

Idaho Fish and Game Commission
Special Meeting
October 3, 2013
Boise, Idaho

Present in the Director's Office: Director Virgil Moore, Deputy Directors, Jim Unsworth and Sharon Kiefer; Dallas Burkhalter, Deputy Attorney General; Mike Demick, Conservation Information Supervisor; Niels Nokkentved, Public Information Specialist; Mary Boyer, Executive Assistant; Jeff Gould, Wildlife Chief; Jon Rachael, State Wildlife Game Manager; Toby Bourdreau, Wildlife Program Coordinator; and Robert Moore, a member of the public.

A special meeting of the Idaho Fish and Game Commission was held by telephone conference. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bob Barowsky with Commissioners Fred Trevey, Brad Corkill, Mark Doerr, Randy Budge, and Will Naillon participating. Commissioner Anderson was absent.

RULES

Elk Controlled Hunt Area Adjustment

Jon Rachael, State Wildlife Game Manager, presented the staff recommendation.

The Idaho Fish and Game Commission set big game seasons, including controlled hunts for 2013 at their March 2013 meeting. Lightning-caused fires impacted nearly 400,000 acres (e.g., Elk complex = >131,000 ac; Beaver Creek = 111,490 ac; Pony Complex = 149,384 ac) of private and public shrub-steppe uplands and forested habitat in portions of the Magic Valley and Southwest regions during August and September. Impacted habitat and fire-related area closures have resulted in many hunters requesting rain checks for next year or seeking to exchange their tags for other hunts.

Elk Controlled Hunt Area 48-3 (CH 2107, 90 tags, Antlerless Elk only, Oct 15 – Nov 9) has been significantly affected by fire, and access to much of the area is still restricted. Roughly half of Hunt Area 48-3 (that portion of Unit 48 south of the Ketchum-Warm Springs Creek-Dollarhide Summit Road) is currently closed to public access and the portion of the hunt area that remains open contains few elk.

Expanding the hunt area for this controlled hunt would offer the 90 tag holders flexibility to hunt in portions of adjacent units 43 and 44, and potentially provide the additional benefit of harvesting elk that would otherwise migrate to winter range (including agricultural land) that was severely impacted by the Elk Complex Fires near Mayfield in Unit 39.

The original hunt recommendations resulted from monitoring of population and harvest data and year-round public involvement, and were scoped internally and with the public through regional meetings and surveys, email outreach, and the website. Many hunters who drew controlled hunts and, thus, are limited to hunting specific areas have either requested rain checks or expressed a

desire to hunt this year if possible. The department hosted a public meeting in Mountain Home on September 17 to discuss big game hunting, feeding, and habitat issues following these wildfires.

Commission action is required to modify the current controlled hunt boundaries for the 2013 hunting season. Expansion of this hunt area will eliminate the need for rain checks and provide improved opportunities for the 90 tag holders to hunt this year. Secondly, this modification will help alleviate elk related conflicts on private lands in the Mayfield area this coming winter.

Staff recommends a modification to expand the current hunt boundary for CH 2107 (CH Area 48-3, 90 tags, Antlerless Elk only, Oct 15 – Nov 9) to include a portion of Units 43 and 44 as follows:

Hunt Area 48-3 – That portion of Unit 48 south of the Ketchum-Warm Springs-Dollarhide Summit Road and that portion of Units 43 and 44 west of the Pine-Featherville Road (Forest Service Road 61) and Rocky Bar Road (Forest Service Road 156).

Action Requested:

Modify Controlled Hunt Area 48-3 for Elk Controlled Hunt 2107 for the 2013 season to include that portion of Units 43 and 44 west of the Pine-Featherville Road (Forest Service Road 61) and Rocky Bar Road (Forest Service Road 156).

13-64 Commissioner Naillon moved and Commissioner Corkill seconded a motion that the Commission adopt the staff recommendation to modify Controlled Hunt Area 48-3 for Elk Controlled Hunt 2107 for the 2013 season to include that portion of Unites 43 and 44 west of the Pine-Featherville Road (Forest Service Road 61) and Rocky Bar Road (Forest Service Road 156). All Commissioners voted in favor.

MISCELLANEOUS

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

Robert Barowsky
Chairman

Virgil Moore
Secretary