## MINUTES OF MEETING FISH AND GAME COMMITTEE MONTANA STATE SENATE

February 10, 1981

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Smith at 1:00 P.M. in Room 402 of the Capitol.

ROLL CALL: All members of the committee were present.

CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL 51, "An act to provide compensation for qualifying fish and game wardens for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week by paying a premium in 26 equal parts annually over and above the warden's normal salry; to obtain premium pay funds from funds generated from the sale of nonresident hunting and fishing licenses; amending sections 87-1-601 and 87-1-602, MCA."

Chairman Smith asked Senator Jack Galt, sponsor of SB 51, to explain the bill. He said the bill was prefiled and he had been asked by the Montana Association of State Game Wardens to introduce the bill. He said the bill offers financial compensation to fish and game wardens for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week. The compensation is termed "premium pay" and is equivalent to 15% of the annual gross salary of a warden with 10 years' service. This "premium pay" is disbursed in 26 equal payments annually to every permanent fish and game warden below the rank of sergeant. The premium pay will be paid out of the proceeds from the sale of nonresident hunting and fishing licenses.

PROPONENTS OF SENATE BILL 51. Mr. Jim DeBoer, President of the Montana Association of State Game Wardens, spoke in favor of the bill. He said a warden is required by the department and the needs of the public to work long and odd hours. The system of compensatory time under which wardens now work is not a uniform policy throughout the state and is not satis-Mr. DeBoer distributed a fact sheet (Attachment factory. #1) to the committee and explained the calculations thereon. He said the idea of premium pay was obtained from the system under which the federal wildlife enforcement officer is compensated; however, their system is figured on a sliding scale and the wardens propose theirs to be figured on a percentage basis for easier bookkeeping purposes. He stated that the Montana Highway Patrol officers are paid time-and-a half for overtime worked.

Mr. DeBoer said their efforts regarding premium pay was begun in the summer of 1979 at the bargaining table through contract negotiations with the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks. He said they felt if they could not obtain premium pay through that means, they would try it through legislation. Mr. Robert VanDerVere spoke in favor of SB 51.

Mrs. Mary Jean Bivins, wife of Game Warden Tom Bivins, Choteau, spoke in favor of the bill. Her testimony is marked Attachment #2.

Mr. Lloyd Frisbie, Meagher County Sheriff, White Sulphur Springs, spoke in favor of the bill.

Mr. Don Malmberg, Deer Lodge Game Warden, spoke in favor of the bill.

OPPONENTS OF SENATE BILL 51. Mr. Jim Flynn, Director of the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, spoke against the bill. His testimony is marked Attachment #3. He said that during the 1979 negotiations with game wardens, the department advised them that premium pay would be considered in the 1981 negotiations if the wardens brought it to the bargaining table. He said the wardens were told at that time that if they chose to take the matter to the legislature, that legislative action would be the guidepost for future department actions on the subject.

Mr. Wilbur Rehmann, as a representative of the Montana Wildlife Federation, spoke against the bill. He believes the wardens do a commendable job. A bill such as SB 51, however, he said, would not only affect fish and game wardens--there would be statewide ramifications involving professional people in all state agencies if the legislature set a prececent of negotiating with one group of employees over another.

Chairman Smith called on Senator Galt to give his closing remarks. A discussion period followed.

Senator Smith said that he serves on the subcommittee which is involved with the budget of the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks and they were considering funding a larger number of wardens in the field and also fully funding their proposed budget for gasoline expenses.

CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL 123, "An act to allow discharge of firearms at shooting ranges located in towns or cities or located in private dwellings under certain conditions; and to clarify that it is otherwise lawful to discharge a firearm in towns, cities, or private dwellings in certain instances; amending section 45-8-343, MCA; and providing for an immediate effective date."

Chairman Smith introduced Representative Verner L. Bertelsen, sponsor of HB 123, to explain the purpose of the bill. He said the bill came about as a result of citizens in Lincoln who tried to establish a shooting range within the city limits. As a result of objections in the neighborhood, the matter was taken to a county attorney who ruled that it was illegal to shoot a firearm within a town or city. This bill would allow a shooting range or the firing of firearms within city limits or a dwelling if the shooting range or firing of firearms is approved by the local governing body.

PROPONENTS OF HB 123. Mr. James McConnell of Lincoln, representing Montana Rifle and Pistol Association, spoke in favor of the bill. He said his organization has liability insurance with the National Rifle Association. The NRA took the position that if firing firearms within the city limits is illegal, then their liability coverage would be voided. This bill would allow the local authorities to regulate the firing of firearms. Other laws on the bocks, he said, provide that a range could not be established urder the law if it presents a noise nuisance or a danger.

Mr. Wilbur Rehmann, speaking for the Montana Wildlife Federation, spoke in favor of the bill.

There were no opponents to House Bill 123.

Chairman Smith called on Representative Bertelsen to close the hearing on HB 123. There were no questions from the committee.

CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL 103, "An act to permit a special archery season in the Teton-Spring Creek Bird Preserve; amending Sections 87-5-401 and 87-5-405, MCA."

Chairman Smith called on Representative Rex Manuel to explain the purpose of HB 103. The people in the Choteau area want to hunt deer on a 6,000-acre preserve which has been set aside by legislation and, therefore, can only be opened up to hunting by legislation. It is estimated that there are about 300 deer in the area, 37 of which were killed last year by automobiles. He said a town meeting was held about 2 or 3 years ago and all landowners agreed that the preserve should be opened to deer hunting with bow and arrow only. He stated there should be no harm to the birds in the preserve.

PROPONENTS OF HOUSE BILL 103. Mr. F.W. Wright, Attorney for the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, spoke in favor of the bill and presented written testimony (Attachment #4).

Mr. Wilbur Rehmann, representing the Montana Wildlife Federation and rod and gun clubs across the state, spoke in favor of the bill.

There were no opponents to HB 103. There was no discussion.

CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL 18, "An act to provide for the regulation of private game animal shooting preserves."

Senator Smith said that the Governor's office is going to appoint a task force to study the issues involved in establishing regulations for private game animal shooting preserves. The task force will consist of representatives from the Department of Livestock, Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, game farm operators, a senator and a representative from the Montana Legislature.

It was agreed by committee members that they would meet at 12:30 p.m. for an executive session on Thursday, February 12, 1981.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

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Senator Ed B. Smith, Chairman

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# FISH AND GAME COMMITTEE

47th LEGISLATIVE SESSION - - 1981

Date <u>2/10/8</u>/

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Each day attach to minutes.

### FACT SHEET

GAME WARDEN'S PREMIUM PAY BILL

Calculations and Costs License fees and permits for license year 1979 totaled 8.6 million. Current pay matrix for ten year warden service - grade 13 step 7. \$17,949. Comp. time held by regional average for 1979 per man. R-1 318.4 hrs. R-5 480.8 hrs. R-2 365.6 Hrs. R-6 306.2 hrs. R-3 198.3 hrs. R-7 233.8 hrs. 266.6 hrs. R-4 average per warden 310 hrs. Cost of premium pay at rate of 15%; per warden per year \$2692 per pay period \$103 total cost \$164,212.00 Warden Performance and Duties Number of wardens - 61 Warden district size - from 620 sq. miles to 7200 sq. miles; ave. 2466 sq. miles. On call to the demands of the public 24 hrs. per day by law. Annual accumplishment recap: 1977 1978 1979 vacation days taken /1 11.5 12 11.2 days off /2 87 89 92.4 nights away 18 21.8 20 /1 vacation varies with length of service; up to 10 yrs. 15 days/ yr. 10 to 15 yrs. 18 days/ yr. 15 to 20 yrs. 21 days/ yr. over 20 yrs. 24 days/ yr. /2 days off allowed - 104 plus 10 legal holidays 120 hrs. of comp. time to be given up annually - 120 X \$8.50 = \$1020.00 value/ man. 10 holidays at time an one-half comp. time - 10 X & X \$8.50 X 1½ = \$1020.00 value/man. Rebuttal of ex-officio effectivness Performance of ex-officios for calander year 1979

147 ex-officios

26 NTA's

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Mary Jani Birino, Choteau Mt.

DIntroduction: Mary Jean Bivins-wife of game Warden, Tom Bivins. I'm here to testify on behalf of the Premium Pay Plan.

(R) Phenomenal change has taken place in a warden's job since my husband began working as a warden in 1967. In here to tell you how the demand for his Time has changed.

A the job has become increasingly more demanding of his time because of increased recreational emphasis " witte : - SNOWMOBILING - BACK PACKING - BOHYING - RESORT DEV. - LANDOWNER REL. - GAME DAMAGE PROBLEMS - AND ADDITIONAL DUTIES Quated by - grizzlies, mtn. lions, sneep trophying & pelt=tagging; A additionally my husband has been called upon to teach at ex-officio warden training schools - one school lastmap

of weeks.

#2a & In NECENT YEARS THERE YAS BEEN AN INCREASED Emphasis on Wardens patrolling state recreational areas Such as historic sites, game ranges, state monuments, fishing the acces sites, 9 small game management areas- $(\mathcal{A})$ all these additional duties have been accomplished with a reduction in field wardens and a reduced milleage & perdiem expenditure. Den our home I thandle half of the probable to 7-900 phone calls the perger due to my trusband being in the field. These callers aren't always A Wardens are required to work noudays & wilkinds -Memorial May hundrand Labor Day Those worked Ha of July Ahese houdage Mile 1967.

Becauce of my huchand's conscientious work efforts demanded by the sportsmen, he accrues a substantial amit of comp time ANNUALLY-much of what a person cast use up \_\_\_\_\_ this, time is accumulated because wordens can't get their days off because of calls relating to the following D' Game damage D'andourner Tresspass late season hunts A drownings, lost hunters, la When the state classification of pay plan went into effect in 1973, the warder really didn't processo a favorable classification in light of their duties they were encouraged by certain stoff dept. people to Enter a Con ective bargaining unit Enter a Colllien compared to H.P. - interesting because H.P. get overtime pay over \$40 hrs.

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MORE PRESSURE, I'L ENCAURAP my husband to sell part time employment & caly work 40 hrs. per/wk., Mat way, our lignely can take weekends 4 cholidais of like other families IF Lamilie -Mix Promium Pay Man is a bargain - compared to what time & a half wiuld be.

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PRESENTED BY: James W. Flynn, Director Dept. Fish, Wildlife & Parks

February 10, 1981

### SB 51

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Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, my name is Jim Flynn. I am here on behalf of the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, and I speak in opposition to SB 51.

The department has bargained with and entered into agreements with the Fish and Game Wardens on a biennial basis since 1975. During the 1979 negotiations, the department advised the wardens that premium pay would be considered in the 1981 negotiations if the wardens brought it to the table.

During the summer of 1980, it came to the attention of the department that the wardens were contemplating seeking legislation to address the issue of premium pay. In December, 1980, an informal meeting was held in Helena with representatives of the department, the wardens, the MPEA, and the Labor Relations Bureau in attendance. The purpose of the meeting was to ascertain the position of the wardens on premium pay for negotiating purposes and to state the department's position on the same.

The department stated it was willing to discuss premium pay during the 1981 bargaining session, however, if the wardens took the matter to the legislature, legislative action (affirmative or negative) would be the guidepost for future department actions on the subject. The wardens' representative acknowledged that position and indicated they would report to their membership and arrive at a decision. SB 51 is the result of that decision.

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The department is well aware of the philosophy behind this bill and does not disagree with that philosophy as evidenced by our willingness to discuss it at the bargaining table. However, philosophy aside we do oppose SB 51.

The financial situation of the department is well known. In general, we will not be able to continue at current level of operations even with a license fee increase. If the requested premium pay is adopted, the approximately 70 wardens (including present vacancies) will require approximately an additional \$447,000 during the 1982-83 fiscal year.

There are not sufficient revenues in our projected budget to cover this added expense. One of two options need to be considered by this committee in arriving at your decision. The first option is to fund the added expense from the General Fund or as a second option the department, in order to provide the revenues necessary, could look to compensating by reducing its work force by approximately 10 FTE's. This reduction would directly impact the Enforcement Division.

The bill does not address qualifying conditions for premium pay in relation to the hours a warden works a week. As the bill reads a warden working 60 hours in a week would be compensated the same as a warden who worked 50 hours in a week.

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In addition, the issue of compensatory time is not addressed adequately. Should SB 51 pass, it is not clear whether or not the department would still be obligated to recognize compensatory time for the wardens.

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It should also be brought to the committee's attention wardens are only one of several groups of department professionals - many others in the agency work more than 40 hours a week.

As director of the department, I am less than excited with the prospect that some professional members of the agency would be compensated for working over and above 40 hours per week in performing their normal duties, while others would not. That process would certainly contribute to a new set of personnel problems which are unneeded.

For the foregoing reasons, I recommend a do not pass on SB 51. I would point out that there is a typographical error on the fiscal note as it came from the Budget Office. Under the assumptions, number 4, the figure "\$2,093" should be "20,093." PRESENTED BY: James W. Flynn, Director Dept. Fish, Wildlife, & Parks February 10, 1981

### HB 103

Mr. Chairman, members of the Senate Fish & Game Committee, my name is Jim Flynn. I appear on behalf of the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, & Parks, and I speak in favor of HB 103.

Supporters of this bill ask that the department present to you the outcome of the hearing held in October, 1979, on the proposed abandonment of the Teton-Spring Creek Bird Preserve. As part of my statement today, I am including a report made to the Fish & Game Commission after that hearing.

In the summer of 1979, concerned sportsmen in and around Choteau, Montana asked the Commission to provide bow and arrow hunting in the Teton-Spring Creek Bird Preserve. The only method that could be used under current state law was to abandon the bird preserve and then re-establish a closed area except for bow and arrow hunting. A petition to the department by sportsmen was presented and the hearing set up pursuant to state law to receive input on that abandonment. At the hearing, it was apparent that sportsmen and landowners did not want the area in the bird preserve abandoned where there was a possibility that its original purpose could be lost. Legislation is the only alternative that provides for continuing the preserve and authorizing limited hunting within it. That authorization is provided in HB 103. The department sees the need for some limited hunting within the bird preserve because of increased deer populations. Not only do the deer live inside the preserve, but they forage outside the preserve on private grounds.

Authorizing bow hunting in this preserve would also increase sportsmen hunting opportunity close to Choteau and provide the department another method of responding to landowner damage complaints within the preserve. Upon receiving the report and considering the comments from the hearing, the matter was tabled as the commission could not authorize hunting in the preserve under current state law.

I urge a do pa**ss on HB 103.** 

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## BEFORE THE FISH AND GAME COMMISSION STATE OF MONTANA

Teton-Spring Creek Bird ) REPORT ON HEARING Preserve Abandonment )

On 10 October 1979, at 7:40 p.m. in the Choteau Public Library, Choteau, Montana, a public hearing was held on the subject of the abandonment of the Teton-Spring Creek Bird Preserve. The presiding officer was F. Woodside Wright; There were in attendance some 31 persons. The presiding officer read the notice as it had appeared in the local paper and gave the general procedure for the conduct of the hearing. Before any testimony or presentation was made, opportunity for questions was given.

At that time Mr. Pete Howard came forward and submitted a letter dated October 5, 1979, to the Teton-Spring Creek Bird Preserve landowners, signed by himself and Don Murray. Copy of this letter is enclosed in the minutes of the hearing. The subject is a discussion of the purpose of seeking modification of the preserve; the rationale for bow hunting on the preserve area; the method of use of the area, particularly contact with the landowners and by landowner permission only; the deer population difficulties; limitation of hunting with firearms; the desire for alteration of preserve status to allow bow hunting only, not complete abandonment; and asking for attendance of landowners at the hearing. Copy of this letter is attached to this report for reference.

There were several other questions regarding the reason and purpose for the hearing --the possibility of just shutting the hearing down immediately as most people were opposed to the concept; and other questions relating to general information regarding this proposed abandonment.

The presiding officer then opened the hearing to the proponents for their comments, statements, evidence, or other information they wished to present. There being none, the presiding officer then asked for comments, statements, or evidence from those in opposition to the proposed abandonment.

Mr. Harold Bouma commented as follows: there have been no problems with deer in the area from 1957 on; that he is adamant against abandonment; that there is no good purpose for the abandonment; that he does not desire it; and that he is against any alteration of the present status of the bird preserve for this piece of land.

Mr. Walt Arensmeyer spoke in opposition for the following reasons: that he is opposed to any change of status of the area; and that there is no opposition to bow hunting on the preserve but opposition to gun hunting and to any arrangement that would permit the Fish and Game Commission to set up gun hunting on the preserve. Mr. Les Arensmeyer, who owns land but does not live in the area, commented that there was some deer damage last year; that he did not desire to make it difficult for the bow hunters but that he did speak in opposition to the abandonment.

Mr. Pat Saylor leases ground on the preserve; is against the abandonment; speaks in favor of the opportunity for bow hunters to hunt on the preserve; and that there is some damage by deer but not enough to require abandonment as an alternative. He further commented that he felt if the area were abandoned, "no trespassing" signs would go up and that all hunting activity in the area would cease.

Mr. Pete Howard spoke, requesting that the initial petition be returned to the persons who submitted it and that it be withdrawn and the proposal for abandonment not continue any further.

Mr3. Bernice Van Setten spoke, suggesting that the matter go through a legislative process to permit bow hunting on the preserve.

Mr. Nels Thoreson spoke in general comment as being supportive of the bow hunters' request to hunt in the area and also presented the landowners' complaints and the difficulties of removing deer that are causing damage to crops while the current status is retained. He noted that the current statute does not provide for hunting of any type on the preserve, whether it be to mitigate landowner damage by wildlife or not.

The presiding officer than called for a show of hands regarding those who were in support of pursuit of the legislative action alternative, focusing on allowance of bow hunting only on the bird preserve and at this time no change in the designation of the Teton-Spring Creek Bird Preserve. The show of hands gave 16 who supported this action. The presiding officer noted that 15 of the 16 who showed hands as being landowners in or adjacent to the preserve.

Mr. Harold Bouma then submitted petitions in regard to this abandonment. The petitions stated as follows:

To: The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks: We the undersigned residents of Teton County do hereby respectfully petition the department to continue and not terminate the Teton-Spring Creek Bird Preserve. The undersigned who live in the vicinity of the area protest the termination because of probable problems with hunters in the area.

There are six petitions of this type with approximately 121 signatures thereon, all addressed from Choteau, Montana. The petitions were admitted as part of the record of the hearing. Copies are attached hereto.

After receipt of the petition, Mrs. Bernice Van Setten asked how many landowners had called in with damage complaints. Warden Sergeant Jack LaValley of the department stated that four had at this time.

Prior to conclusion, Mr. Pete Howard requested that the presiding officer write to him or someone in the community with publication in the local paper and report on the outcome of the commission action on this hearing. The presiding officer indicated he would do so.

There being no further comments, statements, or submission of evidence by anyone present at the hearing, the hearing was closed.

This report respectfully submitted this 8th day of November, 1979.

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F. Woodside Wright Presiding Officer

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## STATE OF MONTANA

FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST NO.

Form BD-15

In compliance with a written request received <u>January 6</u>, 19 <u>81</u>, there is hereby submitted a Fiscal Note for <u>Senate Bill 51</u> pursuant to Title 5, Chapter 4, Part 2 of the Montana Code Annotated (MCA)

Background information used in developing this Fiscal Note is available from the Office of Budget and Program Planning, to members of the Legislature upon request.

Description of Proposed Legislation:

An act to provide compensation for qualifying fish and game wardens for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week by paying a premium in 26 equal parts annually over and above the warden's normal salary.

Assumptions:

- 1. Approximately 70 wardens will be eligible to draw compensation under the proposed legislation.
- 2. It is assumed all eligible wardens will work in excess of 40 hours per week.
- 3. State employees will receive approximately a 12% pay increase during each of the fiscal years.
- A permanent state fish and game warden with 10 years service will be paid \$20,093 during FY82 and \$22,504 during FY83. Fifteen percent permium pay per man FY82 - \$3,013; FY83 - \$3,375.

Fiscal Impact:

	FY 82	FY 83
Expenditures under proposed law Personal Services	\$1,617,420	\$1,811,530
Less expendutires under current law Personal Services	\$1,406,510	\$1,575,280
Increased expenditures under proposed law Personal Services	\$ 210,910	\$ 236,250
FWP nonresident license fees ERA	\$ 210,910	\$ 236,250

Comments:

Enactment of SB51 will increase the enforcement division's budget by \$210,910 in FY 82 and \$236,250 in FY 83. The bill provides funding from the sale of nonresident hunting & fishing licenses, but does not indicate a budget increase or earmarking of nonresident fees to meet that budget increase. The present proposed budget could not absorb the increases without a reduction in manpower.

The bill does not give any qualifying con	ditions for the premisudGET DIRECTOR	
pay in relation to wardens working exactly		na
week or the number of hours in excess of a		
SB51 does not indicate that compensatory	time will be	
deleted.		

## SENATE FISH AND GAME COMMITTEE February 10, 1981

Information Sheet

## Senate Bill 51--Galt

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This bill offers financial compensation to fish and game wardens for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week. The compensation is termed "premium pay" and is equivalent to 15% of the annual gross salary of a warden with 10 years' service. This "premium pay" is disbursed in 26 equal payments annually to every permanent fish and game warden below the rank of sergeant. The premium pay will be paid out of the proceeds from the sale of nonresident hunting and fishing licenses.

### SENATE FISH AND GAME COMMITTEE

### February 10, 1981

## INFORMATION SHEET--

### HOUSE BILL 103 (Manuel)

This bill would allow a special archery season in the Teton-Spring Greek bird preserve in accordance with:

- 87-1-304--The commission may fix seasons, bag limits and possession limits for bow and arrow hunters; and
- (2) 87-2-708--Class A-2 special bow and arrow license is an additional \$6.00 on valid hunting license.

### HOUSE BILL 123 (Bertelsen)

This bill amends the section of law that prohibits firing of firearms within a dwelling or the city limits; the amendment would allow a shooting range within city limits or a dwelling if the shooting range is approved by the local governing body.

The provisions of HB 123 do not affect the sections of law (Title 45, Chapter 3, Part 1) pertaining to the justifiable use of force in defense of person or property.

COMMITTEE ON Senate Fish and Game BILL NO.\_\_\_\_

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(Please leave prepared statement with Secretary)