

6/14/21

The Wyoming Wildlife Taskforce

Hello Sublette County, this is Albert Sommers reporting to you from the interim of the Wyoming Legislature. On June 16 and 17, I am in Casper for meetings of the Wyoming Wildlife Taskforce. Two legislators from each chamber were chosen by the presiding officers of their respective chambers to participate in the taskforce. Speaker of the House Eric Barlow selected Representative Jamie Flitner and myself to represent the House. Rep Jamie Flitner is House Chairwoman of the Travel, Recreation and Wildlife Committee, and resides in the Big Horn Basin. I was selected to represent western Wyoming, which has great wildlife resources and a variety of challenges that revolve around wildlife. Senate President Dan Dockstader appointed Senator Ogden Driskill from northeast Wyoming and Senator Larry Hicks from south central Wyoming.

The Wyoming Wildlife Taskforce was convened by Gov. Mark Gordon, Wyoming legislative leadership and the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission. The taskforce will study top-priority wildlife policy issues facing the state related to the allocation of hunting opportunity, sportsperson access and other issues. At the June 16-17 meeting, topics will be identified by taskforce members for study over an 18-month period with the goal of presenting conclusions and recommendations to the Wyoming Legislature, Game and Fish Commission, and Governor.

The Task Force consists of the following members:

- Tony Lehner – Converse County Commissioner, landowner
- Duaine Hagen – Park County landowner
- Representative Jamie Flitner – Big Horn County
- Representative Albert Sommers – Sublette County
- Adam Teten – Johnson County sportsman
- Joe Schaffer – - Laramie County sportsman, President of Laramie County Community College

- Rusty Bell – Campbell County Commissioner, taxidermist, sportsman
- Sy Gilliland – President of Wyoming Outfitter and Guides Association
- Elissa Ruckle – Owner of Elevate Wyoming
- Senator Ogden Driskill – Crook County
- Senator Larry Hicks – Carbon County
- Liisa Anselmi-Dalton – Sweetwater County hotel owner
- Jen Scoggin – Director, Office of State Lands and Investments
- Lee Livingston – Park County Commissioner
- Josh Coursey – Muley Fanatics Foundation, Sweetwater County
- Pat Crank – Laramie County sportsman, outgoing Wyoming Game and Fish Commissioner
- Pete Dube – Johnson County, President of the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission
- Brian Nesvik – Director of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department

Over the next 18 months, the idea is to discuss and try to resolve the really tough issues surrounding wildlife, outfitting, hunting, and sportspersons' access issues. During this process, I will raise issues that include the increase in guided float fishing on Wyoming's rivers, youth hunter opportunity for bighorn sheep and moose, once-in-a-lifetime licenses for bighorn sheep and bull moose, increased elk populations in the Black Hills, and other topics that YOU, my constituents, might send me. I can be reached at albert@albertsommers.com with questions or comments.