

**MINUTES**  
**MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**68th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION**  
**COMMITTEE ON (H) FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS**

**Call to Order:** Chair Ross Fitzgerald-R, on January 03, 2023 at 3:02 PM, in 172

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:** Rep. Ross Fitzgerald, Chair (R)  
Rep. Tom France, Vice Chair (D)  
Rep. Jedediah Hinkle, Vice Chair (R)  
Rep. Denise Baum (D)  
Rep. Lee Deming (R)  
Rep. Neil Duram (R)  
Rep. Paul Fielder (R)  
Rep. Jonathan Karlen (D)  
Rep. Brandon Ler (R)  
Rep. Denley Loge (R)  
Rep. Marilyn Marler (D)  
Rep. Eric Matthews (D)  
Rep. Russel Miner (R)  
Rep. Gary Parry (R)  
Rep. Bob Phalen (R)  
Rep. Tyson Running Wolf (D)  
Rep. Tanner Smith (R)  
Rep. Mallerie Stromswold (R)  
Rep. Sue Vinton (R)

**Staff Present:** Toni Henneman, Research Analyst  
LJ Jennings, Secretary  
Rolf Johnson, Remote Meeting Coordinator

**Audio Committees:** These minutes are in outline form only. They provide a list of participants and a record of official action taken by the committee. The link to the audio recording of the meeting is available on the Legislative Branch website.

**Committee Business Summary:**

Hearing & Date Posted:

HB 73 12/28/2022  
HB 86 12/28/2022  
HB 162 12/28/2022

Executive Action:

HB 73 DO PASS

HB 86 DO PASS

15:05:40            **Committee Discussion:** Introductions and Organizational rules

15:02:43            Chair Ross Fitzgerald

15:05:42            LJ Jennings

15:07:12            Rep. Lee Deming

15:07:22            LJ Jennings

15:07:30            Chair Ross Fitzgerald

15:07:41            Vice Chair Jedediah Hinkle

15:08:38            Chair Ross Fitzgerald

15:09:06            Vice Chair Tom France

15:09:44            Rep. Denise Baum

15:10:13            Chair Ross Fitzgerald

15:10:17            Rep. Tanner Smith

15:10:37            Rep. Eric Matthews

15:10:51            Rep. Russel Miner

15:10:57            Rep. Gary Parry

15:11:16            Rep. Sue Vinton

15:11:38            Chair Ross Fitzgerald

15:11:41            Rep. Marilyn Marler

15:12:12            Rep. Bob Phalen

15:12:39            Chair Ross Fitzgerald

15:12:42            Rep. Paul Fielder

15:13:13            Rep. Tyson Running Wolf

15:13:48 Rep. Denley Loge  
15:14:29 Rep. Lee Deming  
15:14:53 Rep. Jonathan Karlen  
15:15:13 Rep. Neil Duram  
15:15:31 Rep. Brandon Ler  
15:15:44 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
15:15:56 Toni Henneman  
15:17:36 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
15:17:39 LJ Jennings  
15:17:59 Katelyn Amick, RMC  
15:18:17 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
15:19:28 Rep. Bob Phalen  
15:19:31 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
15:29:57 Toni Henneman  
15:30:12 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
15:30:19 Rep. Sue Vinton  
15:30:32 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
15:37:27 Rep. Brandon Ler left the meeting.  
15:37:58 Vice Chair Jedediah Hinkle  
15:39:09 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
15:40:27 Vice Chair Jedediah Hinkle  
15:41:14 Toni Henneman  
15:41:37 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
15:43:04 Vice Chair Jedediah Hinkle

15:43:08 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
15:43:45 Vice Chair Jedediah Hinkle  
15:43:55 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
15:13:48 Rep. Mallerie Stromswold  
15:43:45 Vice Chair J. Hinkle moved for committee rules be adopted.  
15:43:06 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.  
15:44:16 **Committee Discussion:** Reminders  
15:44:16 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
15:44:29 Toni Henneman  
15:44:31 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
15:45:20 Toni Henneman  
15:45:43 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
15:46:21 **Recessed**  
16:03:37 **Reconvened**

**HEARING ON HB 73 - Repeal surety bond requirements for FWP license agents**

**Opening Statement:**

16:07:29 Rep. Denley Loge (R), HD 14, opened the hearing on HB 73, Repeal surety bond requirements for FWP license agents.

**Discussion:**

16:07:29 Rep. Denley Loge-R  
16:07:59 Chair Ross Fitzgerald

**Proponent Testimony:**

16:08:10 Emily Cooper, Licensing Bureau Chief, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP)

**Opponent Testimony:**

None

**Informational Witness Testimony:**

None

**Questions from Committee:**

16:09:10 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
16:09:17 Rep. Neil Duram  
16:09:19 Emily Cooper, FWP  
16:09:48 Rep. Neil Duram  
16:09:49 Chair Ross Fitzgerald

**Closing Statement:**

16:10:00 Rep. Denley Loge (R), HD 14, closed the hearing on HB 73.

**Discussion:**

16:10:04 Rep. Denley Loge  
16:10:09 Hearing adjustments  
16:10:12 Chair Ross Fitzgerald

**HEARING ON HB 162 - Revise electronic tag law**

**Opening Statement:**

16:12:22 Rep. Braxton Mitchell (R), HD 3, opened the hearing on HB 162, Revise electronic tag law.

**Discussion:**

16:12:22 Rep. Braxton Mitchell-R

**Proponent Testimony:**

16:13:05 Emily Cooper, Licensing Bureau Chief, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP)  
16:14:03 Marcus Strange, Montana Wildlife Federation  
16:14:31 Matt Leow, Montana Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers

**Opponent Testimony:**

09:16:42 Marc Cooke, Wolves of the Rockies

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**Informational Witness Testimony:**

None

**Questions from Committee:**

16:17:35 Rep. Bob Phalen  
16:17:53 Rep. Braxton Mitchell-R  
16:18:03 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
16:18:44 Rep. Denise Baum  
16:18:46 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
16:18:49 Rep. Bob Phalen  
16:19:04 Emily Cooper, FWP  
16:19:07 Rep. Bob Phalen  
16:19:09 Emily Cooper, FWP  
16:19:15 Rep. Bob Phalen  
16:19:23 Emily Cooper, FWP  
16:19:48 Rep. Bob Phalen  
16:19:51 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
16:19:59 Rep. Gary Parry  
16:20:02 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
16:20:05 Emily Cooper, FWP  
16:20:07 Rep. Gary Parry  
16:20:19 Emily Cooper, FWP  
16:20:36 Rep. Gary Parry

16:20:38	Chair Ross Fitzgerald
16:20:41	Rep. Neil Duram
16:20:44	Chair Ross Fitzgerald
16:20:45	Emily Cooper, FWP
16:20:47	Rep. Neil Duram
16:21:01	Emily Cooper, FWP
16:21:06	Rep. Neil Duram
16:21:07	Chair Ross Fitzgerald
16:21:08	Rep. Neil Duram
16:21:15	Emily Cooper, FWP
16:21:18	Chair Ross Fitzgerald
16:21:19	Emily Cooper, FWP
16:21:31	Chair Ross Fitzgerald
16:21:34	Rep. Neil Duram
16:21:39	Chair Ross Fitzgerald
16:21:41	Emily Cooper, FWP
16:21:43	Chair Ross Fitzgerald
16:21:45	Rep. Paul Fielder
16:21:47	Chair Ross Fitzgerald
16:21:50	Emily Cooper, FWP
16:21:53	Rep. Paul Fielder
16:22:19	Emily Cooper, FWP
16:22:25	Chair Ross Fitzgerald
16:22:40	Vice Chair Jedediah Hinkle

16:22:43 Emily Cooper, FWP  
16:22:45 Vice Chair Jedediah Hinkle  
16:23:14 Emily Cooper, FWP  
16:23:40 Vice Chair Jedediah Hinkle  
16:23:41 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
16:23:56 Rep. Braxton Mitchell-R  
16:24:24 Chair Ross Fitzgerald

**Closing Statement:**

16:23:56 Rep. Braxton Mitchell (R), HD 3, closed the hearing on HB 162.

**Discussion:**

16:23:56 Rep. Braxton Mitchell-R

**HEARING ON HB 86 - Remove sunset for the Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program**

**Opening Statement:**

16:25:12 Rep. Kenneth Walsh (R), HD 71, opened the hearing on HB 86, Remove sunset for the Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program.

**Proponent Testimony:**

16:28:31 Ken McDonald, Administration Division, Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks  
16:33:11 Julia Altemus, Montana Wood Products Association  
16:33:48 Marcus Strange, Montana Wildlife Federation  
16:34:16 Colin Cooney, Trout Unlimited  
16:34:35 Ian Foley, Department of Agriculture  
16:35:05 Matt Leow, Montana Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers

**Opponent Testimony:**

None

**Informational Witness Testimony:**

None

**Questions from Committee:**

None

**Closing Statement:**

16:36:10 Rep. Kenneth Walsh (R), HD 71, closed the hearing on HB 86.

**Discussion:**

16:36:10 Rep. Kenneth Walsh-R

16:36:39 **Committee Discussion:** Deciding to do executive action or not

16:36:39 Chair Ross Fitzgerald

16:37:26 Vice Chair Tom France

16:38:07 Chair Ross Fitzgerald

16:38:22 Vice Chair Jedediah Hinkle

16:39:40 Rep. Gary Parry left the meeting.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 73 - Repeal surety bond requirements for FWP license agents**

16:40:09 **Motion:** Vice Chair Jedediah Hinkle moved that **HB 73 DO PASS.**

16:40:53 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 86 - Remove sunset for the Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program**

16:41:05 **Motion:** Vice Chair Jedediah Hinkle moved that **HB 86 DO PASS.**

16:41:02 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

16:43:59 **Committee Discussion:** Last items on agenda

16:44:02 Vice Chair Jedediah Hinkle

16:44:07 Chair Ross Fitzgerald

16:46:11 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
16:46:12 Rep. Marilyn Marler  
16:46:46 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
16:46:47 Rep. Paul Fielder  
16:47:17 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
16:48:46 Rep. Denley Loge  
16:49:23 Chair Ross Fitzgerald  
16:49:38 Vice Chair Jedediah Hinkle  
16:49:49 Chair Ross Fitzgerald

**ADJOURNMENT**

Adjournment: 16:49:59

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LJ Jennings, Secretary

Additional Documents: [EXHIBIT\(230103FIHaad\)](#)