

**Idaho Fish and Game Commission
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Headquarters
March 19-20, 2024
Boise, Idaho**

March 19

MISCELLANEOUS

Public Meeting

Chairman Don Ebert called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. MDT and reviewed the rules of conduct for the hearing and reported that all public comments would be reviewed by the Commission at the Wednesday business meeting. Commissioner Dave Bobbitt, Don Ebert, Tim Murphy, Greg Cameron, Jordan Cheirrett, Brody Harshbarger, and Ron Davies were present.

The following individuals provided in person testimony: Bert Bowler, Marc Cooke, Stephan Pfeiffer, Tim Davanis, Justin Webb, Katie Roundy, Rosanne Noble, Cortney Lyskoski, Jeff Abrams, Ben Lamb, Rye Russell, Travis Bullock, David Cannamela, Jeff Bitton, Pat Ford, Dave Hayes, Garrick Dutcher, Bury Mantel, Sasha Truax, Nathan Wright, Charlie Bullock, Caroline Shankel, and Matt Borg.

March 20

MISCELLANEOUS

Chairman Ebert called the meeting to order at 8:00 am MDT.

Review of Public Comment

Director Fredericks provided a summary of the public comments. There were 60 members of the public in attendance with 23 people providing testimony.

- 13 people provided testimony and two written comments regarding a petition for a rule change that would allow clients of a licensed guide to participate in trapping excursions without taking mandatory Trapper Education courses. Nine people opposed the changes to the rule and four spoke in favor of the petition.
- Four people provided testimony regarding wild salmon and steelhead urging the State to actively engage in the Columbia Basin Restoration Initiative with specific requests to keep salmon science in the public eye and a request to support removal of the Snake River dams.
- Two people provided testimony in support of the draft Elk Management Plan.

- One person provided testimony in support of the additional reduction of mule deer and pronghorn tags in the Southeast and Upper Snake Regions in response to the difficult winter in 2023.
- One person requested a rule change for muzzleloader bullets other than all lead. This was part of Negotiated Rulemaking through 2023. The Department is currently waiting on approval by the Legislature.
- One comment asked the Department and Commission to reconsider changes in the Weiser elk zone that eliminated the youth cow hunting opportunity.
- One comment also suggested additional youth hunting opportunity by providing youth-only pheasant hunting opportunities on the WMAs on a rotational basis.
- One person requested the Commission eliminate white-tailed deer tags suggesting the need for more hunters in Clearwater region to assist in reducing the deer numbers due to Chronic Wasting Disease. Director Fredericks pointed out that the intent is not to reduce deer numbers in the Region and is specific to an area where there is CWD.

Director Fredericks made special mention of the signing of HB 592 which appropriates \$225,000 of State General Fund money to livestock depredation. There will be \$150,000 allocated for compensation for loss related to wolves and grizzly bears and \$75,000 for conflict prevention. This legislation was supported by both the House and Senate and is a bill the Commission supported as well.

Consent Calendar

Minutes July 26-27, 2023, and November 15-16, 2023,
Financial Report

The consent calendar was adopted with no objections.

SEASON SETTING AND RULES

Season Setting: Spring Chinook Salmon Fisheries

Chris Sullivan, Anadromous Fisheries Program Coordinator presented chinook salmon season recommendations. (Appendix 57, Exhibit 18).

24-22 Commissioner Davies moved, and Commissioner Murphy seconded a motion to approve the proposed 2024 fishing seasons for Chinook Salmon in the Snake River, Lower Salmon River, Little Salmon River, Mainstem Clearwater River, Middle Fork Clearwater River, North Fork Clearwater River, and South Fork Clearwater River. Motion carries.

Season Setting: Big Game Season Adjustments for 2024

Rick Ward, State Wildlife Manager presented adjustments in the Big Game Seasons for 2024 (Appendix 57, Exhibit 19).

24-23 Commissioner Cheirrett moved that the Commission adopt modifications to the 2024 big game hunting seasons as proposed. Commissioner Cameron seconded the motion. Motion carries.

REPORTS

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD): 2024 Management and Surveillance

Tricia Hebdon, Assistant Wildlife Bureau Chief, gave the commission an update on CWD management and surveillance for 2024 (Appendix 57, Exhibit 20).

24-24 Commissioner Murphy made the following motion:

1: The Commission adopt the staff recommendation to remove GMU 15 from the CWD Management Zone and add GMU 18 to the CWD Management Zone, resulting in the CWD Management Zone being comprised of GMUs 14 and 18.

2: The Commission adopt staff recommendations to remove the mandatory CWD testing requirements for mule deer, white-tailed deer, elk, and moose harvested in GMU 15 and for elk and moose harvested in GMU 14.

3: The Commission adopt staff recommendations to implement mandatory CWD testing requirements for mule deer and white-tailed deer harvested in GMUs 18, 23, 24, and 32A.

Commissioner Bobbitt seconded the motions. Motions carry.

Hells Canyon Bighorn Sheep Disease Update

Jana Ashling, Regional Wildlife Manager, Clearwater Region provided a disease update on Hells Canyon Bighorn Sheep (Appendix 57, Exhibit 21).

Staff recommends no change to Controlled Hunt No. 5001 (2 tags) or allowance of lottery tag (1) in Controlled Hunt Area 11, which could result in the use of 3 total tags in the hunt area during the 2024 season. No action was taken by the Commission.

LANDS

Moyie River Corridor Forest Legacy Project Conservation Easement

Casey Pozzanghera, Lands/Mitigation Program Coordinator, presented (Appendix 57, Exhibit 22).

24-25 Commissioner Bobbitt moved the Department direct IDL to reallocate the \$300,000 in Department Access funds to assist in the completion of the Moyie River Corridor Project and acquisition of the Moyie River Corridor-Jackson Timberland Opportunities Conservation Easement. Commissioner Davies seconded the motion. Motion carries.

LEGISLATION

Legislative Update

Ellary TuckerWilliams, Legislative & Community Engagement Coordinator, presented updates on legislative activity (Appendix 57, Exhibit 23).

Rulemaking and Budget Update

Amber Worthington, Deputy Director, presented updates on rulemaking and budgetary activity since initiation of the 2024 Legislature on January 8, 2024 (Appendix 57, Exhibit 24).

24-26 Commissioner Davies moved, and Commissioner Cheirrett seconded, a motion that the Department conduct negotiated rulemaking regarding the waiving of trapper education and trapping license requirements for a person under direct supervision of a licensed outfitter or guide. Motion carries.

MANAGEMENT PLANS

Release Draft Elk Management Plan Release for Public Review and Input

Curtis Hendricks, Regional Wildlife Manager, presented the draft Idaho Elk Management Plan 2024-2030 (Appendix 57, Exhibit 25).

With no objection from the Commission, the draft Elk Management Plan will be released to the public, agency partners, and interested organizations for their input.

REPORTS

Deer and Elk Status Update

Toby Boudreau, Deer and Elk Program Coordinator, presented the Deer and Elk Status Update (Appendix 57, Exhibit 26).

SEASON SETTING AND RULES

Migratory Game Bird Season Preview

Jeff Knetter, Upland and Migratory Game Bird Program Coordinator, gave a preview of the Migratory Game Bird Seasons (Appendix 57, Exhibit 27).

MISCELLANEOUS

Shikar Safari Presentation

Greg Wooten, Bureau Chief of Enforcement, presented Officer Spencer Wesche with the Shikar Safari Award.

REPORTS

Wild Salmon and Steelhead Monitoring and Trends

Tim Copeland, Wild Salmon and Steelhead Program Coordinator, gave a presentation about wild salmon and steelhead monitoring trends (Appendix 57, Exhibit 28).

Director's Report

Director Fredericks highlighted items from each bureau in the Director's report.

Commissioner Reports

Commissioner reports stand as written (Appendix 57, Exhibit 29).

MISCELLANEOUS

Planning for Next Meeting

The next meeting will be May 15-16, 2024, in Coeur d' Alene.

Executive Session I. C. 74-206 (1) (f)

24-27 Commissioner Bobbitt moved, and Commissioner Harshbarger seconded, a motion that the Commission enter executive session under Idaho Code 74-206 subsections (1) (c) and (f). Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Dave Bobbitt, Don Ebert, Tim Murphy, Jordan Cheirrett, Brody Harshbarger, and Ron Davies.

The Commission discussed potential property acquisition and litigation matters.

24-28 Commissioner Cheirrett moved, and Commissioner Cameron seconded a motion that the Commission come out of executive session with no action taken. Motion carries.

Open session

Adjourn



Don Ebert
Chairman



Jim Fredericks
Secretary