

Meeting Date: November 19, 2015

Agenda Item No. 14

Agenda Item: 2017 – 2026 Management Plan for the Conservation of Wolves in Idaho

Bureau Chief Approval: _____

Prepared by: Jim Hayden

Background:

Wolf management in Idaho is guided by the 2002 Idaho Wolf Conservation and Management Plan. During March 2008, the Commission approved a state management plan expanding upon the 2002 plan to “provide a framework for state management of the gray wolf...population for the 5-year period following de-listing.” When wolves were re-listed in 2010, this plan became moot, and the Commission rescinded the 2008 plan. The State continued to manage wolves under the direction of the 2002 plan (approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) following de-listing in 2011 to the present.

The Commission will be briefed regarding the upcoming planning process for the development of the next wolf management plan to commence in January 2016.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:

Under Idaho Code 36-104, the Commission is granted authority to manage Idaho’s wildlife, and Species Management Plans are the guiding documents to do so. Species Management plans are a direct reflection of the Department Strategic Plan.

Public Involvement Process:

The Department will update the wolf plan with public input collected as follows:

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| Jan - April | Public opinion survey designed, conducted and analyzed <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repeat of some of the 2006 survey questions to see how Idaho residents, hunters, and ranchers opinions may have changed• Regionally based so that commissioners have region-specific information |
| May | Report survey results to the Commission |
| May - July | Prepare first draft of wolf plan |
| August | Present draft to Commission for direction/modifications before release for public review |
| September | Conduct 21-day public review |
| October | Revision and formatting |
| November | Final to Commission for approval |

Justification:

The current wolf management plan has been in effect for 13 years, and much has changed since that time. The wolf population has grown, wolves have been de-listed, and active population management has ensued, including both hunting and trapping. A plan update will bring information current, and provide clarity to management.

Staff Recommendation:

This is an update on plan development.

Action Requested:

Information only.