

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES – TERRESTRIAL

VIABILITY OF USER-PAID SYSTEM OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION IN MONTANA

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Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) is entrusted with the responsibility to conserve all species of fish and wildlife to meet a variety of public interests and values. To date, users of these resources, namely hunters and anglers, have provided the financial and political support for the state to achieve this mandate. With this presentation, we make the business case for why user participation is critical to the future of fish and wildlife stewardship in the state, and compare current participation trends in Montana to those of other states in anticipation of what we might experience in the future. This will be followed by a brief discussion of the primary factors leading to changes in participation, and how they relate to the user-paid model of wildlife conservation using a conceptual framework. We will then present and discuss a variety of strategic initiatives Montana could explore to address the implications of a changing user demographic. We will conclude by providing an overview of ongoing efforts by FWP to date including the role of marketing and branding of our services and products. We're hopeful that these two presentations will be supportive of TWS-Montana Chapter's efforts to explore ways in which we can promote sound stewardship of wildlife and their habitats in Montana in a manner that is economically and socially sustainable.