

LEPO

Legislative Environmental
Policy Office

MONTANA LEGISLATIVE
SERVICES DIVISION

TRACKING FISH & WILDLIFE: SUCH A THING AS TOO CLOSE?

DISSEMINATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE LOCATIONS

[Senate Joint Resolution No. 30](#) passed by the 2019 Legislature asked the EQC conduct research and debate into whether or how the state should protect fish and wildlife location data, including den and nest sites, spawning locations, congregation areas, courtship display grounds, and harvest locations.

The 2019 Legislature passed [Senate Bill No. 349](#), which established criminal penalties for a person who obtains “exact coordinate location data” from the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks and uses the data or transfers it to another person who uses the data to “in a way that harms, harasses, or kills fish or wildlife.”

However, the new law does not address the release of the information itself. That was the impetus for SJR30 and the EQC study.

JANUARY MEETING MATERIALS

Study materials for January include an overview of constitutional and statutory provisions regarding public information. Also included are two years of public record requests made to DFWP, including some for location data. A DFWP checklist for processing requests is included as well.

At the meeting, the DFWP will demonstrate how location data is collected and how it may be used in the field.

*AS OF JULY 1, 2019, IT IS A
CRIME TO USE EXACT
COORDINATE LOCATION
DATA TO HARM, HARASS,
OR KILL FISH OR WILDLIFE.
PUNISHMENT COULD
INCLUDE \$1,000 FINE, 6
MONTHS IN JAIL, AND LOSS
OF HUNTING PRIVELGES*

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Date

Title of Whitepaper
Name of Interim Committee
Name of Researcher