

MHGDC Special Board Meeting Minutes

1/27/10

The special meeting of the MHGDC Board of Directors was called to order at 6:20 PM.

Board Members Present: Randy Setzer, Jeff Squire, Julie Kirkland, Scott Benowitz; Al Gadoury, Peter Bakun, Greg Johnson, Dale Spartus

Guests present: Tracey Setzer

This meeting was called to discuss the proposed special conditions of the 2010 FWP Special Use Permit for the Training Grounds and Blackbird. This year's permit includes the following Special Conditions:

1. This permit does not imply exclusivity to the club for the use of the Horse Pasture. The club or its members may not exclude the general public from entry or use of the Horse Pasture. Exception: Restricted public use may be imposed within the defined field trial area, during one of the four field trial events.
2. The Gun Dog Club may ONLY utilize that portion of Missouri Headwaters State Park known, as the Horse Pasture, and in combination with Blackbird FAS for the purpose of conducting organized Field Trials and will not exceed (4) four two-day Sanctioned Field Trial events and (2) "Training Evaluation" days per month April through August, (Club Members Only) during any one calendar year. An event is defined as a licensed field or hunting trial.
3. For the purpose of training dogs or allowing dogs off leash from January through December, Individual Club members and the general public may use Black Bird FAS and must utilize ONLY the Horse Pasture while at Missouri Headwaters State Park.
4. Live ammunition is also allowed for this same period of January through December within the Horse Pasture and Black Bird FAS.
5. No live ammunition may be discharged in areas of Missouri Headwaters State Park other than the Horse Pasture April 1 to August 31st. The use of poppers will be limited to the horse pasture and the gravel pit. The use of poppers in gravel pit area may only be used during the period of the first of April to the end of May.
6. General Individual Dog Training: Each Individual dog handlers / trainers must obtain from the Region Three Headquarters of Fish, Wildlife & Parks a Permit to Use Captive-Reared Upland Game Birds for Dog Training. Note: This is a change from previous permit requirements.
7. Club Sanctioned Field Trials: The Gun Dog Club will provide by February 28th each year a calendar of Field Trial events, secure and submit for authorization through the regional enforcement division of FWP all necessary permits.
 - a. A representative of the "Club" must submit an Application for Permit to Conduct Field Trial." for each of the four (4) organized field trial events to FWP's designated liaison, under this permit. Required information to be included is the name of the field trail event, names of event organizer(s), and contact phone numbers.
8. Release of Live Birds The release of live birds is restricted to the Horse Pasture and Blackbird FAS. The release of birds outside the above describes areas under this permit is prohibited.
9. Public Vehicle travel will be limited to the southeast ingress and egress gate location in the horse pasture. Indiscriminate motor vehicle travel is prohibited in the horse pasture and pit area will be closed to all motor vehicle travel to prevent the spread of noxious weeds. All other gates located on the perimeter of the horse pasture at the southwest and northwest corners of the horse pasture will remain locked during training and field events. The Gun Dog Club is prohibited in the use of Off-highway vehicles as defined under Montana Statute, Title 23-2-811, beyond designated road and parking areas within that area known as the horse pasture. Exceptions to this provision will not be granted.
10. Camping is prohibited within the horse pasture, which is designated a Day Use only area. Exception: The Gun Dog Club may have no more than two camper units located at the southeast ingress area for the purpose of securing equipment used at the time of approved Field Trials. Individuals or groups not affiliated with Missouri Headwaters Gun Dog Club may NOT use the pasture area for camping during a Field Trail. Furthermore, the Gun Dog Club may NOT authorize groups not affiliated with the Missouri Headwaters Gun Dog Club to camp in the Horse pasture area.
11. AREA RESTRICTION: Field trials and training activities are restricted to the south two thirds of the horse pasture. The northern portion of the pasture as posted is restricted to no hunting or dog training year-round, for the use and security of FWP livestock (Horses).

12. The permit may be canceled at any time upon thirty days written notice should such cancellation be deemed in the best interest of the Missouri Headwaters State Park and/or Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks.

The Board was generally in agreement with all special conditions except Item #11. The Board discussed the suitability and practicality of having the Area Restriction include "dog training". (Note: MCA 12.6.206 DEFINITIONS includes: (3) "Dog training" means the handling, exercising, teaching, instructing, and disciplining of dogs in the skills and techniques of hunting and retrieving game birds characterized by absence of judging, awards, or any fees related to the shooting of captive-reared birds.)

The reasons for the discussion were generally due to (a) previous discussions with FWP about the area restriction pertained to a proposed no-shooting zone in the northern portion of the Horse Pasture in order to avoid shooting conflicts with FWP horses. The no dog training provision in the draft permit is the first time the Board was aware that FWP was proposing the area restriction include the no dog training provision.

The Board's second concern was that club members would no longer be able to exercise their dogs within the restricted area. This is especially problematic for larger running dogs. A third concern was that FWP may see non-club members exercising their dogs in the restricted area and FWP would assume these individuals were Club members. This would result in the Club bearing the burden of the general public trespassing in the area restriction. Another issue with Item #11 is the wording "...northern portion...", as that is somewhat generic and could be interpreted differently by different FWP officials.

The Board approved a motion that Scott and Greg meet with FWP to discuss Item #11, with the goal of modifying the area restriction language to a no-shooting zone as posted behind signs.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM