

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL 1301 E. 6th Ave (State Capital) Room 172 Helena

SUBJ: The General Appropriations Act of 2013 HB 2 - FWP (pgs. 27-29)

My name is Dyrck Van Hyning of Great Falls, a semi-retired Montana Food Broker dba Van Hyning & Associates since 1991.

I would like to comment on the Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Wildlife Funding. In the 63rd Legislature Short Title The General Appropriation Act of 2013 or HB0002–Page 27 & 28 Enacted 4% Personal Services Reductions on the Executive Branch agencies. In the Natural Resources and Transportation Division, Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks, there are 8 categories:

1. Information Services Division
2. Fisheries Division
3. Law Enforcement Div
4. Wildlife Division
5. Park Division
6. Communication and Education Div
7. Management & Finances
8. Fish & Wildlife Administration

Of the 8 categories of the FWP, only one full time employee (40 hours per week) in the Wildlife Administration was cut. That person was a 40 year employee, Arnie Dood, Natural Wildlife Game Species-Bison position. Wild free roaming bison would be wildlife, it would be hunted, licenced, managed, not livestock or endangered species. Arnie's position termination letter excerpts:

The department has determined that the position of Brucellosis Technician is available to you as a reassignment. This position reports to the Region 3 Wildlife Manager and is assigned to the Bozeman Office. Because this position is a Wildlife Biologist Band 5 if you chose this reassignment, you will be pay protected at your current base rate of \$ 29.6220 for six months. On January 1, 2016 your hourly base rate will be \$ __. __/hour.

If you do not accept this reassignment you will be laid off effective July 1, 2015. As an

All other positions in FWP were already vacated positioned, minimum hours lawn keepers at 1.8 hours or moved laterally to full hours and pay at previous position.

Arnie Dood is a dedicated FWP wildlife biologist who advocated for the wildlife science. Arnie began working for FWP in 1975 – 40 years he has been our trusted public servant. He is even mentioned in the Montana's Wildlife Legacy book, "In 1974, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks appointed Dennis Flath as its first non-game biologist and in 1984 Arnold Dood was assigned as the Endangered Species biologist. Since then, more non-game biologists have been hired, but are

now called native species biologists.”

Arnie has worked with a number of species recovery programs involving the Piping Plover, Grizzly Bear, Wolf, Peregrine Falcon, Bald Eagle, Black Footed Ferret and the Bison. This FWP public servant has worked with hunters, landowners, NGO's and served the sportsmen well. He has also written and contributed to a number of academic papers during his FWP career. Including the FWP scientific manual, Background Information on Issues of Concern for Montana: Plains Bison Ecology, Management, and Conservation, prepared for MFWP by Stephanie M. Adams and Arnold R. Dood Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks 1400 S. 19th Ave, Bozeman, Montana. It is the bible for Wild Bison in the United States. Arnie visited and talked with the management of premier wild bison herds around the country.

Henry Mountain Wildlife Area Utah

Book Cliffs Wildlife Management Area Utah

Raymond Ranch Wildlife Area Arizona

Grand Teton National Park and National Elk Refuge,
Wyoming

Sturgeon River Plains Bison Herd Saskatchewan



Background Information on Issues of Concern
for Montana:
Plains Bison Ecology, Management, and
Conservation

I first met Arnie at one of the CMR Community Working Group meetings. This working group is made up of the 6 counties around the CM Russell National Wildlife Refuge, Fergus, Phillips, Valley, McCone, Garfield and Petroleum. This group started in 2011. Participants in the group include agency representatives, landowners, grazing permittees, county commissioners, conservation districts, interest groups and engaged citizens. The group meets bi-monthly, rotating through the 6 counties. Over these past 17 meetings, Arnie has always been there, many times the only FWP person attending. He is an outgoing person who any or all of the above group members can talk to and come away with learning something they wanted to know.



There seems to be a lot of miscommunication of the forthcoming Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. Lauri Hanauska-Brown, FWP Nongame Wildlife Management Bureau Chief, returned my e-mail question on “When is the scoping of the PEIS going to be released”. Her answer of 1/27/2015:

We have considered our efforts to date as scoping (including those 8 public meetings we had in 2012.) No additional formal ‘public scoping’ is planned at this time. We do plan to offer a very long public comment once we’ve released a draft EIS.

If there is anything specific you would like to discuss please don’t hesitate to call me. Arnie is out of the office through mid February.

Another e-mail from Lauri Hanauska-Brown Thu, 2 Apr 2015 17:20:53 +0000

Hello and Happy Spring,

I wanted to let everyone know that we’re a little behind schedule with our release of the statewide EIS. Our new hope is to release a draft in late April/early May, followed by a 90

day comment period.

Without Arnie, this EIS will only go through the motions for lack of bison wildlife biologist knowledge. He was taken out of the Bison EIS process early on and the results will show forthwith. Apparently the 4/3/2015 Draft EIS topics were changed to something more friendly to the cattle industry based on a legislator's stock grower comment to the FWP.

Surely, FWP can do a better job of managing their resources for the state of Montana.

Sincerely,

Dyrck Van Hying
Great Falls
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