



## IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

*Date: November 7, 2024*

*Agenda Item No. 11*

*Agenda Item: Wildfires, Wildlife, and Hunters*

*Bureau Chief Approval: SR*

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*Position/Title: Regional Wildlife Biologist and Regional Wildlife Manager*

### **Background:**

Wildfires are an annual occurrence across Idaho and can have a multitude of effects on wildlife, depending on the species. Wildlife species co-evolved with a natural fire regime and many species benefit from the early successional habitat that wildfires create. However, the size, severity, and frequency of fire; environmental conditions; and the presence of invasive species may require human intervention to aid habitats in recovery. The fire season in Idaho may extend into November, which can restrict hunter access and alter habitat used by wildlife. Federal and state agencies may issue fire closures for human safety that can further restrict hunter access. IDFG assists hunters with fire updates, alternative accessible areas, and in limited circumstances with refunds or rain checks. This presentation will cover wildfire effects on wildlife—including short/long-term habitat use by game species—habitat restoration, and population management. In addition, the presentation will cover how IDFG assists hunters that have been affected by wildfires in their hunting area.

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

IDAPA 13.01.04 – Rules Governing Licensing, establishes the rules in which the Department shall issue refunds or rain checks for illness/injury, military deployment, and hunt closures.

### **Public Involvement Process:**

Public may comment on this topic at the public hearing portion of the meeting.

### **Justification:**

This presentation is informational for the Commission about wildfire effects on wildlife and hunter access.

### **Staff Recommendation:**

No action requested. This agenda item is presented for Commission information only.

### **Suggested Motion:**

None