

**FieldNotes**

**Snowkite Rodeo to be held at Georgetown Lake this weekend**

The third annual Montana Snowkite Rodeo will be held this weekend at Georgetown Lake just outside of Anaconda. Pro and amateur riders from Norway, France, England, Canada and the United States will join Montana's growing number of snowkites for the event.

Kiter cross races and big air freestyle events will be taking place all weekend as well as a couple of new events including kite barrel racing and a huge free-for-all. There will be free kite demo lessons given by certified PASA instructors on Saturday and Sunday, and this year a plethora of prizes will be raffled off all weekend long.

Live music is planned for Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights as well as a good, old-fashioned Montana Ho-down with the Jim Basnight Band.

The Montana Snowkite Rodeo is sponsored by Montana Kite Sports, the Georgetown Lake Lodge and many other local and national sponsors. For more information go to [www.montanakitesports.com](http://www.montanakitesports.com) or call Keith at 461-5302, or Georgetown lakelodge.com 406-563-7020.

**LCAS to presents 'Freshwater Sponges of Western Montana'**

John Addis, professor of Biology at Carroll College, will present "Freshwater Sponges of Western Montana" on Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 7 p.m. in the Lewis and Clark Library's large meeting room. The event is presented by the Last Chance Audubon Society and is free and open to the public.

Living attached to submerged rocks, logs and aquatic vegetation in many of Montana's lakes, rivers, and creeks are simple, filter-feeding animals known as freshwater sponges. Often small and usually inconspicuous, these animals are surprisingly common, and where they are abundant, they can have significant effects on ecological processes.

Addis and his students have been studying freshwater sponges for the past dozen years. The program will cover the life cycles, ecological interactions, and species diversity of the freshwater sponges found in western Montana.

**WITO announces planning meeting for next workshop**

If you are interested in assisting in the planning and organization of the next Women in the Outdoors Event, plan to attend an informational meeting on Thursday, Feb. 23, at 6:30 p.m., at the Red Lion Colonial Hotel. The Women in the Outdoors Event/program is a great way for women to learn outdoor skills, meet new people and spend time with friends and family. The program features a day-long event where women 14 years and older receive expert instruction and a chance to try a variety of outdoor

activities. For more information or to RSVP, please contact Tammy at 442-5454 or e-mail at [mtsnorider@earthlink.net](mailto:mtsnorider@earthlink.net).

**Montana Discovery Foundation plans Snowschool event**

On Saturday, Feb. 25, from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., the Montana Discovery Foundation will host a public Snowschool Event at the Tenmile Environmental Trail west of Helena.

Introductory snowshoe walks will last about 45 minutes and will leave the trailhead every half hour. Equipment and leaders provided. Please RSVP to ensure snowshoes for your size. Call the Montana Discovery Foundation at 495-3718 or 495-3711.

**HBC meeting to feature bike fit presentation**

The Helena Bicycle Club will have a special presentation on bicycle fit and positioning at its February club meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 28, at 7 p.m. at Great Divide Cyclery, 336 N. Jackson.

Do you want to ensure you are positioned on your bike in the most efficient and healthy way? A good bicycle fit is essential for recreational and competitive cyclists. With 20-plus years of bicycle fit experience and having just returned from a 20-hour training with Andy Pruitt from the Boulder Center for Sports Medicine (one of the world's most foremost experts on bike fit and cycling injuries), Eric Grove and Gwen Sensenig of Great Divide Cyclery will lead a discussion on bicycle fit.

Discussion will include:  
 ■ basic biomechanics of riding a bicycle  
 ■ elements of a basic bicycle fit  
 ■ elements of an advanced bicycle fit including assessment of anatomy, alignment and flexibility  
 ■ common bike fit problems

For more information on the meeting and presentation, contact Helena Bicycle Club president Karen Thompson at 406-443-3166.

**FWP Commission to meet Feb. 21**

Montana's Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission will meet in Helena on Feb. 21 at the Colonial Hotel Red Lion, 2301 Colonial Drive, beginning at 8 a.m. in the Judicial Room.

The FWP Commission will make a variety of final decisions including:

- changes to the definition of trophy elk used in the state statute for restitution;
- a carcass transportation rule that addresses CWD concerns;
- a new annual lottery of hunting licenses;
- a move to biennial season setting for antelope, deer and elk;
- a limit of five antlerless deer and two doe/fawn antelope licenses per license year;
- separating game damage seasons from the general five-week season;
- authorizing final game

damage permits;  
 ■ making youth elk hunting opportunities now available to those ages 12 to 14 available to those ages 12 to 17;

- 2006-2007 moose, sheep and goat seasons and hunting district boundaries;
- 2006-2007 antelope, deer and elk seasons and hunting district boundaries;
- 2006-2007 lion seasons and hunting district boundaries;
- 2006 spring and fall turkey seasons and quotas;
- 2006-2007 spring black bear seasons and quotas;
- 2006-2007 prairie dog shooting rule.

A final decision will also be made on appointments to the Paddlefish Roe Advisory Council.

The FWP Commission will make a tentative decision on commercial fishing regulations at Canyon Ferry Reservoir and Lake Helena, and update the state index of water bodies with information on recent river recreation rules.

The full agenda for the FWP Commission meeting can be found by clicking on the FWP Commission icon on the bottom of the FWP home page at [www.fwp.state.mt.us](http://www.fwp.state.mt.us).

**FWP, APHIS VS to hold additional meeting on bison study**

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Veterinary Services will hold a public meeting in Gardiner, on Thursday, Feb. 16, on the Bison Quarantine Feasibility Study Phases II and III. The meeting will be held at the Gardiner Community Center from 6 to 9 p.m.

In addition, the public comment period will be extended another 14 days to allow people time to attend the meeting, review the draft environmental assessment and submit written comments. The comment deadline is now Feb. 27, at 5 p.m.

The draft EA was prepared by FWP and APHIS VS to analyze the environmental impacts associated with a proposal to develop appropriate quarantine facilities to implement Phases II and III of a Bison Quarantine Feasibility Study.

The complete draft EA and additional project information is available by clicking on Recent Public Notices at [fwp.mt.gov/publicnotices/notice\\_987.aspx](http://fwp.mt.gov/publicnotices/notice_987.aspx) or on the APHIS Web site at: [www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/nahp/s/brucellosis/](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/nahp/s/brucellosis/).

Comments or questions may be emailed to: [Bison-QuarantineEA@mt.gov](mailto:Bison-QuarantineEA@mt.gov) or mailed to: Bison Quarantine EA, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, P.O. Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701, or fax it to 444-4952

**Male mountain lion hunting closes in districts 413, 432**

The hunting of male mountain lions in north-central Montana hunting districts 413 and 432, which includes portions of Cascade, Meagher and Judith Basin counties, was closed Feb. 14.

**Feds extend comment period for grizzly delisting proposal**

*March 20 is new deadline*

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK (AP) — The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said Wednesday that it will give the public more time to comment on the agency's proposal to lift special protections for grizzly bears around Yellowstone National Park.

**Some people wanted more time because they said the proposal was too complex**

The comment period, which was to have expired Wednesday, now will run through March 20, the agency said in a news release.

Chris Servheen, Fish and Wildlife's grizzly bear recovery coordinator in Missoula, said it's not unusual to allow more time for comment. He said the agency received several requests for extensions — some people wanted more time because they said the proposal was too complex or released too close to the holidays — and that it wanted to be responsive.

So far, the agency has received more than 120,000 comments, many of those e-mail form letters, he said.

"It's not a vote, anyway," Servheen said in a phone interview. "We care about the substantive issues people bring up to make sure we have addressed the substantive issues of the

proposal." Last fall, Fish and Wildlife declared the Yellowstone-area grizzlies recovered and proposed removing them from protections under the Endangered Species Act. The agency says the bear population has grown from 4 percent to 7 percent a year since the mid-'90s and that more than 600 grizzlies now live in that region.

Some environmentalists worry that not enough has been done, or is yet known, to ensure a thriving population if protections were lifted.

Janet Barwick, of the Natural Resources Defense Council, welcomed the extension, saying there are several highly technical documents related to the proposal that need to be pored over to produce "thoughtful and substantive" comments.

**Feds OK 4 new types of nontoxic shot**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recently approved four new nontoxic shot types for waterfowl and coot hunting.

"The Service's approval of these four shot types demonstrates our determination to make it easier for waterfowl hunters to comply with the restrictions on lead shot," said H. Dale Hall, USFWS director. "Hunters now have a wider choice of shot types, and this will continue to lessen the exposure of waterfowl to lead."

Waterfowl can ingest expended lead shot and die from lead poisoning. Efforts to phase out lead shot began in the 1970s, and a nationwide ban on lead shot for all waterfowl hunting was implemented in 1991. Canada followed with a complete ban in 1999.

The approved shot types are:

(T1CN) shot, composed of 40-76 percent tungsten, 10-37 percent iron, 9-16 percent copper and 5-7 percent nickel produced by Spherical Precision, Inc. of Tustin, Calif.

■ A formulation of iron-tungsten-nickel (ITN) alloys composed of 20-70 percent tungsten, 10-40 percent nickel, and 10-70 percent iron produced by ENVI-RON-Metal Inc. of Sweet Home, Ore.

■ A formulation of tungsten-bronze (TB) shot made of 60 percent tungsten, 35.1 percent copper, 3.9 percent tin, and 1 percent iron produced by Olin Corporation of East Alton, Ill.

■ A formulation of tungsten-tin-iron (TTI) shot composed of 58 percent tungsten, 38 percent tin, and 4 percent iron produced by Nice Shot, Inc., of Albion, Penn.

A study in the mid-1990s suggested that the nationwide ban in the United

States on the use of lead shot for waterfowl hunting has had remarkable success. Six years after the ban, researchers estimated a 64 percent reduction in lead poisoning deaths of surveyed mallard ducks and a 78 percent decline in lead pellet ingestion. The study concluded the restrictions on lead shot has prevented the deaths of thousands of waterfowl.

With the approval of these new shot types, the list of approved shot types for waterfowl hunting now includes bismuth-tin, iron (steel), iron-tungsten (2 types), iron-tungsten-nickel, tungsten-bronze, tungsten-iron-copper-nickel, tungsten-matrix, tungsten-polymer, tungsten-tin-iron, tungsten-tin-bismuth, and tungsten-tin-iron-nickel.

For more information on toxic and nontoxic shot, please see <http://migratorybirds.fws.gov/issues/nontoxic-shot/nontoxic.htm>.

**The HELENA BOAT SHOW**

*"A 23 Year Tradition"*

**Largest Indoor Sale of the Year!**













**Fantastic Interest Rates! Unbelievable Factory Rebates!**

SKI DOO Snowmobiles  
SEA DOO  
HONDA Generators  
HONDA Outboards  
Electronics & Accessories

BOMBARDIER ATV  
JOHNSON  
MERCURY  
EVINRUDE  
DOCKS/HOISTS






**FEB. 17<sup>TH</sup>-18<sup>TH</sup>-19<sup>TH</sup>**  
**L&C FAIRGROUNDS**  
**HELENA**  
 FRIDAY 12-9  
 SATURDAY 9-6  
 SUNDAY 10-5

**"23 Years & Growing"**



**443-7373**  
**1-800-585-7397**  
**3186 HWY 12 EAST**  
**HELENA**



**Belmont: Synness met with Mount Belmont notables**

continued from 1C

Club; Bill Downs, a ski historian and original member of the Belmont Ski Club; and Les Alke, considered to be

"the father of the Belmont Ski Hill," before their deaths in the last few years. He also interviewed John Morrison, who served as Mount Helena Ski Club's first president in

the late '30s. "I've made friends with some of Helena's greatest athletes," Synness said. "Before, I was just painting walls and having daydreams."

**Great Divide: Open Monday**

continued from 1C

He expects the wind to calm down by Friday, allowing the ski area to reopen for business as usual for the day. However, Great Divide won't offer night skiing on Friday.

Taylor adds that this is a long holiday weekend, with many state and federal workers having Monday off of work for Presidents Day. Schools also will be closed. "So just think of it as we're taking away a nasty

Thursday and you get an extra holiday day on Monday," Taylor said. For more information, check out the Great Divide Web site at [greatdividemontana.com](http://greatdividemontana.com) or call the snow phone at 447-1310.