



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

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

December 6, 2013

Name
Address
City, State, Zip

Dear Name:

I want to give each of you who participated in the Regional Work Groups an update since my last letter in August. I remain impressed and amazed as I am reminded that over 170 of you dedicated more than 1,000 total hours generating ideas for revenue options for the Wildlife Diversity Program and I again personally thank you for your efforts.

Department Direction

As you recall, the Director's Office reviewed the options and for the near-term, decided to bring two options forward to last July's Commission meeting for consideration as part of the Department's 2014 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 "mammal wildlife special plate and fish wildlife special plate" to allow a broader spectrum of designs to retain customer interest.
- Create an access permit and fee for Commission-designated IDFG properties and facilities for users who do not have a hunting, fishing, or trapping license.

Additionally, the Department received approval from the Commission at that same meeting regarding moving ahead with a general revenue enhancement proposal. The current revenue proposal includes several parts:

- Amend IDFG Commission authority to discount licenses and to authorize discounts tailored for annual repeat buyers (i.e. a fee-lock for annual license purchase) or for purchase volume (buy more get higher percentage discount)
- A fee increase to include multiple changes:

Increase fees for all resident licenses, tags, permits by about 20%, with the exception that customers already with at least an annual license prior to 2105 fee increase will "lock in" at 2013 prices for license, tags and permits as long as they continue to purchase an annual license.

Create nonrefundable resident/nonresident control application fee at 3 times existing fee and drop requirement to submit tags fees at time of application.

Increase daily fishing license fees by 20% for nonresidents.

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Move “trapping license” from Commercial License designation to Sport License designation.

Withdrawn Proposals:

As staff worked on developing the concept proposals approved by the Commission, it became apparent that fielding multiple pieces of legislation that could affect license and other fees in the same session could become confusing and distracting. In November, we asked the Commission for approval, which they granted, to withdraw two proposals, including the proposal to give the Commission rule-making authority to create an access permit and fee for Commission-designated IDFG properties and facilities for users who do not have a hunting, fishing, or trapping license. We also withdrew a proposal to raise the ceiling for the Hunter’s Education fee

Additional Measures

My direction to IDFG staff remains to pursue six other options that I believe are still within our capacity. These reflect a consistent theme from the Regional Work Groups, i.e. “do more to market Idaho wildlife recreation opportunities”. I did set aside a small budget to fund professional marketing assistance to advance these and our other revenue strategies to encourage investment in all wildlife:

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

Next Steps

I know many of you have high expectation for progress on this important issue and may feel that your time spent on the Wildlife Diversity funding work sessions was not fruitful. To the contrary, I am gratified that you cared enough to engage with us and gave us many very good ideas, some of which require our longer term planning than the upcoming legislative session. The quality of the work by each Regional Working Group was evident, and again, your efforts are greatly appreciated. As we work to coordinate our efforts with those of the Idaho Fish & Wildlife Foundation, we may pursue other ideas you offered such as an Endowment Campaign and the Round-Up for Wildlife campaign. Lastly, we also want to investigate the future legislative feasibility of the working group’s conservation tax credit.

You may be interested in our license revenue strategy of a fee lock to protect consistent license buyers from a proposed fee increase. Enclosed is a brochure with more information about this proposal.

As we move forward, I hope I can count on your continued enthusiasm to keep the momentum going all across Idaho. 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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