



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

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Boise, Idaho 83707

C.L. "Butch" Otter / Governor
Virgil Moore / Director

August 14, 2013

Name
Address
City, State, Zip

RE: Update on Wildlife Diversity Program Revenue Options

Dear Name:

I want to give each of you who participated in the Regional Work Groups an update on what has happened to your input since you met in April and May. Over 170 of you built on the conservation momentum and enthusiasm generated by the Wildlife Summit. You graciously dedicated more than 1,000 hours combined to brainstorm revenue options for the Wildlife Diversity Program and I personally thank you for your efforts.

Compiling the Options

In June 2013, a total of 41 revenue options (see attached table) were developed from the Regional Work Group reports, past studies and funding efforts in Idaho, and comments received at the Idaho Wildlife Summit. Many similar, but not exact, versions of the same ideas were suggested, requiring judgments to merge options or keep distinctive elements separate. The quality of the work by each Regional Working Group was evident, and again, your efforts are greatly appreciated. Please understand that the exact wording of a suggestion may have been blended into a broader description of that option. In addition, many education and awareness-building ideas will be merged into preliminary steps necessary for our 2014 revenue package to go forward successfully. Other legislation ideas from the Regional Work Groups will be held for consideration in 2015.

Assessing the Options

A group of six Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) staff and two individuals from outside the agency (one from the Idaho Bowhunters Association and one from The Nature Conservancy - Idaho) scored the 41 options by the following criteria with facilitation and feasibility assistance from an economist familiar with state government and the department:

- Revenue-generating ability
- Revenue Stability
- Efficiency
- Administrative ease
- Fairness
- Simplicity
- Public Acceptance

Once this group of eight scored the options, the Wildlife Bureau Chief and the Wildlife Diversity Program Manager further analyzed the scored options – primarily by sorting the scored options based on key criteria – and brought a recommendation packet to the Director's Office to consider.

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Commission Decisions

The Director's Office looked at the options and their scoring, and decided to bring two options forward to the July Commission meeting for consideration as part of next year's legislative package. The Commission approved moving forward with these two items for the Governor's approval as the first step for 2014 legislation.

- Amend Wildlife Special Plate legislation terms from "elk wildlife special plate" and "cutthroat wildlife special plate" to "animal wildlife special plate" to allow a broader spectrum of designs to retain customer interest (*a version of Option #39*).
- Create an access permit and fee for Commission-designated IDFG properties for users who do not have a hunting, fishing, or trapping license (*a version of Options #14 and 15*).

Low-Hanging Fruit

In addition, I have assigned my staff to pursue six other options that I believe are within our capacity to do; these reflect a consistent theme from the Regional Work Groups, i.e. "do more to market Idaho wildlife recreation opportunities". Accordingly, we are reprioritizing a small portion of our budget to fund professional marketing assistance to advance these and other strategies to encourage investment in wildlife:

- Option # 1 - Increase license plate purchases
- Option # 2 - Increase personal income tax check-off for nongame programs
- Option # 3 - Clarify role of Idaho Fish & Wildlife Foundation and increase direct donations
- Option # 6 - Adapt culture of IDFG toward entrepreneurial marketing & fundraising
- Option # 7 - Broaden outreach with Internet and social media
- Option #11 -Increase opportunity to donate to Wildlife Diversity Program at license purchase

Next Steps

As we work to align our efforts with those of the Idaho Fish & Wildlife Foundation, we may pursue campaign ideas such as an Endowment Campaign (Option #5) as well as Round-Up for Wildlife campaigns (Option #12). Lastly, we also want to investigate the legislative feasibility of a conservation tax credit (Option #20).

So, I am pleased to report to you that IDFG will take action on several of the ideas generated by your efforts in the Regional Working Groups. As we move forward, we will continue to work with you to keep the momentum going in all parts of Idaho. Last year's Wildlife Summit revealed what many of us believed – that a broad spectrum of Idahoans care deeply about the wildlife that make our state so special.

Thank you for doing your part for Idaho's wildlife and for continuing to be an important conservation partner. Please don't hesitate to contact me or your Regional Supervisor with questions or comments.

Sincerely,



Virgil Moore
Director

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41 Revenue Options for Wildlife Diversity Program (WDP)

Variations on Existing Mechanisms

1. Increase License Plate Purchases
2. Increase Personal Income Tax Check-Off for Non-Game Programs
3. Clarify Role of ID Fish & Wildlife Foundation & increase Direct Donations
4. Use College Interns and/or Americorps volunteers for WDP and IFWF projects

New, Non-legislative Mechanisms

5. Endowment Campaign
6. Adapt Culture of IDFG Toward Entrepreneurial Marketing & Fundraising
7. Broaden Outreach with Internet & Social Media
8. Crowd-funding Specific Projects
9. Idaho Wildlife Trust Membership
10. Idaho Wildlife Retail Products
11. Opportunity to Donate to WDP at License Purchase
12. "Round Up for Wildlife" Sales Challenge
13. Issue Wildlife Credit Card

New Taxes or Fees Requiring Legislation

14. Mandatory, Vehicle-based Conservation Stamp/ Access Card
15. Mandatory w Hunting & Fishing License, Individual-based Conservation/Habitat Stamp/ Access Card
16. Mandatory Conservation/Habitat Head Tax w or w/o Access
17. Voluntary Conservation Heritage / Non-Game Stamp / Nature Appreciation Card/ Wildlife Watchers' Card/Passport
18. Excise Tax on Outdoor Equipment
19. Nongame Wildlife Conservation Fund Tax Credit
20. Conservation/Habitat Fund Tax Credit
21. New Energy Development Tax
22. Real Estate Transfer Fee or Impact fee
23. Increase ORV Registration fees for WDP
24. Tax or Fee on OHV and Snowmobile Purchases
25. WDP Excise Tax On Outfitted Trips
26. Private Party River Float Permit Fee
27. Temporary Diversion of Sales Tax on Outdoor Equipment
28. Habitat Tax/registration Fee for Mountain Bikes
29. Charge Commercial Users of IFWIS information a Data User Fee
30. Increase and get share of general sales tax
31. Increase and get share of motor vehicle registration
32. Increase Gas Tax for WDP
33. Extractive industry taxes
34. Increase Kilowatt hour tax for WDP

Other Legislative Options

35. Statewide Wildlife Raffle
36. Nationwide Wildlife On-Line Auction for WDP
37. Wildlife Lottery Tickets
38. General Account Appropriation for youth & senior license subsidies
39. Increase Number of License Plate Animal Options
40. Authorize Limited Edition "Super Plate" License Plate
41. Expand Wildlife Plates to OHVs, Snowmobiles, Trailers, &/or RVs