

**Idaho Fish and Game Commission
Special Meeting – March 7, 2024
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Legislative Conference Call
Boise, Idaho**

A meeting of the Idaho Fish and Game Commission was held by telephone conference, attended by Commissioners Don Ebert, Greg Cameron, Jordan Cheirrett, Brody Harshbarger, and Ron Davies.

IDFG staff present: Director Jim Fredericks, Deputy Director Jon Rachael, Deputy Director Amber Worthington, Ellary Tucker Williams, Deputy Attorney General Kathleen Trever, Deputy Attorney General Owen Moroney, Jon Oswald, Tara Reichert, Tricia Hebdon, Shane Roberts, Greg Wooten, Frank Edelmann, Lance Hebdon, Sal Palazzolo, Rick Ward, Valerie Taro and Elizabeth Heist. IDFG staff participating via phone: Carson Watkins, JJ Teare, Josh Royse, Craig White, Kenzie Baratti, Mike, Peterson, Kimmarie Sawyer, Pat Kennedy, Matt Pieron, James Bower, and Ryan Hilton.

Members of the public in attendance: Garrett Visser and Michael Gibson.

Chairman Ebert called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. MST.

LEGISLATION

Update about Commissioner Confirmation

Commissioner Brody Harshbarger was confirmed on the Senate Floor.

Update on Fish and Game Legislative Presentations (JFAC, Bills, other) and Budget

Amber Worthington, Deputy Director, gave an update on rules and JFAC budget. Rules are out of the House Resources and Environment Committee and area awaiting concurrence from the House and Senate Floor.

The budget has passed the Senate and is on to the House Floor for a vote.

New Bill Analysis for Discussion/Update on Pending Legislation / Action for Policy Position

HB 404 has a signing ceremony scheduled for Monday, March 11.

SB 1231a has passed the Senate and is in the House Resources and Conservation Committee.

HB 468 has passed the House and is on the Senate Floor.

HB 469 failed in the House Resources and Conservation Committee.

HB 484 is in the House Resources and Conservation Committee.

HB 592, formerly HB 485, has passed the House and is on the Senate Floor.

HB 591, formerly HB 536, has passed the House and is in the Senate Agriculture Affairs Committee.

SB 1340 has been pulled. The Department will continue to monitor.

HB 612 has passed the House and is in the Senate Agricultural Affairs Committee.

HB 586 has passed the House and is in the Senate Resources and Conservation Committee.

SB 1404, formerly SB 1345, is in the Senate Judiciary and Rules Committee. SB 1404 would make it difficult for conservation officers to preserve and protect Idaho's wildlife for current and future generations by significantly limiting their ability to enforce Fish and Game and trespass laws on private land. It is also likely to have negative consequences on law enforcement by inhibiting brief inquiries into unusual activity on private land observed by or reported to rural law enforcement which includes conservation officers.

24-21 Commissioner Davies made a motion that the Commission not support and testify against SB 1404. Commissioner Cameron seconded the motion. Motion carries. Commissioner Harshbarger opposed and asked to have his vote recorded.

HB 696, formerly HB 597, would shift out-of-state hunter tags for deer, elk, and pronghorn from a first-come, first-served over-the-counter system to a drawing-based system, starting November 15, 2026. This bill is the result of multiple conversations between Speaker Moyle, IDFG, Outfitters and Guides, and sportsmen with concessions and compromises on all sides.

The Commission will not take a position at this time and would like the Department to continue to answer questions.

Other Discussion

Rick Ward, State Wildlife Manager, gave an update on CWD. There were 4,100 samples taken statewide of deer and elk from July 1, 2023, to present. To date, there have been 3,954 negative samples, 23 positive samples, and 123 still pending.

The CWD control action ended on February 22. A total of 140 animals were removed. There were 79 white-tailed deer removed with 33 negative, six positive and 32 samples still in process. There were 57 mule deer removed, 32 negative, one positive and 31 samples still in process. There were two elk removed, one positive and one pending. The Department will update the Commission on prevalence rates at the March Commission meeting.

Adjournment



Don Ebert
Chairman



Jim Fredericks
Secretary