

Fish, Wildlife and Parks

The Role of FWP in Fisheries and Wildlife Management


Pat Gunderson, Region 6 Supervisor
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FWP Mission

Montana FWP, through its employees and citizen Commission, provides for the stewardship of the fish, wildlife, parks and recreational resources of Montana while contributing to the quality of life for present and future generations.

Fish, Wildlife and Parks, a Trustee



➤ State's responsibility to pass laws and regulations to regulate time, place, and manner of private taking.



➤ Authority is exercised as a trust for all the people in Montana, and *not* for the benefit of government nor third parties.

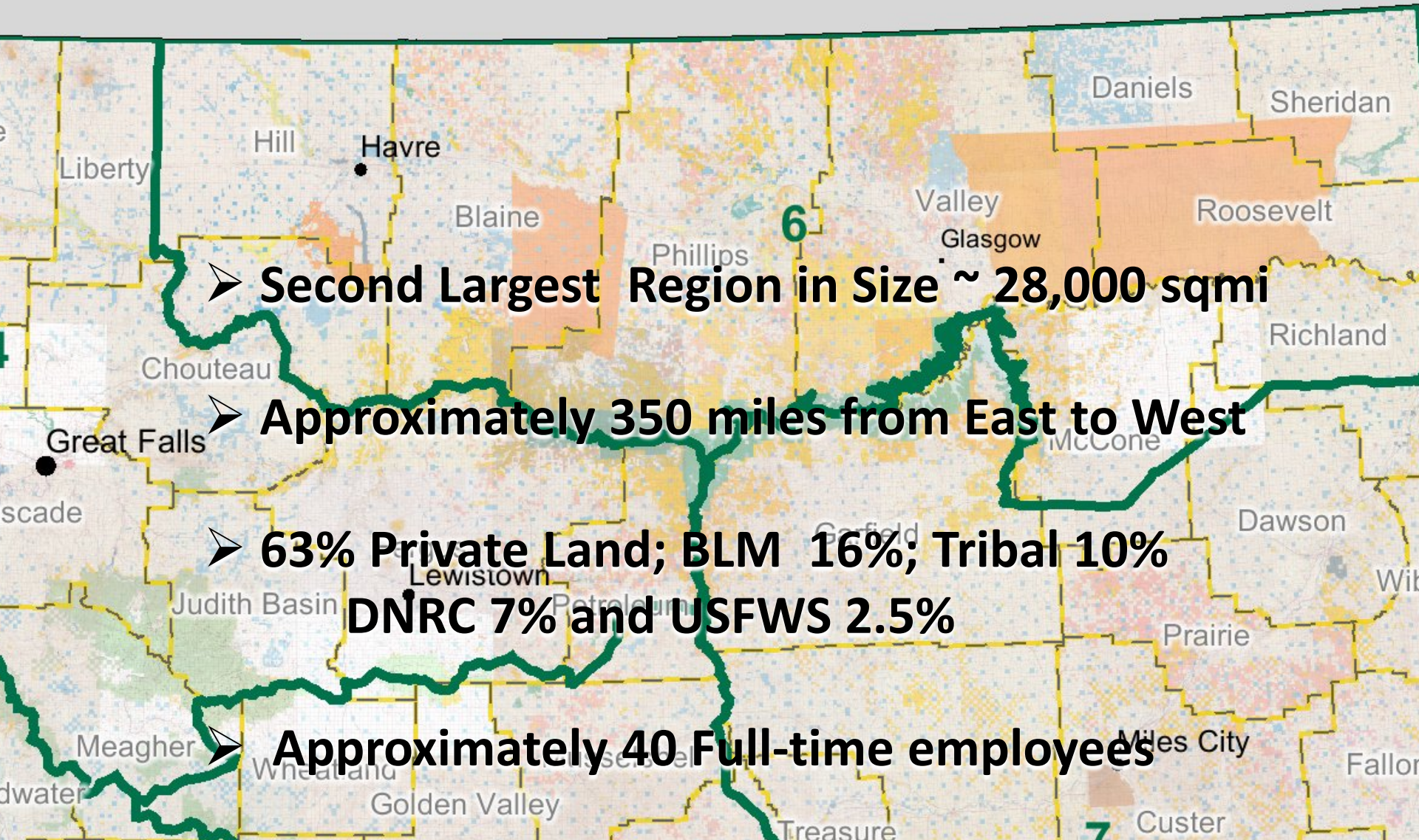


➤ State power is exercised under the broad concepts of police power (state enforcing laws) and public trust.

FWP Responsibilities

FWP, by law, supervises management of all fish, wildlife, game and nongame birds, waterfowl and game and nongame furbearing animals of the state. Further, FWP is responsible for all state parks-related scenic, historic, archeological, cultural and recreational resources of the state.

Region 6



➤ **Second Largest Region in Size ~ 28,000 sqmi**

➤ **Approximately 350 miles from East to West**

➤ **63% Private Land; BLM 16%; Tribal 10%
DNRC 7% and USFWS 2.5%**

➤ **Approximately 40 Full-time employees**

Wildlife Program

The Region 6 Wildlife program is focused on habitat, population management, recreational access, enforcement of laws and landowner relations.

- Focus on Partnerships with Private and Public Landowners
- Utilize Habitat Montana, UGBEP and other programs to affect wildlife habitat
- Focus on Recreational Opportunities for the Public
- Maintain Simplified Hunting Seasons for the Public
- Utilize Liberal Seasons to Manage Wildlife Populations within Habitat and Landowner Tolerances.

Fisheries Program

The Region 6 Fisheries program is focused on habitat, population management, recreational access, enforcement of laws and water quality and quantity.

- Utilize Future Fisheries Program and landowner and Agency Partnerships to affect habitat
- Focus on Recreational Opportunities for the Public
- Maintain Simplified Fishing Seasons for the Public
- Manage Fort Peck, Fresno and Nelson Reservoirs, Missouri and Milk Rivers and many small ponds.
- Species include pallid sturgeon, paddlefish, walleye, chinook salmon, lake trout and catfish.

Partnerships



Wildlife Partnerships



- Private landowners are FWPs key partners in Region 6 – Habitat, Access and Expertise
- Hunters and Local Conservation Groups
- State, Federal and Tribal staff are also key.
- Canadian Partners
- Non-Governmental Organizations

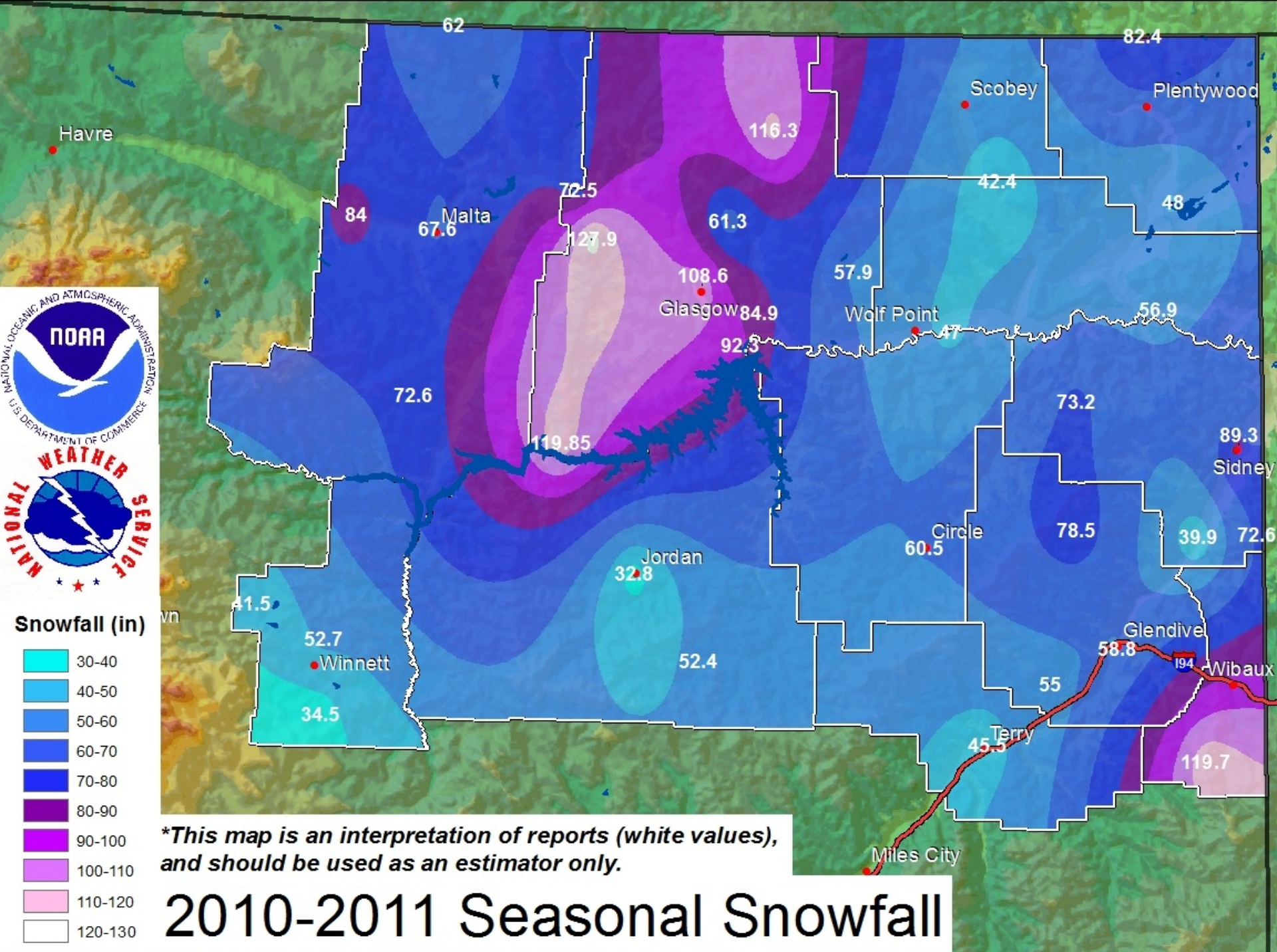
Pronghorn Study

Collaborators



Fisheries Partnerships

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 - Fisherman and Local Conservation Groups
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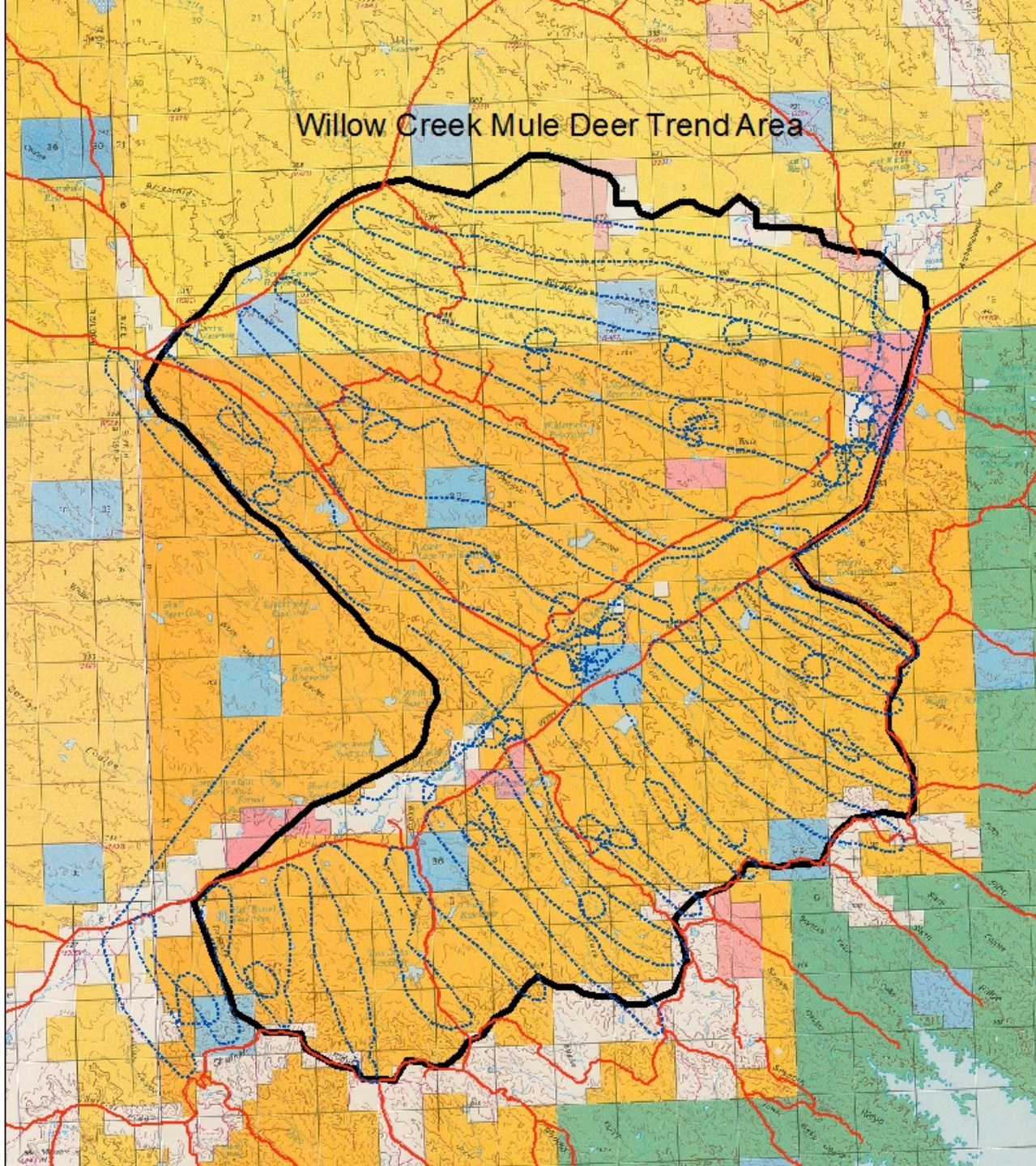


Wildlife Population Status

Mule Deer

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- Into Winter of 2010 – 2011 with very high numbers and animals were in good condition
 - Post-season surveys indicated approximately 25% decline in overall populations
 - Dropped antlerless quota by 54% from 2010 to 2011.

Willow Creek Mule Deer Trend Area



Wildlife Population Status

White-tailed Deer

- Into Winter of 2010 – 2011 with very high numbers and animals were in good condition
- Spring surveys indicated approximately 25% decline in overall populations
- Additional decline in late-summer due to severe Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease outbreak
- Dropped antlerless quota by 60% from 2010 to 2011.

Wildlife Population Status

Pronghorn Antelope

- Into Winter of 2010 – 2011 with average numbers and animals were in good condition
- Surveys indicated approximately overall populations in HDs declined from 40-90%.
- Dropped Quota by 60% from 2010 to 2011.

Wildlife Population Status

Elk

- Elk in Region 6 rarely have losses due to winter conditions.
- Surveys are conducted every other year and 2010 surveys indicate above average populations.
- Maintained liberal antlerless licenses in 2011.



Fisheries Population Status

- Rising waters in Fort Peck Reservoir have provided quality spawning and brood habitat for many species of fish.
- Flooding rivers provided outstanding conditions for spawning fish in 2010 and 2011.
- Paddlefish fishery above Fort Peck is very healthy.
- Small pond fisheries suffered winter-kill conditions last winter, but have excellent water-levels at present

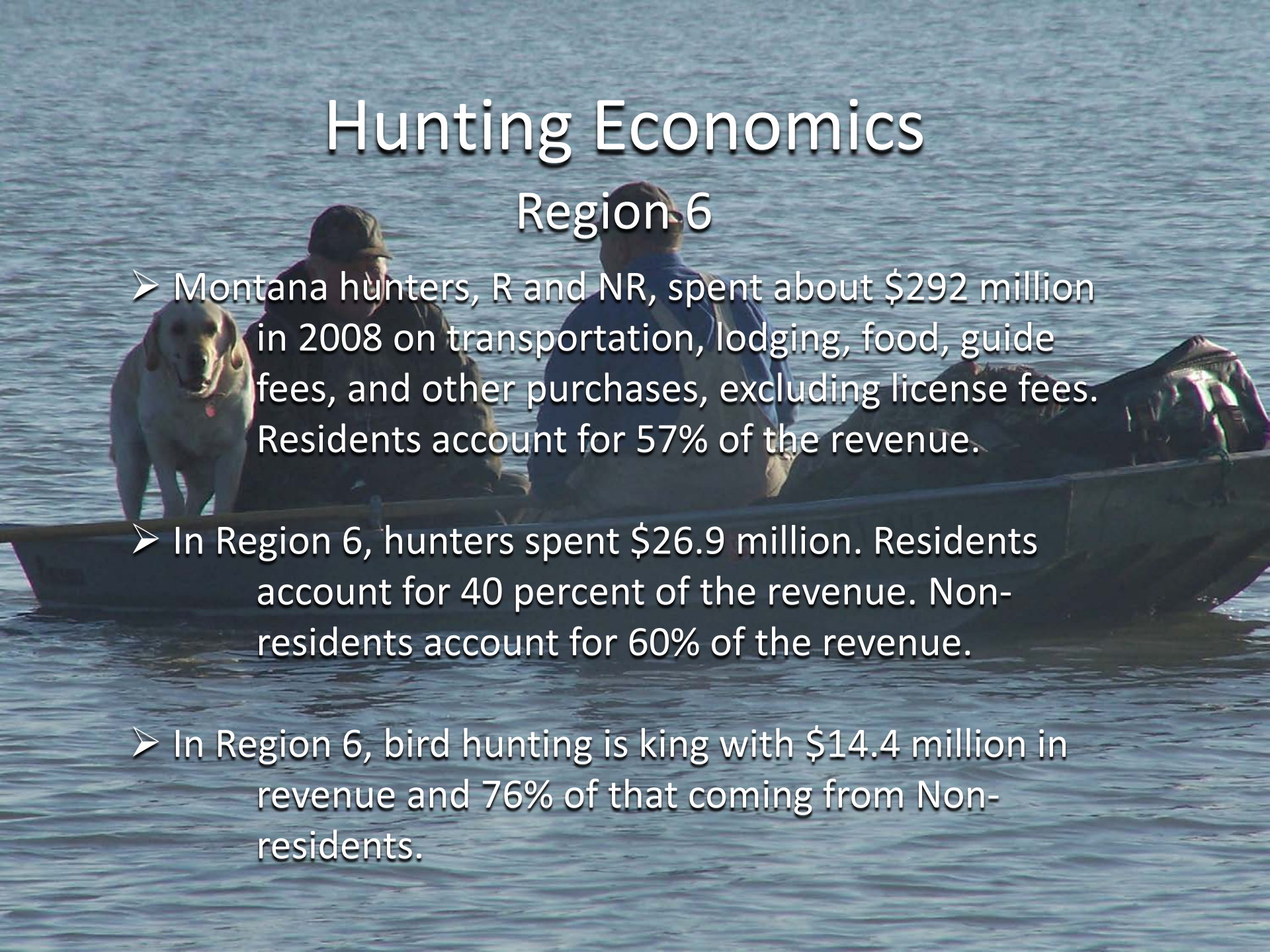
Fishing Economics

Region 6

- In 2008, anglers spent an estimated \$240 million in Montana on transportation, lodging, food, guide fees and other direct purchases, excluding license fees. Nonresidents account for more than 50 percent of the revenue from fishing.
- In Region 6, anglers spent \$8 million. Residents account for 84 percent of the revenue.


Hunting Economics

Region 6

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- A photograph of two hunters in a boat on a body of water. One hunter is wearing a dark jacket and a cap, and the other is wearing a blue jacket. A white dog is sitting on the left side of the boat. The background is a calm blue body of water.
- Montana hunters, R and NR, spent about \$292 million in 2008 on transportation, lodging, food, guide fees, and other purchases, excluding license fees. Residents account for 57% of the revenue.
 - In Region 6, hunters spent \$26.9 million. Residents account for 40 percent of the revenue. Non-residents account for 60% of the revenue.
 - In Region 6, bird hunting is king with \$14.4 million in revenue and 76% of that coming from Non-residents.

CMR Relations

Region 6

- Cooperation in various surveys, research and enforcement activities.
 - Annual discussions on quota-levels and seasons.
 - Differences in some objectives for big game animals.
 - Differences in some big game season structures.
 - Differences in Scale of Management
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- An aerial photograph of a dry, hilly landscape with scattered trees and a herd of elk running across the middle ground. The elk are brown and appear to be in motion, possibly migrating or fleeing. The terrain is a mix of light-colored soil and sparse green vegetation. The background shows more trees and a slight rise in the land.



Questions?