

**Meeting Date:** 16-18 May 2007

**Agenda Item No.** 9

**Agenda Item:** Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy Update

**Bureau Chief Approval:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Prepared by:** Chuck Harris, Nongame Wildlife Program Manager

**Background:** In 2001, the Department began receiving federal State Wildlife Grant (SWG) funds to focus on species and habitats in greatest need of conservation. This proactive species conservation approach is intended to keep species from being listed under the Endangered Species Act and maintain state management authority. To continue receiving SWG funds the Department developed a Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS) addressing eight required elements and submitted it to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for approval by September 2005. The Idaho CWCS was approved in February 2006. SWG funding, matched 50:50 with nongame funds, has allowed the Department to put nongame wildlife biologists in each regional office, rebuild the Idaho Conservation Data Center's zoology program and animal conservation database, and develop a statewide coordinated bird monitoring program. A portion of each year's SWG allocation is also dedicated to a third-party grants program to engage interested conservation partners in helping implement the CWCS.

**Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:** Idaho Code 36-103. Wildlife property of state – Preservation.

**Public Involvement Process:** Much of the same extensive public involvement used in developing the COMPASS was used in development of the CWCS. The CWCS Steering Committee had broad stakeholder representation.

**Staff Recommendation:** Informational only.

**Justification:** Conserving at-risk species and their habitats; keeping species from being listed under the Endangered Species Act.