

Meeting Date: November 16, 2023

Agenda Item No. 5F

Agenda Item: Camas Cattle LLC Land Acquisition
(ACTION)

Bureau Chief Approval: SR

Prepared by Casey Pozzanghera, Natural Resources Program Coordinator and Steve Elam, Mitigation Staff Biologist

Background:

The Department is proposing fee-title acquisition of the Camas Cattle LLC property, a 5,533 acre livestock ranch containing high-quality wildlife habitat in Elmore County, approximately 20 miles southeast from the city of Boise.

The property lies within an area of heavily used winter range and supports roughly 1,800 mule deer and 700 elk annually. This acquisition would increase the Department's ability to manage big game winter range within the Boise River Habitat District and would complement the management objectives of the nearby Boise River Wildlife Management Area. In addition to big game, the property supports upland game species such as California quail, mourning dove, chukar, and gray partridge.

This acquisition would provide additional opportunities for public access and recreation in the state's most densely populated region. The threat of development in this area is extremely high, as evidenced by several proposed residential developments on adjacent parcels. This acquisition would not only protect important big game winter range but would also create additional access opportunities to tens of thousands of acres of adjacent public land.

The appraised value is \$7,860,000. Bonneville Power Administration would fund the acquisition under the Southern Idaho Wildlife Mitigation Agreement.

Staff estimate maintenance costs would be \$25,000 annually and Fee in Lieu of Tax payments to Elmore County to be \$4,500 annually.

This property was previously presented to the Commission during Executive Session in May 2023.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy issues:

The Idaho Fish and Game Commission has the authority to acquire land (Idaho Code 36-104(b)(7)). Land acquisition is in accordance with Commission land acquisition policy.

Public Involvement Process:

Elmore County commissioners have been notified.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends acquiring the 5,533 acre Camas Cattle LLC property in Elmore County.

Suggested Motion: I move to acquire the 5,533 acre Camas Cattle LLC property in Elmore County.