SENATE FISH AND GAME 6
EXHIBIT NO. 6
DATE 2/8/05
BILL NO. SB 298

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

P. O. Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701
406-444-3186
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Ref:DO0043-05
January 26, 2005

Mr. Bob Gilbert
Walleyes Unlimited
1003 Highland Street
Helena MT 59601

Dear Mr. Gilbert:

Thank you for meeting with Fish, Wildlife & Parks' (FWP) staff to discuss LC 1149. This is to document our agreement on this piece of legislation.

FWP mutually agreed that Section 1 of the bill is not necessary to ensure continued good faith working relationships between FWP and Walleyes Unlimited. Your organization has my personal commitment that FWP will not produce cold water species, other than Chinook salmon, in the Ft. Peck hatchery for out-placement during my tenure as director unless by mutual agreement of all affected parties, including Walleyes Unlimited. For the time being, the only production of cold water species, other than Chinook salmon, at Ft. Peck will be as forage fish for warm water species being raised at the hatchery. As the hatchery moves into production, FWP would like to closely evaluate the operations of the hatchery to ensure maximum production and efficiency. If it is determined that there are times during the year when the entire facility is not utilized for warm water species production, FWP would like to consider raising other species for stocking (i.e. lake trout) in Ft. Peck Reservoir.

FWP will support an amended version of LC 1149 that deletes section 1 and retains section 2, which clarifies what species of fish will be considered "warm water game fish," and establishes a permanent list of waters for which the warm water stamp will be required. On a technical note, the final sentence of section 2 can be amended off the bill, because no rule making will be necessary. Under the terms of the statute, any lake stocked from the Ft. Peck Hatchery will automatically and permanently be added to the list of waters for which a warm water stamp is required.

Sincerely,

M. Jeff Hagener
Director

c: Fisheries