



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

EXHIBIT 9
DATE 02/22/07
HB 484

P.O. Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701
(406) 444-3186
FAX: 406-444-4952
Ref: DO097-07
February 21, 2007

Representative Julie French
House of Representatives
PO Box 200400
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Rep. French:

This letter is in response to your questions about how Fish, Wildlife, & Parks (FWP) plans to proceed in working with the Private Land/Public Wildlife (PL/PW) Council to address issues raised in House Bill 484, a bill focused on wildlife impacts to agriculture. As stated in our testimony, FWP believes the PL/PW Council is well suited to address these issues.

The terms of current members of the PL/PW Council (see attached list) expire June 30, 2007. When appointing new members who represent landowner interests, FWP will ask the Governor to select members from different parts of the state who are familiar with various aspects of wildlife management and wildlife impacts to agriculture. In light of HB 484, as well as other bills developed during this session, including HB 389 and LC 1204, FWP will also ask Governor Schweitzer to emphasize the need for the PL/PW Council to develop recommendations which address issues involving management of Montana's big game species and related impacts to Montana's agricultural producers in the council charge for the upcoming biennium.

In addition to focusing selection of new PL/PW Council members on individuals who can address the issues raised in HB 484 and including the need to address these issues in the council charge, FWP will recommend the PL/PW Council engage representatives of the organizations named in HB 484 in discussions related to wildlife management and agricultural impacts. This will ensure broad involvement in the discussions and progress on these issues.

The Department is committed to working closely with the PL/PW Council, landowners and other interests to ensure these important issues are addressed in a meaningful way during the coming biennium.

If we can be of any further help, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Chris Smith
Chief of Staff

Enc.

c: House Agriculture Committee

Council Members (2005 – 2007)

The PL/PW Council consists of 13 members. While Council members are selected based upon general interest categories, most members reflect multiple interests. For instance, an outfitter may also be a landowner, or a landowner may also be a hunter, etc.

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