

# MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS FISHERIES DIVISION

EXHIBIT 2

DATE 02/06/2013

HB Joint Approps sub B  
Natural Resources and  
Transportation

## DIVISION OVERVIEW

*The FWP Fisheries Program preserves, maintains, and enhances aquatic species and their ecosystems to meet the public's demand for recreational opportunities and stewardship of aquatic wildlife. Priorities are:*

### **Fisheries Management and Hatcheries:**

- *Provide a diversity of quality angling opportunities* for native and non-native fish through management of self-sustaining wild fisheries and the use of hatchery-reared fish.
- *Protect, maintain, and restore native fish populations*, their habitats, life cycles, and genetic diversity to ensure stewardship of native species and to ensure angling opportunities whenever possible.

### **Aquatic Habitat:**

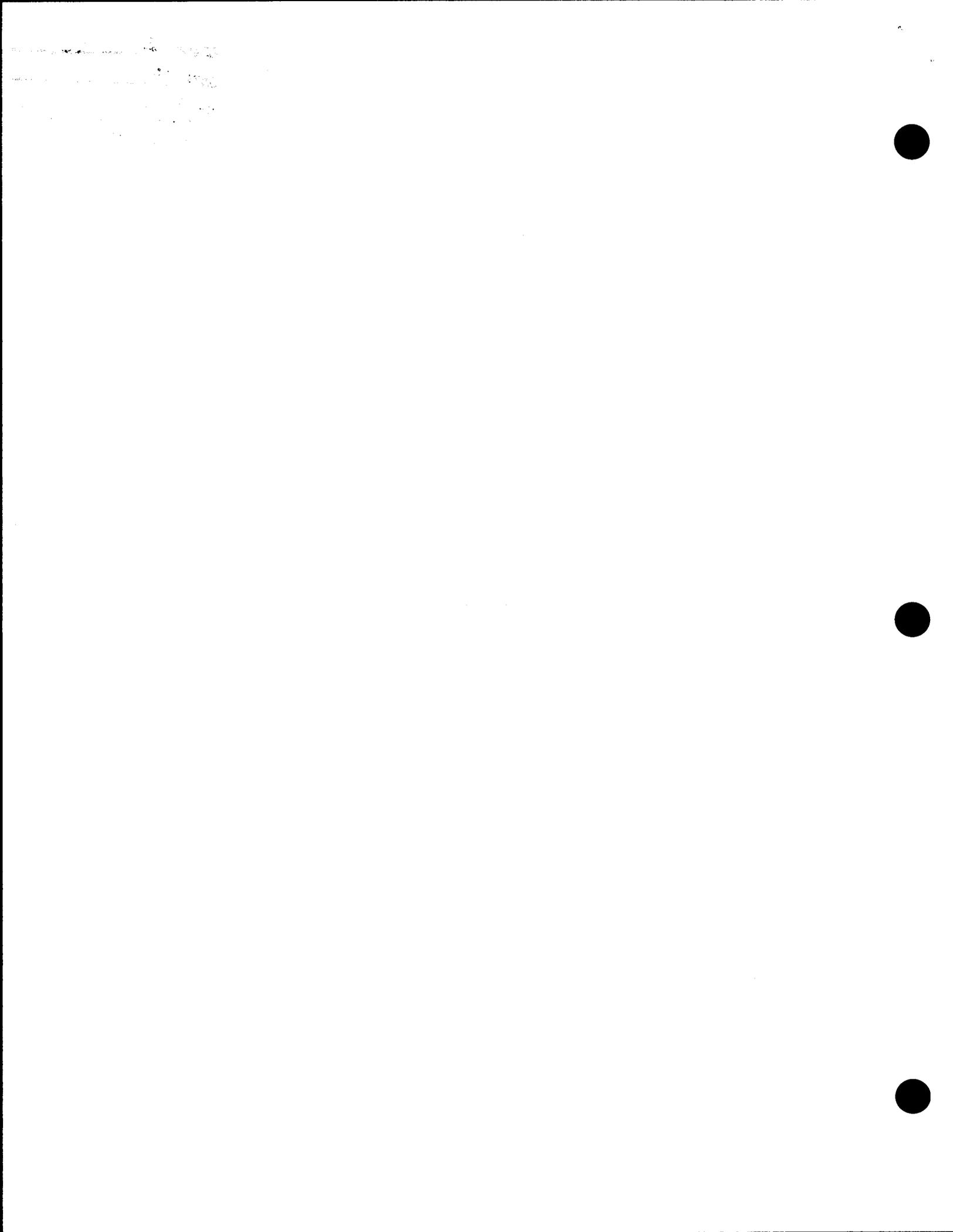
- *Preserve and protect aquatic habitats.*
- *Restore and enhance degraded aquatic habitats.*
- *Restore and maintain adequate water flow in streams and satisfactory water levels in lakes and reservoirs.*

### **Fishing Access and River Recreation Management:**

- *Provide opportunities for people to access and enjoy the public waters of the state* for fishing and other forms of water-based recreation. FWP will do so through the acquisition and development of new fishing access sites, the management of existing sites and recreation use, and through the protection of the public's right to access streams and other public waters.
- *Maintain good relationships with neighboring property owners.* FWP will do so by responsibly managing the property and facilities, as well as the public that uses these sites. This includes maintaining boundary fences, addressing noxious weeds, and preventing trespass.

## DIVISION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- *Provided 2.8 million angler days of recreation* in 2011, the estimated annual economic value of expenditures from fishing activity was \$312 million.
- *Conducted over 25,000 individual watercraft inspections for Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) during 2012, a nearly threefold increase from 2011.* About 20 percent of the boats inspected originated from out-of-state. Detected four boats with zebra/quagga mussels, four with illegal live bait, two with illegal live fish and one with New Zealand mudsnails. Also surveyed 249 sites on 123 waterbodies, no new AIS infestations were detected during 2012.
- *Stocked MT waters (annually) with about 45 million warmwater fish (walleye, pike, bass and catfish) and 8.4 million coldwater fish (trout, salmon & grayling).*
- *Developed Montana's first statewide fisheries management plan*, which describes the main fisheries programs, current operations or areas of work within these programs, and the management emphasis and priorities for all waters of the state. The plan will help guide regulation setting, budget and project prioritization, and routine management decision making.



## Fisheries Division ACCOMPLISHMENTS (Cont'd)

- *Initiated forest sustained yield inventory and forest management planning effort for fishing access sites to be completed in CY2013.* Conducted one timber sale in 2012 and currently have one active timber sale at Stuart Mill Bay (Georgetown Lake).
- *Worked successfully with Big Hole River landowners to address conservation concerns for Arctic grayling in the Big Hole River basin* while helping landowners address production needs. Thirteen site plans have been completed and signed by participating landowners.

## DIVISION CHALLENGES

- *Protecting Montana waters from the negative impacts of aquatic nuisance species.*
- *Providing and maintaining fishing access on an increasingly challenging landscape.*
- *Working with federal agencies, landowners and other stakeholders to manage fish species subject to the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA)* including bull trout, cutthroat trout, Arctic grayling, and pallid sturgeon. ESA increases the complexity of management, impacts regulations and can result in loss of angling opportunities.
- *Drought / Flooding*

## DECISION PACKAGES

### Biennial Amount

- **DP #302 Restore FAS O&M Staff** **\$270,504**  
This base adjustment provides the necessary staff to maintain existing fishing access sites (FAS) around the state. Staff duties will include latrine cleaning, weed control, fencing, vandalism repair and overall site maintenance at more than 320 sites statewide.
- **DP #303 Aquatic Nuisance Species Program (AIS)** **\$618,250**  
This proposal will continue the OTO for AIS work including multi-agency coordination and statewide watercraft inspection. Funding supports staff and operations for statewide watercraft inspections.
- **DP #304 Restore OTO Private Lands Fishing Access** **\$20,000**  
Continue OTO funding in base for resolving conflict at bridge access sites. Funding has been used to construct safe passage for anglers, to resolve parking issues, and to expand access opportunities.
- **DP #301 Funding Switch to Federal DJ/WB** **\$0**  
Fisheries will use an additional \$425,000 per year of DJ/WB funds to maximize the use of federal funds that support program activities while saving general license funds for activities that are ineligible for federal funding.
- **DP #6101 Professional Development Center Fee Allocation** **\$ (-786)**  
The executive recommends funding the PDC as a fixed cost item. This request reflects a reduction in the base equal to the amount paid to PDC. The new fixed cost amount is in the Management and Finance Division budget.