

**Idaho Fish and Game Commission
Quarterly Meeting – November 7-8, 2012
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Upper Snake Regional Office
4279 Commerce Circle
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401**

November 7

MISCELLANEOUS

Field Tour Tex Creek WMA

Commissioners Tony McDermott, Fred Trevey, Bob Barowsky, Joan Hurlock, Randy Budge, Kenny Anderson and Will Naillon participated on a field tour of the Tex Creek Wildlife Management Area.

REPORT

Wildlife Summit Report

Mark Gamblin gave an update report (Appendix 45, Exhibit 88) on the Wildlife Summit. Commissioners were provided a copy of the final report from the Summit and DVD's. All participants from the Summit will be provided with the same information. Commission discussion followed on what are the next steps to continue the dialogue with sportsmen and others vital to the future of Idaho's wildlife.

MISCELLANEOUS

Executive Session

12-80 Commissioner Barowsky moved and Commissioner Hurlock seconded a motion to hold an executive session pursuant to subsection (c) of Idaho Code Section 67-2345 to discuss potential land acquisitions. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Hurlock, Anderson, McDermott, Trevey, Naillon, Budge and Barowsky.

12-81 Commissioner Barowsky moved and Commissioner McDermott seconded a motion to come out of executive session. All Commissioners voted in favor.

The executive session ended at 5:30 p.m. with no official action taken.

Public Hearing

Chairman Budge called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. followed by introduction of Commissioners Tony McDermott, Fred Trevey, Bob Barowsky, Joan Hurlock, Kenny Anderson and Will Naillon.

Chairman Budge made opening remarks regarding the purpose of the Fish and Game Commission, and the procedure for the public meeting.

Will Whelan representing the Nature Conservancy commented on the Wildlife Summit suggesting that the Commission should move quickly to build on the success of the Summit by starting a conversation with sportsmen and the public.

Ed Lindahl, Sagle, submitted written comment (Appendix 45, Exhibit 89) regarding questions on the Wildlife Summit.

November 8

MISCELLANEOUS

Opening Comments

Chairman Budge called the meeting to order at 8:10 with all Commissioners present. Chairman Budge introduced Brian Kelly, Fish and Wildlife Service's State Supervisor of the Idaho State Office.

Consent Calendar

The consent calendar included the following items:

- Minutes, July 11-13, August 23, and August 24-26, 2012.
- Financial Report

12- 82 Commissioner McDermott moved and Commissioner Naillon seconded a motion to approve the minutes as noted in the consent calendar. All Commissioners voted in favor.

12- 83 Commissioner Anderson moved and Commissioner Hurlock seconded a motion to approve the financial report as presented in the consent calendar. All Commissioners voted in favor.

Review of Public Comment

Public comment from the November 7 hearing was reviewed and discussed by the Commission.

RULES

Fishing Proclamation & Brochure for 2013 -2015

Jeff Dillon, State Fisheries Manager, presented the proposed fishing rules for 2013 -2015 (Appendix 45, Exhibit 90) to the Commission. Mr. Dillon reported that by statute, fishing seasons are set through IDFG Commission action on a regular basis. Fishing seasons for Idaho were last set by the Commission in November 2010 and implemented in January 2011. Fishing

seasons have traditionally been valid for two year intervals, but the Department proposes to move to a three-year cycle beginning in 2013. The public is supportive of less frequent changes which will add certainty to their fishing opportunities from year to year.

Due to intense fishing pressure in the urban ponds, there is a proposal to reduce the daily bag limit to 2 trout. Reducing the daily bag limit to 2 is expected to spread harvest opportunity among more anglers while reducing harvest for some anglers. Reducing the bag limit is intended to increase the length of time stocked rainbow trout persist in the ponds and provide more consistent harvest opportunity for a larger number of anglers. This proposal would apply to the Park Center, Weiser Community, McDevitt and Wilson Ponds (North and South) in the Southwest Region; Edson Fichter Pond in the Southeast Region; and Becker Pond (Ryder Park Pond) in the Upper Snake Region.

Ed Schriever presented a request from Mr. Charlie Johnson regarding the Wounded Warrior Program to allow this group to take disabled veterans fishing on the Nature Conservancy section of Silver Creek fishing using a drift boat. This section is currently closed to fishing from a boat by Commission rule. The Commission discussed the request and directed the Director and staff to work through the public process to generate a proposal (or a range of proposals) for their consideration. The Commission was very supportive of the Wounded Warrior program and the opportunities that Mr. Johnson provides for veterans. However, because the fishing rules on Silver Creek have a considerable history of “social engineering” they felt strongly that public involvement in potential changes is a necessary step.

12- 84 Commissioner Anderson moved and Commissioner Naillon seconded a motion to approve the 2013 – 2015 fishing seasons as presented by staff. All Commissioners voted in favor.

Ratification of Rules

Deputy Attorney General Trever presented the proposed rule dockets. She described the general rulemaking process, involving the proposal of rules, publication in the Administrative Bulletin for public comment, Commission approval of pending rules, and submission of pending rules for legislative approval. There are fifteen rule dockets awaiting commission action.

12-85 Commissioner Naillon moved and Commissioner McDermott seconded a motion to adopt the proposed rules as pending rules. All Commissioners voted in favor.

MANAGEMENT PLANS

Statewide Fish Management Plan 2013-2018

Jeff Dillon, State Fisheries Manager, presented the plan for Commission approval. The Fisheries Bureau has updated the guiding programmatic Fisheries Management Plan for the period of 2013-2018. The plan reflects angler opinions and preferences, describes the programmatic structure and function of the Fisheries Bureau, and defines management objectives and strategies for all fisheries programs. The Bureau would use the Plan to guide all aspects of fisheries

management from 2013-2018 and make recommendations to the Commission for seasons and rules to meet management objectives. .

12- 86 Commissioner McDermott moved and Commissioner Barowsky seconded a motion to approve the 2013-2018 Statewide Fisheries Management Plan as presented by staff. All Commissioners voted in favor.

LANDS

Marty Land Acquisition

Gregg Servheen, Wildlife Program Coordinator, asked for the Commission's approval of a 2,615-acre acquisition in Jefferson County to connect the Mud Lake Wildlife Management Area and Camas National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), the combined area would become a 22,000-acre complex. Waterfowl make extensive use of the property; moose and white-tailed deer are common. Elk and mule deer come from Camas NWR to feed on this and adjacent properties. Sage-grouse are common around the agricultural fields and in the uplands. Wild pheasants and numerous songbirds utilize the property as well. The property currently supports large numbers of shorebirds, particularly in the spring. Yellow-billed cuckoos, a declining species in the West, have been surveyed on or near the property 3 times in the past 10 years. This property would add significant acreage for public hunting and trapping, and also comes with extensive water rights.

This property was previously presented to the Commission during Executive Session in November of 2010.

Acquisition cost is \$1,100,000 to be funded by Access Yes, Watershed initiative, FILT surplus, and CRP payment funds. FILT payments/year are estimated at \$2,000/year. O&M costs are estimated at \$40,000 annually.

12-87 Commissioner Anderson moved and Commissioner Hurlock seconded a motion to adopt the staff recommendation to proceed with the Marty Land acquisition. All Commissioners voted in favor.

REPORT

Update on Mule Deer Initiative

Corey Class, Mule Deer Coordinator, provided a status review (Appendix 45, Exhibit 91) on the Department's Mule Deer Initiative (MDI). The update covered the program history as well as success stories and future priorities.

Mule deer populations have declined in the West for over 20 years. Idaho's Mule Deer Initiative began in 2004 to help mule deer populations recover, enhance mule deer habitat, increase public knowledge of mule deer biology and management and to eventually restore and maintain healthy mule deer populations in Idaho. The three basic goals of the MDI are to increase mule deer populations, increase mule deer hunter satisfaction and protect and improve mule deer habitat.

Some recent MDI accomplishments include completion of the Interstate 15, Black Rock mule deer fence near Pocatello and the Highway 21 wildlife underpass near Boise. These projects will benefit both human safety and important mule deer populations by reducing deer-vehicle collisions. Staff continues to work with landowners across southeastern Idaho on habitat and conservation plans for their private property. MDI provided technical assistance to over 140 landowners, involving over 25,000 acres of habitat this past year.

LEGISLATION

Legislative Update

Sharon Kiefer, Deputy Director, reported that the Constitutional Amendment HJR2 passed with 73% of the vote. The 2013 legislative session will begin on January 7. There will be 34 new legislators this year.

Ms. Kiefer briefed the Commission about the status of Department legislative proposals that were submitted in bill form to the Executive Agencies Legislation System for Governor Office approval. The proposals were approved by the Governor's office and are now being drafted to a Routing Slip (RS) format.

The Department has been asked to partner with Governor's Office, Idaho Parks and Recreation and Department of Agriculture to come up with a way for Fish and Game to issue the invasive species stickers using the IDFG vendor system for resident non-motorized boats and non-resident boats. The Department has been asked to provide draft legislation for this process and an estimated cost.

Ms. Kiefer reviewed the 2012 Commission legislative process including Commission conference calls and legislative analysis to gain Commission guidance for the upcoming 2013 session. Commission consensus is to have the same format as used for the 2012 session with the calls scheduled on Thursday's at 8:00 a.m.

REPORT

Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Sharon Kiefer, Deputy Director, presented the Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation report for Ann Dehner, Foundation Development Coordinator.

- The Foundation is currently engaged in planning and budgeting for its fiscal year 2013. Plans call for continued support of the Department's Wildlife Diversity programs through expanded marketing of the Wildlife specialty license plates. Plans also include a review of the Foundation's sponsorship support of the Wildlife Summit held in August 2012; a review of the Foundation's project funding program; and increasing public awareness of the Foundation and its work.

- The Foundation has completed its draft of an updated Memorandum of Understanding with the Department and the Commission. The draft has been approved by the Foundation's Board of Directors and has been forwarded to the Department for further processing.
- The Foundation's board of directors voted at its August Board meeting to distribute funds from its Dale Lawrence Endowment to support a proposal from the Department to benefit youth hunting programs.
- The Board of Directors also voted at its August meeting to approve the construction of a 48' x 60' shop/storage building at the Magic Valley Regional office in Jerome. The building will house the regional fishing and boating access program, a storage area for materials for the Isolated Tracts wildlife management program, and other regional needs for a shop.
- The Foundation is working with the Department to assess needs surrounding electrical issues at the Nampa Fisheries Research office. Such needs include a review of insurance coverage for the property and review of any equipment and service requirements to safeguard operations at the site.
- The Foundation has hired a new Financial Specialist to replace Stella Bush, who is retiring after ten years of service.

LANDS

Briefing of Idaho Land Legacy Trust Initiative

Gregg Servheen, Wildlife Program Coordinator, briefed the Commission on the Idaho Land Legacy Trust Initiative. In 2006, the Commission agreed to move ahead to establish the Wildlife and Land Legacy Project. It focuses on increasing the capacity of the Department for habitat conservation in Idaho and consists of 3 main elements. These are: 1) Establishment of the Endowment/Trust, 2) Cash settlement with the Bonneville Power Administration for its Idaho wildlife mitigation debt, 3) Sale of surplus lands owned by the Department for cash.

Since then, the Department has been moving ahead on each of these elements.

The following items are sales of property via the Idaho Department of Lands sale process:

- \$587,380.58 has been realized by IDFG from the sale of 130 acres (2 inholding parcels) on South Fork Salmon to USFS.
- Monies from sale of property to USFS are being kept in a trust account and are from Pittman-Robertson federal funds.
- \$130,000 has been realized by IDFG from sale of 7.5 acres (2 parcels) and these are all license money returns.

- 1 surplus parcel of 98.5 acres was exchanged for a parcel of equal value to provide fishing access on the Salmon River.
- 3 properties (15 acres total) have been offered at auction and any reasonable offer with no takers/offers.

REPORT

Brucellosis Management Update

Brad Compton, Assistant Chief, Wildlife presented an update (Appendix 45, Exhibit 92) on brucellosis management.

Brucellosis is an infectious bacterial disease that causes abortions in cattle and other animals, including elk. Brucellosis has existed in elk and bison in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem since the early 1900s, and was first detected in Idaho elk in 1998 in Game Management Unit 67.

Because the disease is zoonotic (transferable to humans), brucellosis is one of the most heavily regulated diseases of cattle in the United States. Since discovery of the disease in Idaho, two Governor's Work Group teams were convened, the most recent in 2006, to develop brucellosis management plans. The Department of Fish and Game and State Department of Agriculture have worked cooperatively to implement those plans with a focus on managing prevalence of the disease in elk and preventing transmission to cattle.

In addition to reducing productivity of an elk herd, the disease is problematic for livestock producers. Presence of the disease in cattle results in costly management requirements (e.g. frequent testing, animal ID), and restrictions on the intra/interstate transport. In 2012, 1 domestic bison herd and 1 cattle herd in eastern Idaho tested positive for brucellosis. Ramifications for the Idaho livestock industry are still unfolding.

Although the geographic scale, jurisdictional complexities, and inadequate funding provide challenges for the management of brucellosis, IDFG is committed to working with ISDA, private landowners, and elk hunters to reduce spread of the disease, minimize human infection, monitor seroprevalance, and implement actions to prevent contact between cattle and elk during the disease transmission risk period.

Mr. Compton introduced Brian Oakey, ISDA Deputy Director, and Dr. Bill Barton, ISDA, and Richard Savage, Idaho Cattle Association who were in attendance for the presentation.

MISCELLANEOUS

Chairman Budge entertained a motion to amend the agenda to consider the extension of Order 11-33 (Appendix 45, Exhibit 93) for the discounting of tag fees for mountain lion, black bear, and gray wolf.

This order is set to expire December 31, 2012. The good faith basis for amending the agenda is due to an administrative oversight in staff's preparation of the agenda.

12-88 Commissioner Trevey moved and Commissioner McDermott seconded a motion to consider the extension of Order 11-33. All Commissioners voted in favor

Staff circulated a draft order extending Order 11-33 for 2 years, to expire on December 31, 2014 (Appendix 45, Exhibit 94).

12-89 Commissioner Hurlock moved and Commissioner Barowsky seconded a motion to extend Order to extend Order 11-33 for a two- year period through December 31, 2014.

Chairman Budge entertained a motion to amend the agenda to receive a report from Brian Kelly, Supervisor of U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Idaho State Office, regarding wolf management in Wyoming.

The good faith basis for amending the agenda is Mr. Kelly was present and could provide the Commission with a status report of recent developments on this issue.

12-90 Commissioner McDermott moved and Commissioner Anderson seconded a motion to amend the agenda to receive a report from Brian Kelly on recent wolf management in Wyoming.

Mr. Kelly reported that the delisting of wolves has occurred in Wyoming and a hunting season started on October 1st. Wyoming is divided into three areas:

- A Wolf Trophy Game Management Area in northwest Wyoming in which wolves are regulated by hunting (October 1- December 31).
- Seasonal Wolf Trophy Game Management Area where hunters need a license for part of the year (October 15- February 28) and can shoot wolves on sight as predators the other part of the year (March 1-October 14). This gives more protection for wolves as they move between Wyoming and Idaho.
- In the rest of the state, wolves are considered predators, meaning they can be shot on sight.

MANAGEMENT PLANS

Elk Management Plan Update

Craig White, Wildlife Staff Biologist, reported that Department staff continue to work on revision of our Elk Management Plan. The goal of the revision is to maintain biologically sustainable elk populations and to be responsive to current and future hunter needs and expectations. Dr. White provided copies of a briefing statement regarding the Elk Plan Revision (Appendix 45, Exhibit 95). The Department completed a comprehensive survey of elk hunters to

quantify current hunter demographics, and to understand desires, and expectations for hunting experiences. Elk Planning Team members are using biological data and social desires expressed by the Commission and public to draft management direction, performance targets, and strategies for scoping with the Commission and public.

The Department has dedicated a webpage to provide updates and information on the elk management planning process (<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/elkplanning>).

The Department's goal is to present a plan to the Commission for final approval at the July 2013 meeting.

REPORTS

Trophy Species Briefing

Jon Rachael, State Wildlife Manager, stated that in November of each even-numbered year the Department presents a report on trophy species status in Idaho and issues to be scoped during public hearings. In January of odd-numbered years, the Department presents harvest recommendations for trophy species. Mr. Rachael informed Commissioners of issues and concerns relative to current status and statewide management plans for moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goats for the 2013-2014 seasons, which the Commission will set in January 2013 (Appendix 45, Exhibit 96).

Pheasant Surrogator Report

Sal Palazzolo, Wildlife Program Coordinator, provided a final report (Appendix 45, Exhibit 97) on the two-year Pheasant Surrogator® Evaluation Program. Sportsmen groups, landowners, conservation organizations and Department worked together to implement and evaluate the feasibility and success of raising pheasant chicks in Surrogators® as a tool to improve hunting opportunities.

12-91 Commissioner Trevey moved and Commissioner Barowsky seconded a motion that the Commission policy direction is to encourage the Department to be responsive, supporting local sportsmen and landowners with game bird brooder and habitat efforts consistent with their local needs and desires; to provide technical information, facilitate and encourage discussion on HIP and Farm Bill opportunities; and to give Regional Supervisors the flexibility to provide supplies and direct financial support as the Region deems appropriate. All Commissioners voted in favor.

MISCELLANEOUS

Appoint Commission Representative to Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

12-92 Commissioner McDermott moved and Commissioner Barowsky seconded a motion to appoint Will Naillon to serve as the Commission representative for WAFWA. All Commissioners voted in favor.

2013 Commission Calendar

The Commission discussed and agreed upon the following calendar for 2013:

- January 16-17-18 Boise
- March 18-19 Boise
- May 15-16-17 Coeur d'Alene
- July 10-11-12 Pocatello
- November 13-14-15 Jerome

REPORTS

Director's Report

Director Moore introduced and welcomed Mike Roach, Natural Resources Director, from Senator Risch's Idaho Falls office.

Lori Adams, Idaho Fish and Game's Project WILD Coordinator went to Japan in October to conduct conservation education programs for Japanese teachers. Lori was invited to make this trip by Japan's Project WILD Coordinator, who paid all of the expenses.

The Fisheries "Tag You're It" program recently won the National Sport Fish Restoration Award for research, which is awarded to one state annually by the Fish Administrators Section of the American Fisheries Society.

The Department recently received an additional Wildlife Summit donation from Agrium Conda Phosphate Operations in the amount of \$10,000. The Commission and Department will send a thank you letter.

On the Friday before the waterfowl opener, State Waterfowl Biologist Jeff Knetter and Enforcement Chief Jon Heggen moderated a two hour on-line Chat with questions about waterfowl biology, season setting and framework, how to tips, and hunting rules. There were 158 participants from across the state. It was a highly successful Chat.

Commission Reports

Commission reports stand as written (Appendix 45, Exhibit 98)

Executive Session

12-93- Commissioner Barowsky moved and Commissioner Hurlock seconded a motion to hold an executive session pursuant of subsections (b) and (f) of Idaho Code Section 67-2345 to

discuss personnel and litigation matters. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Anderson, Hurlock, Barowsky, Trevey, Naillon, McDermott and Budge.

Deputy Attorney General Trever reviewed litigation-related and personnel matters with the Commission. The Commission conducted its scheduled performance evaluation of the Director.

12-94 Commissioner Barowsky moved and Commissioner Trevey seconded a motion to come out of executive session. All Commissioners voted in favor.

The executive session ended at 6:30 p.m. with no official action taken.

Randall C. Budge
Chairman

Virgil Moore
Secretary