

**Meeting Date:** November 17, 2016

**Agenda Item No. 15**

**Agenda Item:** Wolf Plan Update and Timeline

**Bureau Chief Approval:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Prepared by:** Jim Hayden, Staff Biologist

**Background:**

Current Status

- Federal oversight over wolf monitoring in Idaho under the ESA ended on May 5, 2016. Relisting of wolves would now require a new petition for listing.
- State management, hunting, and trapping has curbed wolf-related conflicts on livestock and ungulates.
- Mid-winter to spring survival of cow elk was good, averaging 96% within the 14 study areas in the state. Mid-winter to spring survival of calf elk was also good, averaging 74% within the 9 study areas in the state. The primary cause of elk mortalities was predation by mountain lions.
- State management has also curbed livestock depredations significantly. During the year prior to hunting and trapping (2010), there were 109 complaints of wolf damage by livestock producers. This has decreased steadily, with only 55 complaints in 2015.

Wolf Conservation and Management Plan

- The 10-year plan (2017 – 2026) will present current wolf population status, identify current and anticipated issues, and strategies, objectives, and actions necessary to address those issues.
- The Wolf Management Team was formed during May 2016 and has been doing background work and initial drafting of the plan.
- The draft plan will be presented for Commission review during April/May 2017.
- A revised draft plan will be available for public review during June, with a final draft slated for Commission adoption during July.

**Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:**

The Idaho Fish and Game Commission is charged with administering state wildlife policy through supervision and management of IDFG (Idaho Code 36-104). Species Management Plans are the guiding documents to manage wildlife and are a direct reflection of the Department Strategic Plan.

**Public Involvement Process:**

Public involvement will include public meetings and a 30-day comment period of the draft plan posted on the department's website in June.

**Justification:**

The wolf plan will function as the action plan for wolf management in Idaho. It helps, ensuring the population remains well-distributed, self-sustaining, and delisted from the Endangered Species Act in the state, while addressing both recreational opportunities and conflicts associated with wolves.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Information only.

**Action Requested:**

N/A