

Week 6 Update

The Association put on, in conjunction with MT FWP, and the Wild Sheep Foundation. This conference took place Thursday February 9th and Friday February 10th. The conference was well attended, and, more important, well received. The Association's very own Dave McEwen, presented on behalf of the domestic sheep industry and did a fine job representing the Association.

You can read all about the symposium here: http://helenair.com/news/natural-resources/wild-and-domestic-sheep-advocates-seek-common-ground-at-symposium/article_7458c1e6-2e17-56d6-9d36-ffa9bf2cd4a7.html

Also, the Association put on its wool growers day at the capital on Thursday. The Association served lamb stew to the members of the Legislature and to the associated staff. The event was quite successful and proved to be a good opportunity for the Association to showcase its products.

This week was also a good one in terms of Legislation.

1. SB 73 – funding for the livestock loss board and predator control

MWGA's bill to extend the funding provided to the livestock loss board for depredation compensation purposes by another six years was passed by the Senate on second reading 48-2. The bill was then referred to the Senate Finance and Claims Committee for a hearing on Thursday, the 9th. This Committee has always been a problem committee for us in terms of getting our legislation through – However, I am pleased to report that Senate Finance and Claims reported our bill out of Committee this morning on a 15-0 vote. It will head back to the Senate floor for 3rd reading, before being sent to the House of Representatives for that body's consideration.

1. SB 110 -- Funding for wolf collaring and lethal control

During the 2011 legislative session, MWGA worked with Representative Mike Cuffe of Libby to pass a bill that requires MT FWP to dedicate every dollar collected on wolf licenses to wolf management purposes, including the collaring and killing of wolves.

MWGA opposed legislation this past week, which was sponsored by Senator Phillips of Bozeman, and requested by MT FWP that would have altered our 2011 bill and would have allowed those wolf license dollars to be used for educational purposes and habitat improvement while striking language contained in existing law that required FWP to use these monies for killing and collaring. The bill is clearly an attempt by the Department to get around the statutory requirement that the department collar every wolf pack in Montana.

1. HB 367 -- voluntary contribution by those who purchase hunting licenses to contribute \$1 for the purpose of predator control

The House considered a bill this week that would authorize those purchasing conservation and hunting licenses to voluntarily contribute a \$1 for the purpose of predator control. The bill was brought by Becky Beard of Powell County. MWGA ran a similar bill during the 2011 legislative session, without success. MWGA testified in favor of this bill given that the \$1 contribution is voluntary and would be used to help fund wildlife services work. MT FWP opposed the bill on its usual grounds that the bill constitutes a diversion of funds under Pittman-Robertson. Story here: http://missoulian.com/lifestyles/recreation/hunter-donation-program-proposed-for-lethal-wolf-management/article_f6f45188-820e-570f-9ado-4d4713cd92d4.html

1. Water bills –

MWGA is tracking various water bills, among those are:

1. HB 124 – this bill requires that a water commissioner complete at least one educational program prior to administering water. HB 124 passed the House and has been referred to Senate Natural Resources.
2. SB 28 – this bill authorizes the water court to review DNRC decisions on applications for water rights permits and changes to water rights. The existing law only allows a challenge to a DNRC water decision to be filed with the district court. The bill has passed the senate and was referred to the House Committee on Judiciary.
3. HB 48 – this bill clarifies the definition of change in appropriation right. The bill states that a change in appropriation right does not include a change in the method of irrigation. The idea here is to allow water rights holder to change from flood to sprinkler irrigation without having to go through the water right change process. This bill has been passed by the House. It has also had a hearing in the Senate Natural Resources Committee.

Monday – February 13 – Legislative Day 31

Senate Education and Cultural Resources – Room 422, 3pm

HB232 – Revise laws for dual enrollment at community colleges (Kenneth Holmlund)

Senate Natural Resources – Room 303, 3pm

HB124 – Require education program for water commissioners (Sharon Stewart-Peregoy)

HB156 – Extend statutory appropriation from hard rock mining impact trust account (Forrest Mandeville)

Senate Public Health, Welfare and Safety – Room 317, 3pm

SB145 – Generally revise laws re when certain individuals may be transferred to DOC (Roger Webb)

HB71 – Require certain licensed health professionals be trained in suicide prevention (Wendy McKamey)

Senate State Administration – Room 335, 3pm

SB158 – Provide for Montana calendar observance of Juneeenth (Margaret MacDonald)

SB163 – Revise election judge qualifications (Keith Regier)
SB178 – Revise when a primary must be held for local nonpartisan offices (Nels Swandal)
SR26 – Confirm governor appointee for Director of Dept. of Administration (Dee Brown)

House Appropriations – Room 102, 3pm

HB126 – Generally revise the Montana pesticides act (Ray Shaw)
HB187 – Establish an angel investor/venture capital tax credit (Jim Hamilton)
HB257 – Consider housing needs in Montana State Hospital discharge plans (Ellis Hill Smith)

House Energy, Technology, and Federal Relations – Room 472, 3pm

HB384 – Revise oil and gas lease provisions (Austin Knudsen)

House Human Services – Room 152, 3pm

HB356 – Prohibit individual health insurance discrimination with some exceptions (Jean Price)
HB362 – Fingerprint background checks for licensing under medical licensure compact (Ellie Hill Smith)
HB364 – Revise service animal laws (Denley Loge)

House Natural Resources – Room 172, 3pm

HB414 – Provide for enhancement of stream access in MDT construction projects (Zach Brown)

House Transportation – Room 455, 3pm

HB415 – Revise transportation laws regarding travel in right lane (Shane Morigeau)

Tuesday – February 14 – Legislative Day 32

Senate Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation – Room 335, 3pm

SR10 – Confirm Governor’s appointees to agriculture and livestock related boards (Brian Hoven)

SR29 – Confirm Governor’s appointees to Board of Veterinary Medicine (Brian Hoven)

Senate Business, Labor, and Economic Affairs – Room 422, 8am

SR23 – Confirm Governor’s appointees to boards related to business (Edward Buttrey)

Senate Finance and Claims – Room 303, 1:30pm (or upon adjournment of the Senate floor)

SB96 – Right to shop act for health care services (Cary Smith)

SB106 – Revise laws related to the use of certain chemical de-icers on Montana roads (Dee Brown)

Senate Highways and Transportation – Room 405, 3pm

SB182 – Require hearings for highway construction (Mike Lang)

SB194 – Revise state secondary highway system funding laws (Mike Lang)

SB196 – Revise transportation laws related to traffic violations in work zones (Steve Fitzpatrick)

Senate Judiciary – Room 303, 9am

SB170 – Provide civil liability for unmanned aerial vehicle trespass (Steve Hinebauch)

SB193 – Provide for licensing of board certified behavior analysts (Duane Ankney) – Hearing Cancelled

SB200 – Revise laws related to disposition of certain property held by law enforcement (Edward Buttrey)

House Agriculture – Room 137, 3pm

HB352 – Provide for the Montana Local Food Choice Act (Greg Hertz)

HB410 – Increase funding for noxious weed trust fund (Ray Shaw)

House Business and Labor – Room 172, 8:30am

HB290 – Revise outfitter reporting laws (Tom Jacobson)

HB402 – Generally revise laws on storage units/rentals (Jeff Essmann)

House Fish, Wildlife and Parks – Room 152, 3pm

SB91 – Clarify what constitutes as shooting from a vehicle for hunting purposes (Jedediah Hinkle)

House Judiciary – Room 137, 8am

HB380 – Prohibit texting while driving (Virginia Court)

House State Administration – Room 455, 9am

HB282 – Grant county commission authority to correct certain election results (Mike Cuffe)

Wednesday – February 15 – Legislative Day 33

Senate Judiciary – Room 303, 9am

SB99 – Prohibit enforcement of new federal gun laws by Montana public employees (Cary Smith)

SB202 – Prohibit post of no trespassing sign on another's property (Jedediah Hinkle)

SJ11 – Generally revise self-defense laws (Keith Regier)

Senate Public Health, Welfare and Safety – Room 317, 3pm

SB192 – Generally revise civil procedure laws (Nels Swandal)

SB199 – Require coverage of habilitative services under the Healthy Montana Kids Plan (Mary Caferro)

Senate State Administration – Room 335, 3pm

SB206 – Provide for Montana standard time (Ryan Osmundson)

House Business and Labor – Room 172, 8:30am

HB358 – Revise workers' compensation laws pertaining to release of information (Mark Noland)

HB412 – Authorize municipalities to set alternate all-beverages, retail beer quotas (Bruce Grubbs)

House Human Services – Room 152, 3pm

SB4 – Eliminate certain DPHHS advisory councils and reports (Diane Sands)

SB62 – Certification for behavioral health peer support specialists (Cynthia Wolken)

SB82 – Generally revise laws on Medicaid overpayment audits (Albert Olszewski)

SB100 – Authorize direct primary care provider plans (Cary Smith)

HB369 – Establish requirements for accepting sexual/violent offenders in DD group homes (Kirk Wagoner)

HB395 – Require PSC approval of certain hospital charges (Tom Woods)

HB400 – Require disclosure of health care prices (Greg Hertz)

House Education – Room 137, 3pm

HB375 – Provide state funding for tribally controlled schools (Greg Hertz)

HB376 – Establish public charter schools (Jonathan Windy Boy)

House Taxation – Room 152, 8am

HB27 – Revise agricultural valuation laws related to property under a residence (Jeff Essmann)

HB391 – Provide for Montana earned income tax credit (Tom Jacobson)

House Transportation – Room 455, 3pm

HB408 – Enhance commercial airline service (Steve Lavin)

Thursday – February 16 – Legislative Day 34

Senate Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation – Room 335, 3pm

SR30 – Confirm Governor’s appointees to the Board of Milk Control (Brian Hoven)

Senate Energy and Telecommunications – Room 317, 3pm

SB210 – Revise public service commission laws and qualifications (Sue Malek)

SJ10 – Joint resolution regarding the keystone pipeline (Mike Lang)

Senate Judiciary – Room 303, 9am

SB203 – Revise laws related to boarding animals (Nels Swandal)

SB207 – Provide for confidentiality of heritage properties and paleontological remains (Frederick Moore)

SJ12 – Resolution requesting Article V convention for a balanced budget amendment (Douglas Kary)

House Agriculture – Room 137, 3pm

HB338 – Revise livestock transportation permit laws (Casey Knudsen)

HB345 – Exclude certain bees from per capita livestock fee (Geraldine Custer)

House Business and Labor – Room 172, 8:30am

HB291 – Prohibit certain underwriting factors for private passenger insurance (Tom Jacobson)

Friday – February 17 – Legislative Day 35

House Business and Labor – Room 172, 8:30am

HB393 – Revising curriculum hours for schools of barbering and cosmetology (Daniel Zolnikov)

House Human Services – Room 152, 3pm

HB386 – Provide for practice of physical therapy through telehealth (Ron Ehli)

HB389 – Generally revise tele-medicine laws for physicians (Kirk Wagoner)