

Fish and Wildlife Licensing and Funding Advisory Council
Preliminary Recommendations as of March 2014

(Changes made since March's EQC meeting are marked in red.)

Free and Discounted Licenses

Retain the following in recognition of service:

- 1) Free and reduced cost licenses for military service members and disabled veterans
- 2) Free big game combo/sportsman licenses for landowners participating in the block management program
- 3) Agreement allowing CSKT to retain license fees paid on the reservation to fund the CSKT tribal wildlife management program (87-1-228, MCA)

Alter the following:

Youth

Consolidate pricing from three age groups to two. (Current age groups are: under 12, 12-15, and 16-17)

- 1) Fishing licenses for residents:

Under Age 12	Free
Age 12-17	Discounted at 50% of full-priced license
- 2) Fishing licenses for nonresidents:

Under Age 12	Free
Age 12-17	Discounted at 50% of full-priced license
- 3) Hunting licenses for residents and nonresidents:

Under Age 12	N/A
Age 12-17	Discounted at 50% of full-priced license
- 4) Discontinue free sportsmans license for first-time resident youth hunters

Seniors

- 1) There's consensus to recommend increasing the age at which seniors are eligible for discounted licenses to age 67. Currently, licenses are discounted at 62 years of age.
- 2) There's concensus to recommend altering senior discounted licenses so that they are priced at 50% of the full-priced license fee. Free licenses would no longer be available.

Disabled

- 1) There's concensus to recommend altering discounted licenses for the disabled so that they are priced at 50% of the full-priced license fee. Free licenses would no longer be available.
- 2) The Advisory Council believes the Fish and Wildlife Commission holds the authority to alter the definition of "disabled" in agency rule for the purpose of determining eligibility for discounted licenses. The Council believes the current definition is too broad and includes some individuals who should be buying full-priced licenses.

Nonresidents

Reprice the "Come Home to Hunt" (87-2-526, MCA) and "Nonresident Relative of a Resident" (87-2-514, MCA) licenses so that they are both priced at 50% of the equivalent full-priced nonresident license. Currently "Come Home to Hunt" licenses are full-priced and "Nonresident Relative of a Resident" licenses are four times the resident price. Also, change the licenses available for nonresident relatives of a resident from a Class B-7 nonresident deer A tag to a Class B-11 nonresident deer combination license and from a Class B-15 nonresident elk license to a nonresident elk combination license.

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Other

- 1) FWP should use a 4 year funding model for reviewing its budget expenditures and revenues, in order to determine the need for making license revenue recommendations to the legislature.
- 2) Create a base hunting license that would be a pre-requisite to purchasing individual species tags and the archery stamp. The price of \$10 for residents and \$15 for nonresidents would include the Hunting Access Enhancement Fee (HAEF) and would result in a net price increase of \$8 for residents and \$5 for nonresidents.
- 3)a) Do not alter the licenses included in the B-10 nonresident big game combination license or the B-11 nonresident deer combination license.
b) Cap the price of the B-10 and B-11 licenses, including the price of the proposed base hunting license and the existing application fee, at \$999 and \$625 respectively.
- 4) Increase nonresident moose, mountain sheep, mountain goat, and bison license prices to \$1250 each.
- 5) Increase fishing license prices.
 - a) Increase resident fees from \$5 for a 2-day license to \$8 and from \$18 for a season to \$24
 - b) Increase nonresident fees from \$15 for a 2-day license to \$26 and from \$60 for a season to \$86.
 - c) Change the current 10-day nonresident license, priced at \$43.50, to a 7-day license for \$56.
- 6) Change the Fish and Wildlife Commission refund policy for nonresidents who are unsuccessful in the March 15 permit drawing so that FWP may retain only ~~10%~~ 5% (instead of 20%) of the fee for a returned license. ~~This would match the license fee retention policy established by the legislature in 87-2-511(6)(b) for other situations.~~ Any refunds requested after that time would follow the Commission's current refund levels, though the Council recommends changing the applicability dates such that an 80% refund is available until June 1 (instead of August 1), and a 50% refund is available thereafter until the season opening.
- 7) All Montanans and visitors benefit from the management activities of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. FWP's management is currently paid for largely by people who purchase hunting and fishing licenses. Of those who do not purchase a license, some benefit in ways that have a physical presence creating impacts that FWP must manage. Others benefit without a physical presence and do not create impacts. Because of the above, FWP and the legislature need to develop/provide mechanisms in addition to license dollars to fund the management and maintenance of the resources that provide these benefits.
- 8) The council reviewed FWP's current revenue earmarks and made a preliminary decision not to make a recommendation regarding earmarks.