

**Idaho Fish and Game Commission
Special Meeting
December 23, 2009
Director's Office
600 South Walnut
Boise, Idaho**

Present in the Director's Office: Director Cal Groen; Deputy Director Virgil Moore; Sharon Kiefer, Assistant Director; Dallas Burkhalter, Deputy Attorney General; Kathleen Trever, Deputy Attorney General; Mary Boyer, Executive Assistant; Jeff Gould, Chief of Wildlife; Tom Hemker, Wildlife Habitat Manager; Bill Hutchinson, Special Assistant; and Niels Nokkentved, Information Specialist.

A special meeting of the Idaho Fish and Game Commission was held by telephone conference. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Wayne Wright with Commissioners Randy Budge, Fred Trevey, Tony McDermott, Robert Barowsky, Cameron Wheeler and Gary Power participating.

LANDS

Tex Creek and Bingham Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation Parcels

Tom Hemker, Wildlife Habitat Manager presented the proposals to the Commission. Mr. Hemker stated that these two Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation properties border Tex Creek WMA in the Upper Snake Region, and the Georgetown Summit WMA in the South East Region. They both contain critical mule deer and elk winter range, and have upland habitats. The Tex Creek parcels totals 700 acres with 380 acres in native habitat and 320 acres in dry cropland. The Georgetown parcel totals 895 acres, all in native habitat. These properties were previously presented to the Commission during Executive Session in November of 2009.

The acquisition cost is \$550,200 in 4 annual installments of \$137,550. This is 50% of appraised value. Under the current proposal, the department would make payments over 3 years and take ownership of the Georgetown property in December 2010 and Tex Creek in December 2012.

Fee in lieu of taxes is estimated at \$340 for the Tex Creek parcel and \$180 for the Georgetown parcel. No additional operating and maintenance costs are estimated as they are currently managed by the Department.

09-115 Commissioner Wheeler moved and Commissioner Budge seconded a motion TO ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE LANDS COMMITTEE TO PROCEED WITH THE ACQUISITION OF THE TEX CREEK AND THE GEORGETOWN PARCELS. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

LEGISLATION

Legislative Ideas

Sharon Kiefer, Assistant Director- Policy presented the legislative ideas (Appendix 42, Exhibit 99) to the Commission. Ms. Kiefer state that the Commission had expressed interest in certain legislative ideas as follows. Because the timeline for the Department to sponsor legislation has expired, these ideas must be addressed in collaboration with legislator sponsors to become an “RS” (pre-bill form):

1. Create a short-term Nonresident Small Game Hunting License and fee.

Idaho Code (I.C.) 36-407(e) describes the current nonresident small game hunting license, issued to nonresidents twelve or older, entitling hunting of upland game birds, migratory game birds, cottontail rabbits, huntable furbearers, and unprotected and predatory birds and animals. Also, the holder of this license may not hunt pheasants during the first five days of pheasant season in any area. If none of these provisions are modified in creation of a shorter term license, then no change would be needed for this section. For example, if a new license were created with a term of three days, any of the above species could be hunted as long as the license was not purchased to hunt pheasants during the first five days of pheasant season.

2. Add wolves to the Nonresident Combination Tag

I.C. 36-409 (c) provides Commission authority to promulgate rules to allow a nonresident deer tag to be used to hunt and kill either a bear or a mountain lion (i.e. a “brown tag”) during the open season for deer in a particular area, as may be specified by the Commission. This is currently described on page 74 of the 2009 Big Game Seasons and Rules brochure. If wolves were added to this statute, the Commission could promulgate rules to allow wolves to also be hunted using a nonresident deer tag.

3. Work with legislators on a resolution advocating sustainable federal funding for wolf and grizzly bear management via trust account or other mechanism.

The 55th Wyoming Legislature in 2001 passed a resolution requesting Congress to establish a Northern Rocky Mountain Grizzly Bear and Gray Wolf Management Trust to fund management of these wildlife populations to alleviate the state fiscal burden post-delisting.

In 2008, the Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Commission drafted and publicly reviewed a similar resolution advocating sustained federal funding for grizzly bears that was not specific about the funding mechanism. It is unclear if the resolution was legislatively adopted.

Ms. Kiefer stated that crafting this type of legislation this year and keeping it within the sideboards of our intent will be challenging and suggests waiting until next year. Deputy Attorney General Trever has concerns that this legislation could get tangled up at the same time people are trying to argue for sovereignty to argue for federal funding support.

Per Commission discussion staff will proceed with finding legislative sponsors for the proposals.

MISCELLANEOUS

Adjournment

09- 116 Commissioner Power moved and Commissioner McDermott seconded a motion TO ADJOURN. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

Wayne Wright
Chairman

Cal Groen
Secretary