



Direction 2012

Director's Business Plan



The Director's Message



This document outlines my short-term, mid-term, and long-term objectives as Director. All of them are important, but one of the most important to me is hosting a large and prominent event in September 2012 for sportsmen and other Idahoans who care about wildlife to collectively discuss the future of fish and wildlife management in Idaho. As we face revenue challenges and new challenges in conservation, it is our responsibility to create the space for these conversations and decisions.

After 30-plus years working at Idaho Fish and Game, I am very excited about being your new Director. And – as I mentioned during the In-service Training School in May – I work for you. My door is always open.

Vig L Moore



Fish and Game Commission

The Idaho State Legislature created the Idaho Department of Fish and Game in 1899. In 1938, by voter initiative, the Fish and Game Commission was created to set policy for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. Commissioners are appointed from seven administrative regions by the governor and serve staggered, four-year terms. The 2010 Commissioners are as follows: Tony McDermott (Panhandle), Fred Trevey (Clearwater), Bob Barowsky (Southwest), Wayne Wright (Magic Valley), Randy Budge (Southeast), Kenny Anderson (Upper Snake), and Gary Power (Salmon). The Commission holds most of the regulatory authority for fish and wildlife management, and expresses its overall expectations to the Fish and Game in the strategic plan called *The Compass*.



Kenny Anderson



Bob Barowsky



Randall Budge



Tony McDermott



Gary Power



Fred Trevey



Wayne Wright

Our Vision

The Department shall work with the citizens of Idaho in providing abundant, diverse fish and wildlife and ensuring a rich outdoor heritage for all generations.

The Landscape 2012: Key External Factors

Economic Slowdown — The slow economy has greatly affected the state of Idaho and has affected Fish and Game's license revenue (albeit to a lesser extent). However, it also has created opportunities to build new relationships with nonresidents, to acquire key land parcels for lower prices, to be more creative and collaborative to solve common problems, and to foster sustainable solutions to fish and wildlife issues.

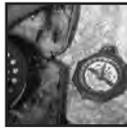
Narrow Funding Base — More than 90 percent of Idahoans say wildlife issues are important to them, yet Fish and Game receives no general tax revenue – the agency's revenue almost exclusively comes from license sales, federal aid, mitigation funding, and grants. At-risk species conservation, urban wildlife management, shifting patterns in wildlife-based recreation, and the public's changing expectations of wildlife management and of Fish and Game require involvement and funding beyond that from hunters and anglers. Several legislators agree, but agreement on the mechanism is elusive.

NonResident Hunters — We sold noticeably fewer hunting licenses to nonresidents than the previous year. Nonresident hunters expressed a "triple whammy" – the wolves' effects on elk hunting, the 2009 fee increase, and the economy were main reasons they gave for not yet planning a trip to Idaho in 2010. Fish and Game has historically charged significantly higher rates for nonresidents to hunt in Idaho, and this has helped keep costs low for our residents. In good times this works well but nonresidents are more likely to defer hunting trips to Idaho in difficult economic times, and when they do, Fish and Game's revenue stream is directly affected. Direct mailings to nonresidents appear to be effective in affecting perceptions, issues, and sales, but they are very time-sensitive and costly.

Wolf Management — A 2010-2011 hunting season on wolves is dependent on the outcome of a pending lawsuit. Seasons, limits, and rules may vary from 2009 to achieve management objectives. Our management efforts appear to have stopped growth, but wolf predation on elk continues to suppress certain elk populations, particularly in the Lolo and Sawtooth Zones. Wolf management remains highly controversial.

Energy Development — Idaho has the natural potential for wind, geothermal, hydro, and solar power. Nuclear power generation may also be on the horizon. Energy development in our neighbor states puts Idaho right in the path of several proposed transmission corridors. Potential effects to fish, wildlife, and habitat must be assessed and considered as in-state and out-of-state energy demands are addressed.

Managing Predation — Fish and Game is taking overt actions to manage predation when it impairs reaching game population objectives. The challenge is to define and find a balance between predators and prey – which is technically difficult, especially when overlaid with legal, policy, or administrative guidelines. Examples include reducing wolf predation on elk to increase elk survival and reducing American white pelican predation on Yellowstone cutthroat trout along the Blackfoot River to improve spawning success. Defining "balance" also includes stakeholders' desires, which can be difficult to assess scientifically.



Climate Change — Collaborative efforts are just beginning for predictive modeling of spatial and temporal effects of climate change on fish, wildlife, and habitat in Idaho and the surrounding states and provinces. All field staff and program managers are challenged with using emerging climate information to adapt their on-the-ground management. Current legal and policy frameworks also may need to be adapted.

Greater Sage-Grouse — The “listing warranted but precluded” determination under the Endangered Species Act will be reviewed every year by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, so progress towards greater sage-grouse recovery must be shown.

Invasive Species — Exotic and invasive plants and animals may alter or convert fish and wildlife habitat and compete, hybridize, or prey on native and other desirable fish and wildlife. The state of Idaho is struggling with how to respond to a rapidly growing list of invasive species and to fund interdiction.

Off-highway Vehicles — OHVs continue to increase in numbers, size, and sophistication. About half of Idaho’s big game hunters are using OHVs during hunting season. Fish and Game must assess and explain how OHV use affects fish, wildlife, and habitats and also must address existing and potential conflicts between hunters and anglers who use OHVs and those who do not.

Nature Deficit Disorder — The average child spends 44 hours per week plugged into electronic media and a mere 30 minutes outside in unstructured play. This disconnection not only has been linked to childhood obesity, attention deficit disorders, and developmental problems, but also will affect the future of wildlife stewardship.

Idaho Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy — The Idaho Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy provides a framework for conserving 229 “species of greatest conservation need” and the habitats upon which they depend. It is the state’s guiding document for managing and conserving at-risk species, most of which are not hunted, trapped, or fished. An integrated approach to implementing this strategy across all Fish and Game programs will reduce potential listings under the Endangered Species Act.

Wildlife Diseases — Increased movement of people, animals, and materials worldwide has increased the potential for native and exotic wildlife diseases to affect Idaho. Additionally, increased human awareness and concern for existing diseases such as hydatid disease, chronic wasting disease, brucellosis, avian influenza, and *Pasteurella* requires a proactive approach to detecting and managing both new and existing diseases.

GOAL—Fish, Wildlife, and Habitat

SUSTAIN IDAHO'S FISH AND WILDLIFE AND
THE HABITATS UPON WHICH THEY DEPEND.

Short-term Objectives

1. Maintain State management of delisted wolves in 2011.

Plan: Open sport hunting and trapping for the 2011 hunting season; initiate population management by May 2011 in the Lolo zone and take over all livestock depredation management by May 2011. Initiate in 2012 population management in other zones with known wolf depredation constraining achievement of elk management goals.

2. Complete two new fishing waters objectives.

Plan: Build the Edson Fichter Pond in Pocatello and the 54-acre Deyo Reservoir in the Clearwater Region.

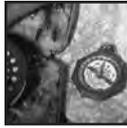
Mid-term Objectives

1. Initiate a review of ungulate management and research.

Plan: Initiate the Elk Management Plan planning process in 2012. Address issues relative to current predator effects and expand management and research efforts for action on those units where predators are limiting factors for deer, elk and moose goals. Additional items: habitat initiatives, transportation corridors mortality reduction, survey techniques, frequency of monitoring, harvest reporting improvements to ungulate and moose inventory research initiated.

2. Reach a long-term settlement with Bonneville Power Administration for inundation and operation of Idaho's BPA reservoirs.

Plan: We are meeting with BPA on a monthly basis and hope to present a statewide mitigation package to the Commission in January 2012.



- 3. Continue work with the Governor's Office and other states to ensure that Sage-Grouse are not listed.**

Plan: Insure BLM and USFWS take needed steps in 2012 to maintain priority Sage-Grouse areas on federal lands. Work through WAFWA and with Department of Interior leadership to get proper regulatory authority in BLM implemented to ensure listing is not warranted.

- 4. Develop a 2013-2017 Wolf Management Plan for Commission review and approval in 2012.**

Long-term Objectives

- 1. Assess technical and effectiveness merit of the Department developing/ leading a range-wide bull trout delisting petition.**



GOAL—Fish and Wildlife Recreation

MEET THE DEMAND FOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE RECREATION.

Short-term Objectives

1. **Develop next steps for the Landowner Appreciation Program to address unresolved issues.**

Plan: Review and discuss the issues with the Commission at the May 2011 meeting for next actions related to the units that exceed 10 percent control hunt allocation to land owners.

2. **Develop and identify off-highway vehicle solutions to issues related to use by hunters.**

Plan: Work with the Commission, hunters, OHV groups, IDPR and legislators to clarify and implement changes in IDFG rules that lead to solutions.

3. **Wildlife Management Areas Commercial Activities Policy.**

Plan: Develop for Commission approval.

4. **Initiate mentor hunt program.**

Plan: Interact with the hunter education instructors and hunters to develop rules for Commission review and action.

Mid-term Objectives

1. **Simplify hunting regulation format and rule complexity.**

Plan: Initiate with the 2012 cycle and finish all regulations in 2013 similar to the 2012-2013 fishing regulations.

2. **Increase overall acres open to the public through *Access Yes*.**

Plan: Integrate some federal funding into the *Access Yes* program to match with license funds.



GOAL—Working With Others

IMPROVE PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF
AND INVOLVEMENT IN FISH AND WILDLIFE
MANAGEMENT.

Short-term Objectives

1. Engage our stakeholders.

Plan: Talk to every major statewide sportsmen group, landowner/ business groups and media boards in the next twelve months to listen and communicate vision/ initiatives in Business Plan.

2. Maintain strong working relationships with the Commission, agency leadership, the Governor and the Legislature.

Plan: Ensure the solid working relationships with the Commission, the Department's executive and management team sustain the cohesive leadership team of the Department. Maintain the good working relationship with the Governor, his staff and cabinet, and members of the Legislature.





Mid-term Objectives

1. **Sponsor a Wildlife Congress in 2012 of all Idahoans to pursue new initiatives and/or validate existing strategies.**

Plan: The vision is to provide the catalyst for the discussion of benefits to all those that provide for wildlife and that new ways of doing our business are required to insure the outdoors is a better place for the next generation; not only with sustainable wildlife populations but for access for hunting, fishing, trapping and wildlife based recreation. This goal would review the *Compass* for relevance with the people of Idaho and Commission and make adjustments based on the new economic realities of this decade by 2013 that will require reprioritized and new funding to accomplish. Utilize In-service Training School May 2011 to kick this effort off with the staff. Develop a prospectus for a Wildlife Congress in 2012.



GOAL—Management Support

ENHANCE THE CAPABILITY OF THE DEPARTMENT TO
MANAGE FISH AND WILDLIFE AND SERVE THE PUBLIC.

Short-term Objectives

1. **Work to resolve issues among sportsmen for legislation to expand auction tags.**

Plan: Initiate discussion with sportsmen that will assist them in determining if legislation to increase the number of auction tags to enhance Department revenue is appropriate.

2. **Clarify and identify core budget priorities to respond to rapidly changing license and federal revenue streams in FY12-13.**

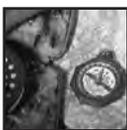
Plan: Review all budgets relative to priorities using the zero-based budget reviews previously completed; adjust and reprioritize resources for the FY2012 budget; implement necessary spending management. Be prepared to deal with Federal budget changes. Report to the Commission at the July 2011 meeting.

3. **Propose first phase of new tag and license fee structure with marketing strategies for implementation in 2012.**

Plan: A Department team is working on this project, including with stakeholder groups and the assistance of a marketing firm. We will have initial options for review with the Commission in July including any legislative actions.

4. **Develop strategies for dealing with non-resident hunter license and tag sales loss.**

Plan: Review the other western states (with over the counter big game license sales) for information to assist IDFG in formulating and understanding of the demographic loss and determine if these can be recovered in the next few years or not.



Mid-term Objectives

1. **Rebalance the Department's portfolio of spending to insure good return on investment.**

Plan: Verify that our major management activities are relevant and on target. Solicit team reviews of projects and activities to insure they are appropriate. Insure we are not spending too much or too little on IDFG diversified efforts. Review all budgets adjust and reprioritize resources for the FY2013 proposals.

2. **Completion of the GRANTS system that is currently under development. This will assist the Department with management of the increasing number of grants, allow better budget tracking by program leaders and facilitate invoicing.**

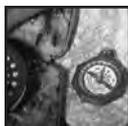
3. **Evaluate efficiency of statewide catchable trout program.**

Plan: Initiate evaluation of cost benefit of catchable and fingerling programs.

4. **Upgrade resident hatchery infrastructure.**

Plan: Review hatchery infrastructure and propose plan for use of funds obtained by sale of Springfield Hatchery to improve and consolidate resident hatchery for greater efficiency and capacity.





Long-term Objectives

1. Lay the foundation to broaden the Department's funding base.

Plan: The Department will work with legislators and other State agencies to explore new funding sources to build the relationships and coalitions necessary to obtain a new and additional funding source for the Department in the next two to four years. It is imperative that the Department maintain a primary funding base that is self-supporting and stays true to its roots and continue to be self-reliant, fiscally responsible and live within its means.

2. Performance audit of license and Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration funded programs as a first step to determine the public benefit being provided by the work we are currently doing, before recommending or developing a proposal to raise license fees.

3. Align our cost accounting system to more effectively track expenditures with goals, objectives and actions of *The Compass*.

Plan: Develop new budget system proposal and cost estimates for review and approval in FY2013 or FY2014.

4. Secure additional HQ, Southwest Region and Panhandle Region office space to meet the needs of the Department. Develop proposals for each of these facilities for inclusion in FY 2013 budget.

5. Continue to seek additional operational efficiencies and effective use of fiscal resources while providing our employees with modern, safe and efficient equipment and working environments. Make employee compensation and retention a top priority using these efficiencies.







Our Mission

(Idaho Code Section 36-103)

All wildlife, including all wild animals, wild birds, and fish, within the state of Idaho, is hereby declared to be the property of the state of Idaho. It shall be preserved, protected, perpetuated, and managed. It shall only be captured or taken at such times or places, under such conditions, or by such means, or in such manner, as will preserve, protect, and perpetuate such wildlife, and provide for the citizens of this state and, as by law permitted to others, continued supplies of such wildlife for hunting, fishing and trapping.



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Telephone: (703) 358-2156.*

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