

ISSUES SUBMITTAL FORM

Date: 12/17/2019

ISSUE:	Should the public be allowed to hunt and fish the Uncompahgre River corridor of Billy Creek SWA during the current seasonal closure period of January 1 through April 30th annually?		
DISCUSSION (FACTS AND FIGURES, EXPLANATION OF ISSUE):			
<p>In the late 1990s, a winter closure was established at Billy Creek SWA. The Area was purchased to secure an area where wintering big game could be left alone and to minimize significant game damage that was occurring on private land in the area. The winter closure has been very effective, as anticipated. However, there is approximately 2/3 of a mile of the Uncompahgre River on the SWA area that, through posting and personal contact, waterfowl hunting and fishing has been allowed within the river corridor during the winter closure period. Since that time, access has also been allowed at a wildlife viewing area during the closure period.</p> <p>Recently, interest in recreational trapping has increased in the riparian area, and the fishery has improved, drawing more winter attention to the river area. Human presence along the river has not affected wintering deer and elk on the uplands of the SWA, so we are requesting to formalize the river corridor exception to the winter closure. Our intent is to allow hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities along the river corridor during the seasonal closure period, without disturbing the wintering big game herds that the closure was initially intended to protect.</p> <p>Conversely, the viewing area is experiencing more and more non-wildlife related activity in the way of dog walkers on closed roads and into the fields where big game and turkey are wintering, clearly affecting wildlife. Additionally, the viewing area parking lot is becoming a party, restroom and trash-depositing area requiring staff time to more aggressively enforce regulations. Technicians living on the property are commonly asked to assist the public at all hours of the day and night in the winter when their vehicles become stuck in the snow. The wildlife viewing area would officially be closed, as originally intended, with the seasonal closure of the entire SWA.</p>			
STATE LAW REQUIRES CPW TO SOLICIT INPUT FROM STAKEHOLDERS THAT MAY BE AFFECTED POSITIVELY OR NEGATIVELY BY THE PROPOSED RULES. THE FOLLOWING STAKEHOLDERS HAVE BEEN ADVISED OF AND INVITED TO PROVIDE INPUT ON THE REGULATORY CHANGES PROPOSED IN THIS ISSUE PAPER:			
IT IS ASSUMED THAT ALL NECESSARY INTERNAL PARTIES HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED.			
Staff have contacted sportspersons during the winter for almost 20 years participating in various activities in and around the river corridor and wildlife viewing area. Additionally, numerous signs have been posted attempting to explain the seasonal closure regulations, purposes and exceptions.			
ALTERNATIVES: (POSSIBLE OUTCOMES or POSSIBLE REGULATIONS):			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. *Preferred Alternative*: On Billy Creek SWA, allow access to the Uncompahgre River corridor for hunting and fishing recreation only, during the seasonal property closure period of January 1 through April 30. River access to the western portion of the river corridor allowed from US Highway 550 to 100 feet on the eastern bank of the river, as posted. Additionally, no longer exempt or allow winter access to the viewing area. 2. Maintain entire property closure as is currently in regulation. No action in regulation 			
Issue Raised by:	Dave Hale, Kelly Crane, Renzo DelPiccolo		
Author of the issue paper (if different than person raising the issue):	Same		
CC:	Cory Chick		
APPROVED FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION BY:			Cory Chick
REQUIRES NEW SPACE IN THE BROCHURE?			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

ARE ADEQUATE STAFF AND FUNDING RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO IMPLEMENT?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
REGION, BRANCH, OR SECTION LEADING IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDED FOR CONSENT AGENDA?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO