scientific studies or information regarding black bear populations in Montana, the minimal effects Houndsmen have on black bear populations in other states, problems caused by miss-management of black bears, or the benefits of a more selective black bear harvest, please forward that information to the Board of Directors." Your comments on MSHA support of such a bill would also be greatly appreciated.

The Board of Directors also voted to increase the MSHA membership fees. Effective June 1, 2012, the individual membership will be \$12.00 per person. A family membership will be \$12.00 for the first family member and an additional \$2.00 per person up to a maximum \$20.00 per family at one mailing address.

The officers will be holding a meeting in December to discuss the possibility of holding a field trial next May and a location for that event. If you have a location, please contact either Scott or Huck. The May event does not have swim races, so a pond isn't required.

Officers elected at the June Field Trial to serve until June 2013 are:

President: Scott Cargill, 72 Cedar Hills Rd., Whitehall, MT 59759 491-1818
Vice President: Huck McGowan, PO Box 4, Boulder, MT 59632 225-9664
Secretary: Dacia Johnson, PO Box 1246, Three Forks, MT 59752 580-7703
Asst. Secretary: Ruby Christian, Havre, MT
Masters of Hounds: Steve Boyles, Livingston, Will Hammet, Connor
Treasurer: Mable Deane, PO Box 925, Three Forks 59752 285-4474
Chairman of the Board: Roland Deane, PO Box 925, Three Forks 285-4474
Board Members:

Josh Cook, Shepherd (406) 373-1366
Justin Duffy, Livingston (406) 222-4925
Greg Houska, Missoula (406) 543-5586
Tim Ravndal, Townsend (406) 266-5212
Brad Shultz, Pray (406) 223-9054
Orwan Smith, Florence (406) 207-0012