

Idaho Fish and Game Commission
Quarterly Meeting
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Blaine County School Community Campus
Hailey, Idaho

November 18

MISCELLANEOUS

Regional Field Tour

Commissioners Mark Doerr, Will Naillon, Brad Corkill, Dan Blanco, Blake Fischer, Lane Clezie and Derick Attebury toured the Beaver Creek Fire location on Greenhorn Road, Silver Creek Preserve, Hayspur Hatchery and the Double R Ranch.

Public Hearing

Chairman Doerr called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Commissioners Brad Corkill, Dan Blanco, Blake Fischer, Lane Clezie, Derick Attebury and Will Naillon were present.

Director Moore introduced staff and stated that staff would be available after the hearing to answer questions.

Chairman Doerr introduced Senator Michelle Stennett. Senator Stennett thanked the Commission for holding a meeting in Hailey and taking the time to hear from constituents.

Chairman Doerr reviewed the rules of conduct for the hearing and the hearing was opened up for public comment.

The following individuals provided public comment:

Brian Bean, Cindy Hamlin Edgers, Sarah Michael, John DeLorenzo, Suzanne Stone, Avery Shawler, Josh Kuntz, Ralph Harris, Betsy Mizel, Denise Decoster, Wayne Butts, Jude Hawkes, Charlie Pomeroy, Josephine Lowe, Ford VanFossan, Danielle Flan, Bob Jonas, John Peavey, Donna Finegan, Travis Bruner, JD Ryan, Jane Tilotson, Laura Stackpole, Charlotte Cunningham, Jima Rice and Larry Schoen.

Written comments received from: Ed Lindahl, Butch Suor, Fred Trevey, Jeff Wimer, Lynda, Mitch Sanchotena, Tim Thomas, Sun Valley Trekking, Idaho Conservation League and Jayne Pinsky (Appendix 48, Exhibit 54).

November 19

MISCELLANEOUS

Opening Comments

Chairman Doerr called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. with Commissioners Brad Corkill, Dan Blanco, Blake Fischer, Lane Clezie, Derick Attebury and Will Naillon present.

Review of Public Comment

Chairman Doerr stated the he noted 18 comments regarding non lethal methods for wolf depredation control. Director Moore stated that most of the comments heard in the meeting were on wolf management and the hunting activities and safety concern in the residential Hulen Meadows. The Commission discussed and reviewed the public comments.

Topics included:

- Wolf Depredation Control Board.
 - Staff discussed with constituents after the meeting to clarify.
- Units 48 & 49 no trapping allowed safety issues similar to Region 1.
 - Mandatory hunter education may alleviate this problem.
- Hulen Meadows Hunting activity in a residential area.
 - Action: Regional Staff will meet with homeowners to discuss options for distance from homes.
- Poaching allegations.
- Use of Poison control for Ravens.
 - Report on the agenda to address this.
- Comments from Wayne Butts, Director Moore will follow up on his comments.
- Mark Koontz comments regarding a Native nonresident license possible for Idaho currently in Montana as pilot program.
 - Chairman Doerr noted that this will be a future meeting discussion.
- Comments on judicial system and violations of code and information for judges.
 - Chief Wooten reports that judges are provided with this information.
 - Deputy Attorney Trever will work with regional magistrates.
- Fish and Game Set-aside Accounts.
 - This is an agenda item and a presentation will be given later in the meeting.
- Opposition to bonus points.

Consent Calendar

The Consent Calendar included the following items:

- Minutes, July 29-30, August 11 and October 1, 2015
- Financial Report

15-70 Commissioner Corkill moved and Commissioner Clezie seconded a motion to accept the minutes and financial report listed in the consent calendar. All Commissioners voted in favor.

Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) and Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board (IOGLB) Memorandum of Understanding

Brad Compton, Asst. Bureau Chief, IDFG and Jake Howard, Executive Director, IOGLB.

IOGLB Board members present: Chairman Wayne Hunsucker, Tom Long, Bob Barowsky, George Mcquiston and Louise Stark.

IOGLB and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) work cooperatively on various matters of mutual interest, such as determining the appropriate involvement of outfitters and guides in their use of Idaho's fish and wildlife; resolving or mitigating for conflict between outfitted and nonoutfitted hunters, anglers, and trappers; managing approximately 1,800 allocated elk zone tags and 250 allocated controlled hunt deer and elk tags; conducting covert and open investigations and prosecuting criminal and administrative related matters; and coordinating and mapping of outfitter licensed operating areas.

In January 2008, IOGLB and IDFG signed an MOU providing procedures and guidance for coordination and cooperation between the agencies on the appropriate management of Idaho's fish and wildlife resources related to the licensing and regulation of Idaho's outfitting industry. Passage of H.B. 597 in 2014 eliminated outfitter licensing requirements on private land; creating an inconsistency between State policy and the IOGLB/IDFG MOU. The change in State policy, combined with some outdated procedures in the current MOU, warrant a revision.

A small Department team consisting of representatives from the Director's Office, Legal, Enforcement Bureau, Wildlife Bureau, Clearwater Region, Salmon Region and Upper Snake Region worked with Jake Howard (Executive Director, IOGLB) and members of his staff to revise the MOU.

On August 26, 2015, the IOGLB provided conditional approval of a revised MOU (Appendix 48, Exhibit 55), pending Idaho Fish and Game Commission (Commission) approval.

15-71 Commissioner Naillon moved and Commissioner Clezie seconded a motion to adopt staff recommendations to approve the revised Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board Memorandum of Understanding. All Commissioners voted in favor.

A similar motion was made by the IOGLB to approve the MOU.

RULES

Pending Rules Ratification

Kathleen Trever, Deputy Attorney General presented nine rule dockets for Commission approval.

As part of the rulemaking process under the Idaho Administrative Procedure Act (IDAPA), the Commission needs to adopt as **Pending Rules** those Proposed Rules previously promulgated

during the last rulemaking year. We have referred to this process as ‘ratification’ because the Commission is formally approving rules which it has already promulgated. This approval is needed for the rules to be reviewed by the 2016 Legislature. If the Pending Rules are accepted by the Legislature, the rules will become Final Rules.

The IDAPA provision for adopting Pending Rules and the legislative review process is Idaho Code Section 67-5224. There are no policy issues. This is an annual step in the rulemaking process.

15-72 Commissioner Corkill moved and Commissioner Attebury seconded a motion that the Commission adopt as Pending Rules the Proposed Rules as presented. All Commissioners voted in favor.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

2015 Strategic Plan Approval

Mike Keckler, Chief, Communications (Appendix 48, Exhibit 56) presented the final draft for Commission approval.

At its November 2014 meeting, the Idaho Fish and Game Commission directed staff to conduct a review of the Fish and Game Strategic Plan titled “The Compass” and bring it up to date. In 2005, the Fish and Game Commission adopted The Compass with the intent it be reviewed every five years. A team consisting of Deputy Director Ed Schriever, Regional Supervisors Chip Corsi (Panhandle), Jerome Hansen (Clearwater), Steve Schmidt (Upper Snake) and Communications Chief Mike Keckler conducted the review and update.

The primary changes are as follows:

- The updated director’s messages focuses primarily on how the Fish and Game strategic plan fits with other strategic planning documents produced annually by the agency, some of which are required by statute.
- An agency overview was added along with an organizational chart demonstrating how Fish and Game is organized and overseen by the commission and the governor.
- The Vision Statement was revised placing more emphasis on hunting, fishing and trapping.
- “Desired Outcomes” were removed, replaced with a definition for “Objectives.”
- The goals and objectives from The Compass are basically the same in the new Strategic Plan but the number of strategies has cut by more than half from 104 in the original document to 43.

- The 2015 Strategic Plan includes new strategies intended to reflect new Commission emphasis and timely issues such as concern over state sovereignty over wildlife management and new communications technologies such as social media.

15-73 Commissioner Clezie moved and Commissioner Naillon seconded a motion to approve the revised Strategic Plan as submitted with Commissioner Naillon request to add a paragraph regarding Commission authority. All Commissioners voted in favor.

LANDS

Gregg Servheen, Wildlife Program Coordinator, presented the following land items to the Commission.

Cook Land Acquisition

This project will acquire in fee title of a 144.6-acre parcel in Nez Perce County, Idaho: Township 33 North, Range 5 West, Sections 13 and 14, located at the end of Redbird Road, in the Waha area, along the northern edge of the Craig Mountain Wildlife Management Area approximately 10 miles southeast of the Lewiston-Clarkston Valley area. The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation is contributing \$50,000 toward the acquisition of the property. The total cost of the acquisition is \$285,000.

This property is surrounded by Department lands on three sides and private land on the east side. Significant efforts by IDFG have been made to acquire properties and block-up ownership in this area since the early 1970s. This acquisition will increase lands in public ownership for recreation. The purchase will provide additional big game and upland bird hunting and substantially improve access to other Department and BLM lands.

This site provides excellent upland bird hunting opportunities and protects mule deer winter range, bighorn sheep transition range, and native grasslands in Lower Hells Canyon. The project protects winter range for elk and white-tailed deer. The property also supports good populations of chukar, gray partridge, and quail.

The Lands Committee recommends proceeding with the acquisition and is seeking Commission approval to proceed with the acquisition.

15-74 Commissioner Fischer moved and Commissioner Attebury seconded a motion to adopt staff recommendations to proceed with the Cook Land Acquisition. All Commissioners voted in favor.

West Land Acquisition

The 1.1-acre and 7.24-acre subject properties are located on the Payette River approximately 2 miles from the town of New Plymouth, ID. The sites will be used for public access and a future potential administrative site on the Birding Islands Segment of the Payette River WMA. These properties border the Bicandi property purchased in 2012 with BPA wildlife mitigation funds.

IDFG owns significant key parcels along the Payette River in this vicinity, both up-and-downstream, so further protection of wildlife corridors along the river would enhance the value of existing habitat.

These properties were previously presented to the Commission during Executive Session in July of 2014.

Acquisition costs are \$14,223 and \$92,775, respectively, and IDFG oil and gas lease funds will be used for the acquisitions.

The Lands Committee recommends proceeding with the acquisition and is seeking Commission approval to proceed with the acquisition.

15-75 Commissioner Fischer moved and Commissioner Attebury seconded a motion to adopt the staff recommendation to proceed with the West Acquisitions. All Commissioners voted in favor.

Palouse Prairie RLA

This proposal is for the permanent protection of up to 412 acres of high-priority private grassland on the Palouse Prairie of northern Idaho through the acquisition of fee-title lands and conservation easements. Funding for this effort is provided under the Endangered Species Act, Section 6 Recovery Lands Acquisition (RLA) grants program. Preserving, protecting, and perpetuating the federally threatened plant *Silene spaldingii* (Spalding's catchfly) is the basis for the RLA grant submission and award. This is the second of such awards.

The first, submitted in 2014 and approved by the Commission in May, 2015, was granted to IDFG and its partners, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Latah Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Palouse Land Trust. The award was for \$232,425, allowing the protection of 16 acres under a conservation easement and 62-acres in fee title.

This one, the second, was submitted to complete purchase of the remaining 333 acres of conservation easements on identified high-priority grasslands. This second RLA application requested \$454,475 and was awarded in full. A total of \$240,875 in value will be donated by the landowners as match for that RLA grant for a project total of \$695,350.

All fee-title lands and conservation easements acquired under the RLA grants will be held in perpetuity by the Palouse Land Trust with IDFG given third-party right-of-enforcement to ensure compliance with Federal Aid grant requirements.

This proposal was initially presented to the Commission during Executive Session on January 21, 2015.

Acquisition of property would support the Department mission to preserve, protect and perpetuate wildlife habitat. The Department has a role in plant management such that in 2003, House Bill 67 transferred authority for plants from Idaho Parks and Recreation to IDFG.

The Lands Committee recommends proceeding with the acquisition.

15-76 Commissioner Naillon moved and Commissioner Clezie seconded a motion to adopt staff recommendations to proceed with acquisition. All Commissioners voted in favor.

RULES

Resolution of Tag Refund/Raincheck Request for Bighorn Sheep

Mr. Jeffrey Keim was present at the meeting and requested for the Commission to consider his request for a raincheck for a bighorn sheep tag (Appendix 48, Exhibit 57).

Commission discussion and questions followed.

Chairman Doerr stated that in the absence of a motion the request for a raincheck is denied.

MISCELLANEOUS

Appointment Commission Representative to WAFWA

The Commissioners' Committee is an all state and all commissioner/board member forum. It is both an educational and informational session that occurs at the annual conference in July and the mid-winter meeting in January of each year. This allows members an opportunity to understand what is happening in other states from the perspective of someone with a similar charge. This session helps to identify the role and responsibilities of a commission/board member and provides a learning environment through sharing experiences and providing networking opportunities. It is an excellent venue in which to discuss tough issues that most states have in common.

Commissioner Will Naillon is currently serving on the committee and was appointed in November 2012.

Commission consensus is for Commissioner Will Naillon to continue to serve as the representative for WAFWA.

RULES

Season Setting: 2016-2018 Fishing Seasons and Rules

Jim Fredericks, Chief, Fisheries presented the fishing season and limit changes for 2016-2018 (Appendix 48, Exhibit 58).

By statute, fishing seasons and bag limits are set through IDFG Commission action. Seasons and rules were last set by the Commission in November 2012 and implemented in January 2013.

That marked the beginning of establishing fishing seasons and rules on a three-year cycle. The shift from a two-year cycle to a three-year cycle was in response to public support of simpler regulations and less frequent changes. The three-year cycle has been well-received by anglers. These proposed fishing seasons and limits for Idaho, including steelhead are for 2016-2018.

The public was invited to provide input through local scoping meetings, press releases sent to local and statewide print and video outlets, posting on social media outlets and public meetings/sporting group events. In addition, the Department collected feedback on potential rule changes through the Department website. A total of 6,629 individual question responses were received from the public through the website on 41 proposed regional and statewide changes.

15-77 Commissioner Naillon moved and Commissioner Fischer seconded a motion to adopt the 2016-2018 Fish Season Proclamation as presented with the following changes:

Panhandle Region

Eliminate the bait restriction for the Clark Fork River in the catch and release period
Eliminate the lower limit for Kokanee in the Clark Fork and apply the regional kokanee limit of 15

Southwest Region

For the Boise River, keep the current 2-fish, none under 14' restriction limit, and modify the boundary to apply between the East Park Center Bridge and the West Park Center Bridge.
All Commissioners voted in favor.

LEGISLATION

Legislative Update and 2016 Commission Legislative Process Guidance

Sharon Kiefer, Deputy Director, briefed the Commission about the approval status of department legislative proposals that were submitted in bill form to the Executive Agencies legislation System (EALS) for Governor Office approval.

To date, the following Department legislative proposal has been approved to be forwarded to the Legislature.

- Amend Idaho Code 36-1101 to clarify that aircraft restrictions related to hunting also apply to unmanned aircraft systems (drones).
- Amend Idaho Code 36-409(i) to raise the minimum age from age 17 to age 18 required to possess a Wildlife Management Area (WMA) Upland Game Bird Permit to hunt pheasants at certain WMAs.

The Department's legislative proposal for a fee increase including legislative intent providing certainty for Price Lock implementation by the Commission is still under consideration by the Governor's Office (Appendix 48, Exhibit 59).

Deputy Director Kiefer reviewed the previous Commission legislative process including weekly Commission conference calls and legislative analysis to gain Commission guidance for the upcoming 2016 session.

Commission consensus is to continue the same process similar to the 2015 legislative session. The conference calls will convene on January 21, 2016 continuing each Thursday at 8:00 a.m. MST until the end of the 2016 Legislative session.

FISCAL

FY17 Budget Update

Michael Pearson, Chief, Administration, reported that at the July Commission meeting, the preliminary figures were presented for the FY 17 budget request which was due to the Governor's office by September 1st. On August 11th the Commission voted to approve the FY17 budget request which had minimal changes from July.

Since approval by the Commission and submission to the Governor, the department has become aware of budget items that need to be added to this request (Appendix 48, Exhibit 60). Mr. Pearson updated the Commission on the specific items which were added to the FY17 revised budget request that was submitted to the Governor's Office by the November 2nd deadline.

Sales Trend Update for Discounted Items

Mr. Pearson, presented an update on the sales of discounted Fish and Game items, which includes:

- Second non-resident deer and elk tags
- Super Hunt applications
- Non-resident Mountain Lion tags
- Non-resident Black Bear tags
- Non –Resident Wolf tags

A sales summary of discounted items was included in the Commissioners agenda packet (Appendix 48, Exhibit 61).

In July 2015 the Commission voted to discount second nonresident deer tags to \$199 and \$350 for nonresident elk before the vendor issuance fee.

At the July meeting also the Commission voted to continue the practice of selling Super Hunt applications without a discount for "bulk purchase".

REPORT

Raincheck/Refund Policy Update

Michael Pearson reported that the Commission has provided the Director delegation of authority for rainchecks and refunds in the interest of efficiency and customer service due to the frequency and fact specific nature of these requests.

The delegation excludes rainchecks or refunds for antlered Moose, Bighorn Sheep, or Mountain Goat tags, including the affiliated license; any controlled hunt tags awarded via auction or lottery, including Superhunt; and any controlled hunt tags for big game hunts that have drawing odds less than 5% as calculated by the total number of tags divided by the total number of first choice applicants.

A copy of the statistics for those requests received that fall within the Commission's delegated authority to the Director was provided (Appendix 48, Exhibit 62).

Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Ann Dehner, Executive Director presented the report.

- In September, the Foundation awarded grants totaling \$25,000 through its 2015 competitive grants program. Grants to the Department included funding for a trapper education trailer in the southwest region; funds to develop the Redtop Pond Property in western Canyon County into community fishing access; and research support for evaluating trace minerals in Idaho moose to improve understanding of the decline in moose populations. Other grants included funding to Trout Unlimited for access improvements to the South Fork of the Salmon River; funding to the Ada County Soil and Water Conservation District for reintroduction of native plant species in Boise-area foothills; and to the Henry's Fork Foundation to support monitoring the water quality of the Henry's Fork in eastern Idaho over the long term.
- In addition to this annual grant program, the Foundation also holds various restricted endowments and non-endowed funds that are also available for Department projects throughout the year.
- The Foundation recently welcomed a new member to its Board of Directors. Jerry Gregson is a retired wildlife biologist from Salmon. He served on the Idaho Fish & Wildlife Foundation from 2005-2008 when his career took him out of state.
- The Foundation is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. We hope to increase public awareness and support of the Foundation's work through a greater emphasis on marketing to promote new avenues for philanthropic giving.
- The next meeting of the Foundation's Board of Directors will be held in Boise on December 5.

ACTION ITEM: At this time, the Foundation is seeking the appointment or reappointment of a member of the Commission to serve as liaison to the Foundation's Board of Directors in an ex

officio capacity for the IFWF fiscal year which begins January 2016. This action would provide a Commission liaison term consistent with the IFWF fiscal year.

15-78 Commissioner Corkill stated that he would be willing to serve as the liaison to the Foundation's Board of Directors. All Commissioners agreed.

Recreation and Exclusive Use on Endowment Lands

Sharon Kiefer, Deputy Director, reported that due to the winter weather conditions, Emily Callihan, Idaho Department of Lands was not able to make the meeting. Deputy Director Kiefer noted that the presentation would be given at the January 28, 2016 meeting.

FISCAL

Review of Salmon and Steelhead Set-aside Account Spending and Anadromous Program Costs

Jim Fredericks, Chief, Fisheries, provided an overview and history of the account and how the monies are spent (Appendix 48, Exhibit 63).

The steelhead and anadromous salmon permit set-aside account was established in 1990 to fund activities associated with sport fishing for salmon and steelhead. This set-aside account is funded with a portion (currently four dollars) of the sales of each salmon and steelhead permit. The account annually funds a portion of the tasks associated with conducting anadromous salmon and steelhead fisheries (e.g. toilet placement and maintenance, harvest surveys, access site maintenance, lease agreements for angler access, etc.). In years when the fund balance is adequately high other special projects may be supported by the account. These special projects include purchasing small river-side parcels specifically for salmon and steelhead fishing access, development of new access sites, replacement or installation of boat ramps. Costs of these special projects typically exceed \$100,000 and cannot be sustained on an annual basis.

Mr. Fredericks and regional staff will follow up with constituent Butch Suor on this item and report back to the Commission.

REPORT

Sage-grouse Process and Implementation Update and Raven Control

Jeff Gould, Chief, Wildlife, provided the update.

Recent Agency Actions: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published a "not-warranted" listing determination for greater sage-grouse, meaning the greater sage-grouse will not be listed under the Endangered Species Act (September 23, 2015). The US Fish and Wildlife Service will review the bird's status again in 2020.

Concurrent with that decision, following 4 years of planning, the BLM and the U.S. Forest Service published Records of Decisions (RODs) that incorporated greater sage-grouse conservation measures into federal land use plans across 173 million acres of sage grouse habitat.

On September 25, Governor Otter and the Idaho Legislature filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., that alleged the land management agencies violated the law by failing to complete the federal planning process in an open and transparent manner, or to complete a necessary analysis of the newly ordered land-use restrictions. The litigation focuses on the additional land-use restrictions addressing secondary threats that were added late in the planning process without proper vetting by the states or the public.

While the lawsuit is pending, the State will continue to work with federal agencies (BLM, USFS, and NRCS) to implement sage-grouse conservation measures such as fire prevention and suppression, habitat restoration, weed control, and juniper removal that are consistent with the Governor's Alternative. Secretary of Interior Sally Jewell recently adopted a national fire strategy that emphasizes the protection of sagebrush habitat. This will bring greater resources to bear and greater flexibility to prevent and suppress rangeland fires impacting sagebrush habitat. Furthermore, IDFG will continue to monitor sage grouse populations, provide financial and technical assistance to implement conservation measures such as rangeland improvements, and work with a committee involved in the development of a mitigation program for sagebrush habitat (pursuant to the Governor's Alternative).

Raven Control Update: In 2013, the Idaho Legislature directed the Department to spend up to \$100,000 on work to evaluate control of ravens as a tool to benefit sage grouse populations. The Department received a permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to control ravens in three areas of Idaho where recent sage grouse declines had been documented (Upper Snake, Curlew, West Central).

The Department intended for USDA APHIS-Wildlife Services (WS) to conduct the raven control work using DRC-1339, an avicide used for ravens. However, WS was unable to update their Environmental Assessment for predator control in Idaho in time to assist IDFG. Therefore in 2014, the Department used shooting and nest removal as the primary control methods. In 2015, the Department received permission to administer DRC-1339 through a Special Local Need Label from the Idaho State Department of Agriculture. IDFG staff focused work on state and private lands in the Greater Curlew Valley and West Central Idaho near Midvale during the sage grouse breeding and nesting period (March-May).

All lands near sage-grouse lek routes were surveyed for ravens and structures that may support ravens (roost and nest sites). The Department works with landowners and land management agencies to modify or remove structures (e.g. Russian Olives) that are supporting ravens. Raven information collected during sage grouse counts is also used to determine raven densities along sage grouse lek routes across southern Idaho.

In 2016, we will evaluate the potential benefits to sage grouse by comparing sage grouse lek trends in the treatment and non-treatment areas in the 2 study areas. Statewide raven surveys will be repeated to evaluate the potential change in raven densities across the state.

Wolf Plan Update and Timeline

Jeff Gould, Chief, Wildlife, briefed the Commission regarding the upcoming planning process for the development of the next wolf management plan to commence in January 2016. Mr. Gould reported that wolf management in Idaho is guided by the 2002 Idaho Wolf Conservation and Management Plan. During March 2008, the Commission approved a state management plan expanding upon the 2002 plan to “provide a framework for state management of the gray wolf...population for the 5-year period following de-listing.” When wolves were re-listed in 2010, this plan became moot, and the Commission rescinded the 2008 plan. The State continued to manage wolves under the direction of the 2002 plan (approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) following de-listing in 2011 to the present.

The Department will update the wolf plan with public input collected as follows:

Jan - April	Public opinion survey designed, conducted and analyzed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeat of some of the 2006 survey questions to see how Idaho residents, hunters, and ranchers opinions may have changed • Regionally based so that commissioners have region-specific information
May	Report survey results to the Commission
May - July	Prepare first draft of wolf plan
August	Present draft to Commission for direction/modifications before release for public review
September	Conduct 21-day public review
October	Revision and formatting
November	Final to Commission for approval

MANAGEMENT PLAN

State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) Update

Rita Dixon, State Wildlife Action Plan Coordinator presented a brief update on SWAP, the “Eight Required Elements”, and Proposed timeline for plan revision.

In 2001, Congress created the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program, which for the first time, provided funding to state fish and wildlife agencies for the management and conservation of the highest priority “at-risk” species. With an emphasis on nongame, game species are also eligible for funding if deemed to be in the “greatest need of conservation” (examples include Bighorn Sheep, Greater Sage-Grouse, and Burbot).

Funding was distributed to the States with the condition that each state develop a “State Wildlife Action Plan” (SWAP) to provide strategic guidance on implementing proactive, nonregulatory, incentive-based solutions to conserve fish and wildlife. To be eligible to receive funding, Congress also required that all States commit to reviewing and, if necessary, revising their

SWAPs within 10 years. As such, IDFG is currently undertaking a comprehensive review and revision of the Idaho SWAP, initially completed in 2005.

Department staff will provide draft materials to the Commission in late November and will seek Commission approval in early December to release draft materials for public review. In late January staff will seek Commission approval to submit a final draft of the Idaho SWAP to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

REPORTS

Sportsmen Survey Review

Jeff Gould, Chief, Wildlife, provided an overview of the sportsmen survey (Appendix 48, Exhibit 64).

In May 2015, the Commission directed the department to survey sportsmen and women to determine their opinions about (a) various methods to improve drawing odds for controlled hunts, and (b) the use of auction tags as a mechanism to generate revenue to support wildlife management and sportsmen access programs.

The Commission reviewed the draft survey in August and approved the strategy presented to collect public input. The strategy involves three separate survey methods to allow more hunters to participate which includes:

- Random sample of hunting license buyers surveyed by standard mail (stratified by region/state)
- Random sample of hunting license buyers surveyed by electronic mail (stratified by region/state)
- Nonrandom survey option for anyone on IDFG website <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov>.

These three methods - mail, email, and web - are being used to develop affordable and reliable methods of surveying hunters and the public.

Drawing Odds Method Review

Regan Berkley, Regional Wildlife Manager, presented the report (Appendix 48, Exhibit 65).

The Department has a random system of drawing for controlled hunts. Each hunter has an equal chance of being drawn. For example, if 100 hunters apply for a 20-tag controlled hunt, each individual applicant has a 20% probability of drawing a tag. Viewed another way, a hunter who consistently applies for that hunt should expect to draw a tag once every 5 years. However, because the selection is random, many applicants do not realize those odds. Some hunters may draw 2 times in 5 years, while others may not draw for 8 to 10 years or more. Because of this, even though all applicants have an equal chance of drawing despite their past drawing success, some hunters perceive the current system as unfair.

There are several potential changes that may affect drawing odds. Each change would have different effects on drawing odds. Because these changes would likely involve tradeoffs such as reduced opportunity or increased cost, these factors must be included in the analysis. This information is vital to making informed decisions about how to change drawing odds, and what those changes would mean to sportsmen.

During the presentation, staff will discuss different methods of affecting drawing odds, potential costs or restrictions associated with these methods, and predicted changes in odds should any of these methods be implemented.

These methods include:

- Implementing longer layout periods for successful applicants in antlered-only controlled hunts (currently, successful applicants must wait one year before applying again for an antlered-only hunt)
- Implementing a point-system
- Restricting controlled hunt applicants to applying for one species only (deer, elk, or pronghorn)
- Restricting applicants who apply for quality or high quality deer, elk or pronghorn hunts to applying for one species only
- Differential pricing for quality or high quality deer, elk, or pronghorn hunts

MISCELLANEOUS

Set the 2016 Commission Calendar

The Commission discussed and agreed upon the following calendar for 2016:

January 27-29, Boise

March 9-11, Boise

May 16-18, Coeur d'Alene

July 6-8, Jerome

November 16-18, Lewiston

REPORTS

Commission Paperless System Need- Mobile Devices

Bob Ross, Chief, Information Systems, provided a short briefing on what is required to design and implement a paperless system for viewing, updating and exchanging information.

Director's Report

Topics in the Director's Report to the Commission included his meeting with Senator James E. Risch regarding grizzly bears; working with Parks & Recreation on Horsethief Reservoir camping responsibilities and the written Director's Report material in the agenda book.

Commissioner Reports

Panhandle Region: Brad Corkill

- Reported that the elk numbers are up.
- Wolf harvest in the Panhandle is on pace with last year; as of the 10th with 21 taken by hunting.
- A collared grizzly bear was shot and killed over an illegal bait in Unit 4 in October, and is still under investigation.

Clearwater Region: Dan Blanco and Regional Supervisor Jerome Hansen

- In the first week of hunting season, Clearwater officers worked 25 big game unlawful take cases.
- Officers also busy dealing with the effects of Blue Tongue, whether talking to landowners and sportsmen or helping some citizens move dead animals.
- A number of recruitment and retention activities have taken place in the Clearwater in the last few months, including our first Hunt Idaho event, youth pheasant hunt, and most recently the youth steelhead clinic.

Southwest Region: Blake Fischer

- The region reported a bighorn sheep poaching that is under investigation.
- See written report for other items.

Magic Valley Region: Mark Doerr

- The hunter success rates are good.
- A world record bull moose was harvested in Unit 54.
- The region organized and sponsored a youth pheasant clinic on October 3rd. Twenty youth attended the clinic and everyone, including the parents had a good time.

Southeast Region: Lane Clezie

- Mule deer hunter success rate was 24% for the season.
- The second annual Southeast Region Family Hunting Workshop was held on November 7th with over 200 participants.
- A youth elk hunt was held at the Meadow Lark Ranch owned by Larry Miller family.

Upper Snake Region: Derick Attebury

- Reports that he is hearing positive comments at the check stations.
- Receiving complaints on misuse of ATVs.
- The deer and elk hunting have been good.
- Attended a legislative open house in Blackfoot with Commissioner Clezie.

Salmon Region: Will Naillon

- Seeing low hunter participation at check stations but the success rate is up.
- Two youth pheasant hunts held in the region.
- New Hunter Education Technician, Erin Landers, hired.

- Other items in the written report.

Commissioner Reports stand as written (Appendix 48, Exhibit 66).

MISCELLANEOUS

Planning for Next Meeting

Chairman Doerr stated that the next meeting would be a conference call on January 21, 2016 to address legislative items and season setting for upland game, furbearers and turkey. The annual meeting is scheduled for January 27&28, 2016 in Boise.

Executive Session

15-79 Commissioner Naillon moved and Commissioner Clezie seconded a motion to hold an executive session pursuant to Idaho Code 74-206(1) (b)(c)(f) to discuss land and litigation.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Brad Corkill, Dan Blanco, Blake Fischer, Mark Doerr, Lane Clezie, Derick Attebury and Will Naillon.

15-80 Commissioner Clezie moved and Commissioner Corkill seconded a motion to come out of executive session. All Commissioners voted in favor.

The executive session ended at 5:06 p.m. with no action taken.

MISCELLANEOUS

Discussion for a Commisison Retreat

Commissioners discussed dates for a possible retreat in 2016, more information to follow.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.



Mark Doerr
Chairman



Virgil Moore
Secretary