

**Meeting Date:** November 19, 2015

**Agenda Item No.** 5D

**Agenda Item:** Cook Land Acquisition

**Bureau Chief Approval:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Prepared by:** Katherine Cousins and Gregg Servheen

**Background:**

This project will acquire in fee title of a 144.6-acre parcel in Nez Perce County, Idaho: Township 33 North, Range 5 West, Sections 13 and 14, located at the end of Redbird Road, in the Waha area, along the northern edge of the Craig Mountain Wildlife Management Area approximately 10 miles southeast of the Lewiston-Clarkston Valley area. The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation is contributing \$50,000 toward the acquisition of the property. The total cost of the acquisition is \$285,000.

This property is surrounded by Department lands on three sides and private land on the east side. Significant efforts by IDFG have been made to acquire properties and block-up ownership in this area since the early 1970s. This acquisition will increase lands in public ownership for recreation. The purchase will provide additional big game and upland bird hunting and substantially improve access to other Department and BLM lands.

This site provides excellent upland bird hunting opportunities and protects mule deer winter range, bighorn sheep transition range, and native grasslands in Lower Hells Canyon. The project protects winter range for elk and white-tailed deer. The property also supports good populations of chukar, gray partridge, and quail.

IDFG pays a fee in lieu of taxes (FILT) for all fee-title properties over 10 acres in size. The FILT for this parcel is estimated at \$766.38.

This was a proposal presented to the Commission during Executive Session on November 10, 2011.

**Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:**

Land acquisition in accordance with Commission and Department land acquisition policy.

**Public Involvement Process:**

Local sportsmen support the acquisition. County commissioners view Department lands as a financial benefit to the county. County commissioners will be contacted and have been supportive of past acquisitions.

**Justification:**

Acquisition of this property would support the Department mission to provide public access.

**Staff Recommendation:**

The Lands Committee recommends proceeding with the acquisition.

**Action Requested:**

Approval of Commission to proceed with the acquisition.

Suggested Motion: Commission adopt staff recommendations to proceed with the Cook Land Acquisition.