

Idaho Fish and Game Commission
May18-21, 2015
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Clearwater Region
3316 16th Street
Lewiston, Idaho

May 18

Commission Field Tour: Snake River

The Commission toured the Snake River.

May 19

Commission Field Tour: Lower Granite Dam

Commissioners toured the Lower Granite Dam.

MISCELLANEOUS

Public Meeting

Chairman Trevey called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Commissioners Brad Corkill, Blake Fishcer, Mark Doerr, Lane Clezie, Kenny Anderson and Will Naillon were present. Chairman Trevey reviewed the rules for conduct of the hearing and the hearing was opened up for public comment.

The following individuals provided public comment: Jim Hagedorn, Joseph Peterson, Brindee Collins, Anthony James, Allan Probst, Amy Berasi, Butch Sour, and Britt Lindhorst.

Written comment was received from Ed Lindahl and Mike Gann (Appendix 48, Exhibit 30). Comments regarding the Lemhi Access received from Brent & Kandice Wilcox, Joan Geary-Smith, Karla Probst, Stacey and Anthony James, Bob and Amy Berasi, Jeff & Kelly Bockman, James & Diane Lyon, Shane McAfee, Karen and Joe Bishop and Rinaldo Jensen (Appendix 48, Exhibit 31).

May 20

MISCELLANEOUS

Opening Comments

Chairman Trevey called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. with Commissioners Brad Corkill, Blake Fischer, Mark Doerr, Lane Clezie, Kenny Anderson and Will Naillon present. Chairman Trevey acknowledged fisheries staff members Joe Dupont, Russ Kiefer, and Regional Supervisor

Chip Corsi for their participation in the Lower Granite Dam field tour. The Chairman thanked Regional Supervisor Jerome Hansen and staff for hosting the meeting.

Director Moore introduced Ray Houston, Legislative Budget and Policy Analyst, LSO.

Review of Public Comment

There were 8 individuals who testified at the public meeting. Director Moore led the discussion and review of the public comments. It was noted that the Lemhi Access item would be discussed in conjunction with agenda item 5. D.

Topics included:

- Allow the use of lighted nocks
- Pheasant stocking and hunting
- Land Owner Appreciation Program
- Next steps from revenue requests
- Lemhi Property Access safety concerns
- Salmon & Steelhead Program Tag Cost
- Need for outhouses in fishing areas
- Thank you and recognition to Commissioners Fred Trevey and Kenny Anderson

Consent Calendar

- Minutes, February 5, 12, 19, 26 and March 5, 12, 19, 2015.
- Financial Report

15-23 Commissioner Corkill moved and Commissioner Anderson seconded a motion to accept the items listed in the consent calendar. All Commissioners voted in favor.

RULES

Proposed 2016-2018 Fishing Rule Changes for Public Comment

Jeff Dillon, Fisheries Statewide Manager, presented the proposal.

By statute, fishing rules are set through IDFG Commission action on a regular basis. Fishing rules for Idaho were last set by the Commission in November 2012 and implemented in January 2013. In January - March, 2015 the Department completed internal and public scoping regarding fishing rules. Based on this input staff have developed proposed rules changes for 2016-2018, and staff are prepared to seek additional public input prior to developing final recommendations for the Commission's consideration. Commissioners were provided a copy of the recommended 2016-2018 fishing rule changes for public review (Appendix 48, Exhibit 32).

Staff seeks approval to present proposed 2016-2018 fishing rule changes for additional public review

15-24 Commissioner Doerr moved and Commissioner Anderson seconded a motion to approve the proposed 2016-2018 fishing rules changes for additional public review and to include the heads & tail amendment proposal. All Commissioners voted in favor.

Season Setting: Chinook Salmon

Peter Hassemer, Anadromous Fish Manager, presented the 2015 Chinook salmon fishery proposal (Appendix 48, Exhibit 33) for the South Fork Salmon River and the Upper Salmon River.

15-25 Commissioner Naillon moved and Commissioner Clezie second a motion to approve the proposed 2015 Chinook salmon fishing seasons for South Fork Salmon River and Upper Salmon River. All Commissioners voted in favor.

Temporary and Proposed Rules

Sharon Kiefer, Deputy Director, presented the rules that were approved in the 2015 legislative session.

The attached series of “temporary and proposed” rules are recommended for adoption by the Commission to improve clarity (Appendix 48, Exhibit 34).

Agenda Item C.1: Disabled Hunter Designated Companion Rule Revision

The revision adds the nonresident disabled American Veteran hunting license as a qualifying license for a hunter to participate in this program.

Agenda Item C.2: Hunting Passport Rule Revision

The revision provides that any 8 year old youth who possesses a Hunting Passport may possess an additional Hunting Passport at age 9.

Agenda Item C.3: Transfer Tag to Youth Rule Revision

The revision clarifies that “once in a lifetime” trophy harvest rules apply to the child or grandchild who has been designated a trophy control hunt tag. The proposal also makes technical corrections.

Agenda Item C.4: Purchase of Leftover Youth Tag Revision

The revision clarifies that hunters with a nonresident disabled American Veteran hunting license are eligible to purchase leftover control hunt tags for youth hunts.

Public involvement process: There were contacts to the Commission and legislators during the 2015 legislative session regarding revision of the hunter passport. We have fielded inquiries with nonresident hunters who possess the nonresident disabled American veteran hunting license

regarding which programs they are eligible for; this is a new license developed subsequent to most of our rules so it is not referenced appropriately. We have fielded inquiry regarding certainty of rule application for trophy species rules relative to tags that are transferred to a child or grandchild.

15-26 Commissioner Clezie moved and Commissioner Doerr seconded a motion to adopt the temporary and proposed rules as proposed by staff in Exhibit 34. All Commissioners voted in favor.

LANDS

Gregg Servheen, Wildlife Program Coordinator, presented 3 land acquisition proposals to the Commission.

Lemhi Fishing Access Acquisition

The 2.15-acre subject property is located on the Lemhi River approximately 17 miles from the town of Salmon, ID. The Lemhi River is one of the best trout fisheries in Region 7, but currently public access is limited to four public access points across nearly 60 miles of river. The closest public fishing access to this point is eleven miles downstream or five miles upstream. The Department first identified improving angler access to the Lemhi River as a priority in the statewide Fisheries Management Plan in 1981. With limited access added since that time, it continues to be a top priority as identified in the current fish plan.

The property is undeveloped riparian and pasture land adjacent to a county road and a county bridge. Via email, letter and comment at yesterday's hearing neighbors have expressed concerns about public use of the property and its suitability to providing fishing access. Anglers have expressed support for the acquisition. The Department proposes acquiring fee-title of the property to provide public fishing access and parking to ensure long-term access to the Lemhi River.

This property was previously presented to the Commission during Executive Session in November of 2014. Acquisition cost is \$33,000 of Access Yes funds.

The Commission asked for additional information regarding issues raised by comments from neighbors. The Commission asked about the navigability of the Lemhi River. Deputy Attorney General Trever explained there are two navigability standards, one related to state ownership of the beds and banks of navigable rivers, and one related to a public right of way for recreational purposes under Idaho Code 36-1601. No court has determined whether the Lemhi River is navigable under either standard. The Idaho Department of Lands is the lead agency on the standard for state ownership; Fish and Game has authority under Title 36 for the public right-of-way. According to Ms. Trever, there is clear evidence, in the form of photographs and testimony, that the Lemhi meets the navigability standards for a public right of way because people have routinely floated the river in various watercraft within the high watermark.

In response to Commissioner questions about the safety and hazards of the river, Regional Supervisor Tom Curet noted there has not been any recent cases or history of drownings on the River. Mr. Curet noted that, as with all recreational uses of rivers in Idaho, people use them according to their own level of skills and at their own risk.

Director Moore referenced written comments from Robert Price, Brooks Montgomery, Tony Latham and Mark Davidson, Trout Unlimited, who support the project (Appendix 48, Exhibit 35). The Region has also heard from anglers on a regular basis asking for Lemhi River access.

The Region contemplates limited development: a small parking lot and a trail to the river. The property would be daylight use only with no camping. The Region plans to put up signs to notify and inform access users about private property and trespass. If neighbors are receptive, staff would like to work with them to address concerns.

Mr. Servheen answered a question about Joan Smith's email about highway turnouts as an alternative. The Department did evaluate these options and determined they would not provide reasonable access.

The Department has made considerable time and financial investments on the conservation and restoration on the Lemhi River focused on anadromous fish. It is also important to the Department to have good working relationship with the agricultural community and area landowners in the Upper Salmon Basin.

In response to Commissioner questions about the transparency of the process for purchase, Mr. Servheen reported that the Department discussed the access with Lemhi County Commissioners in open session on January 12, 2015, and the County gave neighboring landowners an opportunity to voice their opinions. The Department also briefed Representative Beyeler on the project. The Lemhi County Commission has not stated any opposition to the purchase.

According to Deputy Attorney General Trever, Idaho's Open meeting law balances the public policy in favor of open government with the state's fiscal interests in protecting its negotiating position when seeking to buy property. The balance is that a final decision on whether to buy property is subject to final approval of the Commission in a meeting open to the public after public notice. The law allows the Commission to have preliminary discussions in executive session to protect negotiating position. State law requires advanced notice to the affected county for proposed purchases of more than 15 acres. To ensure the Department takes into account local concerns, the Department generally notifies an affected county of any purchase. In this case the Department notified the County even though the proposed purchase is about 2 acres.

15-27 Commissioner Naillon moved and Commissioner Corkill seconded a motion to adopt staff recommendations to acquire the Lemhi River access property in fee title. All Commissioners voted in favor.

Cougar Ranch-Remove From Surplus List

The 67-acre subject property is located on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River approximately 40 miles NW of the town of Challis, ID. The property lies within the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness. The majority of the property is dry rangeland which provides some winter/spring range for elk, deer, bighorn sheep and upland game birds. The Cougar Creek Ranch has a old single room log cabin, a tool shed, and an outhouse. Irrigation ditches are present on the Cougar Creek parcel and it has current water rights (2 cfs). IDFG spends approximately \$700 for Cougar per year on fire protection, FILT payments, and annual operating costs.

Cougar Creek Ranch was purchased for \$6,000 in PR funds from a private landowner in 1948. Since its purchase, fences have been removed, trees and shrubs planted, and noxious weeds controlled while the cabin has been occasionally renovated to keep it in serviceable condition. The primary reason for acquiring this land and other backcountry ranches was to protect big game habitat, to increase big game forage by reducing grazing of livestock on these lands, to increase public access into these remote areas, and to increase big game harvest in these areas. Currently, the Cougar Creek patrol cabin is used by enforcement and fish and wildlife personnel doing patrols and surveys in those areas. The property was purchased before the Wilderness Act and designation of the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness.

At this time the value of retaining this property for patrol, management, and survey uses by IDFG within the Franck Church Wilderness is preferred over making it available for sale to the USFS or other potential buyers.

15-28 Commissioner Naillon moved and Commissioner Doerr seconded a motion to adopt the staff recommendation to remove the Cougar Creek Ranch property from the Disposal/Surplus list. All Commissioners voted in favor.

Palouse Prairie RLA Project

This project will permanently protect 16 acres under conservation easement and 62 acres via fee title acquisition of high priority grasslands on the Palouse Prairie of northern Idaho. Funding is provided under the Endangered Species Act, Section 6 Recovery Lands Acquisition (RLA) grants program; which can only be submitted by and awarded to state fish and wildlife agencies. Preserving, protecting, and perpetuating the federally-threatened plant *Silene spaldingii* (Spalding's catchfly) is the basis for the RLA grant award.

IDFG, along with its partners the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Latah Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Palouse Land Trust, submitted an RLA grant application in 2014 to protect a total of 412 acres. IDFG was awarded partial funding totaling \$232,425, allowing the protection of 16 acres under a conservation easement and 62 acres in fee title. All fee-title lands and conservation easements acquired under the RLA grant are to be held in perpetuity by the Palouse Land Trust.

The partners will submit a second grant application for the funding required to protect the remaining 334 priority acres identified in the original proposal. Should funds be awarded, that project would require a separate approval by the Commission.

15-29 Commissioner Doerr moved and Commissioner Clezie seconded a motion to approve the RLA project and release the grant funds available to acquire a 16-acre conservation easement and 62-acre fee title acquisition to be held by the Palouse Land Trust. All Commissioners voted in favor.

RULES

Hagerman Goose Closure

Toby Boudreau, Regional Supervisor, presented the proposal (Appendix 48, Exhibit 36) and background information to the Commission. Mr. Boudreau stated that over 30 years ago the Department closed several areas around the state to Goose hunting. These areas were designed to give migrating goose populations areas in the state a place to stop over and not be hunted, in hopes that would keep them in the area longer for hunting. Goose populations were much lower when the closure was put in place. The Hagerman Goose Closure boundary was reduced in size in 1994.

The original proposal was to rescind the Hagerman goose closure, while maintaining the Hagerman waterfowl closure around the wildlife management area.

Negotiated rulemaking was used to develop this final proposal. Staff held a public meeting in Hagerman on February 16th to meet with concerned public and to collect public input. Sixty-nine comments were received through the Department website and in person. Forty-four comments were in favor of rescinding the goose hunting closure, and 25 were opposed to it.

Staff reviewed input from the public and worked with Commissioner Doerr to develop a compromise position that modified the boundary. This boundary modification removes the closure in the largest agricultural blocks of lands and retains in along most of the Snake River section. This modification will help increase opportunity for goose hunting in the area and will greatly increase the abilities of landowner to reduce goose depredations on crops.

The total area of current goose closure is 22,591 acres. The proposed change would reduce the area by 11,921 acres reducing the remaining closed area to 10670 acres.

15-30 Commissioner Clezie moved and Commissioner Doerr seconded a motion to adopt the staff recommendation to reduce the size of the goose hunting closure in the Hagerman Valley in Gooding and Twin Falls counties. All Commissioners voted in favor.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

Sharp-Tailed Grouse Species Draft

Jeff Knetter, Wildlife Program Coordinator, provided a brief review of the draft plan. The Columbian sharp-tailed grouse (CSTG) is one of seven subspecies (one extinct) of sharp-tailed grouse in North America. They were once considered the most abundant and well-known upland game bird in the Pacific Northwest. Idaho supports an estimated 63% of the remaining CSTG in the United States.

The Draft Management Plan for the Conservation of Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse (Plan):

- Will provide guidance to IDFG and partners to implement conservation measures that will enhance CSTG habitat and populations (e.g., CRP-SAFE).
- Prevent the need for ESA protection of CSTG in the future.
- Lead state efforts to proactively ensure the long-term persistence and viability of CSTG in Idaho.

15-31 Commissioner Doerr moved and Commissioner Naillon seconded a motion to adopt the staff recommendation to release the draft Management Plan for the Conservation of Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse for public review and initiate a 30-day public comment period on the draft. All Commissioners voted in favor.

FISCAL

Advancing the 2016 Fee Strategy

Director Moore, Deputy Director's Ed Schriever and Sharon Kiefer

Commissioners discussed strategic objectives for developing a legislative fee proposal in 2016.

With the approval of Governor Otter, the Commission and Department advanced a fee proposal to increase Department revenue to the 2015 Legislature. The proposal received legislative support to be printed as a bill – House Bill 32 - and came briefly to the floor of the House Resources and Conservation Committee for discussion. At the request of Representative Moyle, Chairman Raybould held the bill from further action. While the HB32 was being held various legislators were contemplating and developing alternate versions which included legislative mechanisms that would require various department actions including implementation of a bonus point system, issuance of special auction tags for a variety of big game species and significant alterations to the Landowner Appreciation Program. Although considerable thought and effort was put forth on considerations for alternate legislative proposals to HB32, none advanced to the floor during the 2015 session. HB32 was not granted further legislative consideration during the 2015 session. During the session, the Commission took a strong stance that these issues should remain within the Commission forum to further address with stakeholders.

The Department and Commission remain committed to pursuing legislation to increase Department revenue sufficient to address erosion of spending power in operational funds due to the cumulative effects of a decade of unaddressed inflation since our last resident fee increase.

Additional revenue could also be used to enhance existing high priority programs, implement new projects or programs and/or increase the Fish and Game reserve account. The goal is to advance a clean revenue bill through the Legislature in 2016 and have the bill signed by the Governor.

A strategic approach to development of a successful legislative fee proposal in 2016 should include:

1. Further addressing those issues or programs with our stakeholders that generated legislative interest as evidenced by draft legislative proposals modifying HB32,
 - a. Bonus Points – or alternative mechanisms to address low draw odds in some highly desirable controlled hunts,
 - b. Landowner Appreciation Program – this is a more complex issue, requiring consideration of a combination of programs including LAP tags, depredation management, and hunting access.
 - c. Auction tags – The Commission has a defined policy position in regard to issuance of new auction tags. Further policy discussion is necessary to assess the issues for stakeholder engagement.
2. Engaging Hunter, anglers, trappers and other stakeholders to help define the priority areas where additional revenue would be applied in Department operations.
3. Develop a MCO FY17 Budget and an alternative FY17 budget(s) that shows where operations would be enhanced by additional revenue.
4. Maintain or increase the constituent and legislative support garnered for the 2015 fee proposal (HB32) for the 2016 fee proposal, including sportsman's support for a budget enhancement.

Strategic Objective #1.

The Director's Office has developed committees to facilitate the tasks necessary to address the primary legislative issues. We propose to survey sportsmen and women by conducting random surveys to determine their unbiased opinions of the *issues* related to Bonus Points, Auction Tags and LAP. For example; Bonus Points is one possible mechanism aimed at redistributing draw odds in highly competitive controlled hunts. Hunters may not want Bonus Points *per se*, but they may want the Department to consider different mechanism(s) to address the issue of draw odds.

The Department will also survey landowners currently enrolled in the LAP program to get their opinions of the current LAP program framework, opportunities for improvement and how providing more flexibility in the Department's approach to depredation management might alleviate problems and/or make the LAP program more effective.

We plan to invite the participation of legislators in meetings and dialog where alternatives are being developed.

Strategic Objective #2.

Gubernatorial approval for the Department to advance the 2015 fee proposal did not allow sufficient time for public outreach related to detailed fiscal need or development of spending priorities for additional revenue. Regardless, there seemed to be general legislative and public support for increased revenue simply to address a decade of inflation – estimated to have eroded buying power by over 20%. The Department committed to circle back with constituents if the bill passed and develop a FY17 budget reflecting spending priorities for Legislative consideration in the 2016 session.

The Department is currently contemplating mechanisms to solicit public involvement to develop spending priorities for an enhanced FY17 budget (and beyond) in order to demonstrate the connection between the need for increased revenue, operational capacity, outcomes and public benefits.

Strategic Objective #3 – FY17 Budget Development

The Department has begun the planning process for preparation of the fiscal year 2017 budget request to be submitted to the Governor's Office by September 1. This presentation updated the Commission on the current financial status of the Department and discuss revenue and expense expectations for the upcoming budget year.

The annual budget request is developed starting with the “base” amount of ongoing appropriation, which is then adjusted for routine cost increases (employee medical insurance, statewide costs allocated to IDFG, etc.).

The department then requests enhancements which can be ongoing or one-time for the upcoming year.

Strategic Objective #4.

Maintain or increase the constituent and legislative support for the garnered for the 2015 fee proposal (HB32) for the 2016 legislative fee proposal, including sportsman's support for a budget enhancement.

The Department recommends that the Commission stay with the “Price Lock” proposal for the 2016 legislative session. The revenue mechanisms in the “Price Lock” proposal remain relevant. The Department and Commission have spent considerable time and effort developing support for the proposal and it is our opinion that “Price-Lock” ended the 2015 legislative session with increased understanding and support from both the public and legislators.

Current Timeline:

- *May Commission meeting:* Overview of Budget Development and initial estimates for revenue and general priorities
- *May – July:* Department staff compile and submit requests for additional appropriation to cover new projects with funding

- July Commission meeting: Preliminary Discussion of budget request, including items for supplemental appropriation and FY17 line item enhancements.
- July – August: Refinement of budget estimates and supporting documentation
- August Commission meeting: Final approval of FY17 Budget request
- **September 1st, 2015**: Deadline to submit request to Governor’s office and Legislative Services Office.

MISCELLANEOUS

African Model for Wildlife Management Compared North American Model

George Fischer, Conservation Officer, gave a presentation on the African Model for Wildlife Management compared to the North American Model. Mr. Fischer has made several trips to Africa.

REPORTS

Marketing Update: Mobile License Site for Selling Licenses/Phone

Michael Pearson, Chief, Administration, reported that on Thursday, April 30, the Department launched a “mobile friendly” website to make it easier to purchase a license, controlled hunt application, tag, or validation (such as 2-pole permit) using a mobile device. As part of this launch, licenses will now be stored on the device after purchase, but tags will still be physically mailed to the hunter or angler. The mobile device used to purchase these items must have a cellular or Wi-Fi connection in order to make a purchase, and the usual convenience fees will be assessed at the same amount as if these items were purchased using a desktop over the internet.

An informal demonstration was conducted during the break.

Development of Quantitative Adult Return Objectives for Hatchery-and Natural –Origin Salmon and Steelhead

Peter Hassemer, Anadromous Fish Manager, provided the report (Appendix 48, Exhibit 37). The first goal in the current Fisheries Management Plan (2013 – 2018) is to “Sustain Idaho’s fish and wildlife and the habitats upon which they depend.” The first objective under that goal is to “Maintain or improve game populations to meet the demand for hunting, fishing, and trapping.” Except for hatchery spring/summer Chinook salmon, there are no quantitative anadromous fish objectives that define what numbers of fish would be necessary to “meet the demand for fishing” or at what levels these resources could be sustained. Fisheries staffs are developing anadromous fish objectives related to production capacity of the natural environment and mitigation hatchery programs. These goals would represent the numbers of fish that would sustain the populations and provide fishing opportunity.

Development of an Experimental Hatchery Broodstock for the Removal of Undesirable Non-Native Populations

Dan Schill, Fishery Research Manager, stated that since 2006 upwards of 8 million in hydropower mitigation funding have been spent to successfully collapse the Lake Pend Oreille Lake Trout population to restore the kokanee fishery. Despite this success, ongoing suppression (and funding) will be required to ensure the lake trout population does not rebound. IDFG researchers and hatchery staff are collaborating on a new approach for collapsing or completely eradicating such undesirable populations that impact sport fishing. The method uses widely-applied commercial aquaculture methods to develop a broodstock whose progeny are only capable of producing males. Stocking these hatchery fish into a wild population would, over time, skew the sex ratio to all males. The undesirable wild population would ultimately be eliminated and allow re-establishment of a fishery with a more desirable species. Initial projections by IDFG research staff indicates that such an approach, when combined with manual removals could eradicate a short-lived target population in roughly five to six years. Although experimental at this time, the project is approaching the point where a pilot study designed to test the concept is near at hand. The purpose of this presentation is to inform the Commission of the project and discuss issues related to this potential new tool for managing undesirable fish populations.

RULES

Negotiated Rule Making/Update on Trapper Education Proposal

Jeff Gould, Chief, Wildlife, presented the update. At the January 2015 Commission meeting, the Fish and Game Commission directed the Department to move forward with the Negotiated Rule Making Process for mandatory trapper education. The Notice of Intent indicated that negotiated rulemaking would establish a mandatory trapper education class, the class length, and required subject matter to be covered. Additional training, including a field component, would be required for newer trappers.

Staff Recommendation: Staff proposes the following strategies to address the majority of comments provided by those that agreed or agreed in part to the initial proposal.

Formalize the voluntary training as a standard course required by all “new” trappers who never purchased a trapping license prior to 2010.

- Offer an on-line option for new trappers as an alternative to in-person classes.
- Drop requirement for an in-person class for experienced trappers (those who purchased trapping license prior to 2010).
- Provide ethics and non-target avoidance brochures with each trapping license sold.

Commission consensus after discussion is to drop the on-line option for new trappers. The Commission feels that class room experience is important.

This agenda was an information item to update the Commission.

REPORT

Technology Considerations Applied to Methods of Take

Jon Rachael, State Wildlife Manager, stated that improvements in technology, especially among archery and muzzleloader equipment, has increased significantly during the past 2 decades. Additionally, technological improvements in optics and ballistics have altered the functional ability of rifle hunters. While some technological improvements are cosmetic in nature and have little effect on weapon performance or harvest success, others are designed to increase a hunter's effectiveness by improving range, accuracy, and/or lethality.

From 2006-2009, the Commission conducted a thorough review of archery and muzzleloader equipment rules, and adopted some adjustments to regulations to address concerns expressed by a broad spectrum of hunters, and to respond to changes in technology that had occurred during the previous decade. The most recent modifications to technology-related methods of take rules were adopted by the Commission in 2008-2009 and include:

- Firearms: scopes containing battery or tritium powered reticles are allowed
- Archery: compound bow maximum allowable "let off" was increased to 85%, minimum arrow weight was reduced, non-magnifying scopes with battery or tritium lighted reticles were allowed for disabled archery hunters
- Muzzleloader: pelletized powers, .209 primers, and sabots were prohibited, and exposed ignition systems were required

In July 2014, staff presented a workshop to the Commission on the history of the method-of-take restrictions. More recently, the Commission has requested staff to draft a guidance statement that reflects past Commission philosophy when evaluating method-of-take requests (related to technology). The guidance statement is as follows:

"Restrict the use of technological advances in fish and wildlife recreation when they compromise fair chase and management objectives."

The Commission will use this guidance statement in future discussions to formalize their current philosophy prior to evaluating future modification requests.

The most common requests for rule modifications that may merit close evaluation and consideration are allow lighted nocks on arrows, allow telemetry devices in arrows, cameras mounted on firearms/bows, electronic scope-rangefinder combo, lighted archery sights, expanding broadheads, 30# bow draw weight for youth and large caliber air guns.

Commission discussion followed. Commission consensus is to take no action on any of the technology proposals. A discussion on Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), also known as "drones" will be discussed at the July Commission meeting.

Review Sale of Non-Resident Tags as a Second Deer or Elk Tag in 2014

Jeff Gould, Chief, Wildlife, reported on the sales. The Idaho Fish and Game establishes a nonresident (NR) tag quota through Rule IDAPA 13.01.01.600 that limits the number of

nonresident elk and deer tags sold in Idaho each year. This quota has remained at approximately 12,815 nonresident elk and 15,500 nonresident deer tags available for purchase since 1990.

For many years the Department sold most if not all the NR tags available through the quota. In 2009, NR tag sales began to decline and the decline continued through 2012 when 40% of the NR quota remained unsold at the end of the hunting season. In 2013, NR elk and deer tags sales increased by 4% and 10% over the prior year, respectively. In 2014, NR elk and deer tag sales surged by 18% and 35% respectively. Total revenue from NR elk and deer tag sales was \$7.5 million in 2014 compared to \$8.8 million in 2008 when the quota was last sold out.

- 2014 NR elk tags sold increased 18% over the prior year
- 2014 NR deer tags sold increased 35% over the prior year
- 2014 NR elk and deer tag revenue increased by \$1,192,500 over the prior year

Any nonresident elk or deer tags remaining in the statewide quota after August 1 may be sold to residents and nonresidents as a second tag, at the nonresident elk or deer tag price. The previous benchmark (high) for sales of second elk and deer tags was set in 2008 (Table 2). Second tag sales also experienced a similar period of decline starting in 2009 as described for the overall NR elk and deer tags.

In 2014, the Commission discounted the price of the second elk tag by 28% (\$299 down from \$415) and the second deer tag by 33% (\$199 down from \$300). This discount did not apply to first tags purchased by nonresidents. This stimulated second tag sales considerably and established a new benchmark for second tag sales in 2014. Total revenue generated above the prior year from the sale of second tags was \$487,000. This was part of the overall \$1,192,500 revenue increase from all NR elk and deer tag sales compared to the previous year.

The Commission Order to discount the price of the 2014 nonresident/resident second elk and deer tags applied to the 2014 season only and by default prices will return to full price in 2015 with not action taken. The Commission may consider if any action is warranted for 2015 at the July Commission meeting if so desired.

State Wildlife Action Plan Update

Rita Dixon, State Wildlife Action Plan Coordinator, provided a briefing on the process.

Approximately 98% of Idaho's native fish and wildlife species held in public trust by the State of Idaho are not hunted, fished, or trapped and have very limited sources of funding.

In 2001, Congress created the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program and State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program, which for the first time, provided funding to state fish and wildlife agencies primarily for the management of nongame species. The funding was distributed to the States with the condition that each state develop a State Wildlife Action Plan—the strategic direction to implementing proactive, non-regulatory, incentive-based solutions to conserve fish and wildlife.

Congress also required that all States commit to reviewing and, if necessary, revising their Wildlife Action Plans within 10 years. As such, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (Department) is currently undertaking a comprehensive review and revision of the Idaho State Wildlife Action Plan (formerly known as the Comprehensive Wildlife conservation Strategy), first completed in 2005 pursuant to the creation of the Wildlife conservation and Restoration Account.

A draft plan will be released in August for review. A final draft of the revised State Wildlife Action Plan is due to USFWS by October 1, 2015.

MISCELLANEOUS

Election of Commission Chair and Vice Chair

15-32 Commissioner Corkill moved and Commissioner Anderson seconded a motion to appoint Mark Doerr as Chairman and Will Naillon as Vice Chairman. All Commissioners voted in favor.

REPORTS

Director's Report

Director Moore expressed his thanks to Commissioners Fred Trevey and Kenny Anderson for their service to the Department and the Commission.

Idaho Wolf Depredation Control Board

Pursuant to Idaho Code Section 22-5306(3) the Idaho Department of Fish and Game transfers up to \$110,000 on July 1 each year to the fish and game subaccount administered by the Idaho Wolf Depredation control Board to be used as directed by the Idaho Fish and Game Commission (Appendix 48, Exhibit 38).

A memorial to honor fallen officers Pogue and Elms was held May 13th with 55 officers participating. Due to their deaths and sacrifices 34 years ago the rest of the officers have been safe since. Thank you to Greg Wooten and staff in preparation for this event.

Commissioner Mark Doerr, Director Moore, and Gregg Servheen participated on a tour of Rock Creek on May 8th. Will Whelan, TNC, and several legislators were in attendance.

Recognition of Mark Hill, Regional Conservation Officer's retirement.

Commissioner's Report

Panhandle Region, Brad Corkill

- The Department continues to collect data from the 86 GPS collared cow and calf elk in Units 4, 6, & 7. To date we have investigated 12 mortalities; 2 cows and 10 calves.

Wolves are responsible for taking two calves, lions are responsible for the other mortalities.

- Jim Federicks has left the region and is the new Fish Chief for the state. Congratulations Jim.

Clearwater Region, Fred Trevey

- Mark Hill congratulations on retirement and his service.

Southwest Region, Blake Fischer

- New Employee Tour involvement opportunities for involvement in the Region and making connections.

Magic Valley Region, Mark Doerr

- Sage grouse lek routes are completed in the region.
- Mule deer survival continues to be the highest record since 1998 in the Magic Valley.

Southeast Region, Lane Clezie

- The water outlook for this summer and fall is uncertain.
- Continued success with our efforts to control pelican nesting activity at the Blackfoot reservoir nesting colony.
- Wildlife management staffs are working with area houndsmen to collect black bear DNA samples to build an abundance and distribution estimate in the Bear River drainage.

Upper Snake, Kenny Anderson

- As of May 12, 2015 the Upper Snake water storage system is at 83% capacity.

Salmon Region, Will Naillon

- Attended the formal presentation at the New Employee Tour and explained the Commission process to new employees.

Commissioner Reports stand as written (Appendix 48, Exhibit 39).

MISCELLANEOUS

Planning for Next Meeting

The Commissioners discussed scheduled items for the upcoming July 29-30 meeting in Pocatello.

Executive Session

15-33 Commissioner Naillon moved and Commissioner Corkill seconded a motion to hold an executive session pursuant to Idaho Code 67-2345(1)(b)(c)(f) to discuss personnel, land and litigation.

Roll Call Vote: Mark Doerr, Lane Clezie, Blake Fischer, Kenny Anderson, Will Naillon, Brad Corkill and Fred Trevey voted in favor.

15-34 Commissioner Clezie moved and Commissioner Naillon seconded a motion to come out of executive session with no action taken. All Commissioners voted in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

Commission Field Tour: Clearwater River

The Commission toured the Clearwater River.

Mark Doerr
Chairman

Virgil Moore
Secretary