



# *Direction 2013*

## Director's Business Plan



# *The Director's Message*



This document outlines my key short-term, mid-term, and long-term objectives as Director, with approval of the Fish and Game Commission. My focus in early FY 2013 will be hosting the Idaho Wildlife Summit, a statewide event open to hunters, anglers, trappers, and other wildlife conservationists to check in with the strategic direction of the Department, to renew the enthusiasm for Idaho's wildlife, to better understand what it takes to protect and manage wildlife, and to motivate citizens to support management efforts and engage in wildlife conservation. The backdrop of our conversation with Idaho citizens is that "Idaho's Wildlife Belongs to You." The Summit is the first step in working together with diverse interests to match public expectations and legal mandates with fiscal realities.

We all have a shared responsibility in protecting and managing Idaho's wildlife. After all, diverse and abundant wildlife makes Idaho...Idaho.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "V. J. Moore". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

# *Fish and Game Commission*

The Idaho State Legislature created the Idaho Department of Fish and Game in 1899. In 1938, by voter initiative, the Fish and Game Commission was created to set policy for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game in its role to implement the State of Idaho wildlife policy. Commissioners are appointed from seven administrative regions by the governor and serve staggered, four-year terms. The FY 2013 Commissioners are as follows: Tony McDermott (Panhandle), Fred Trevey (Clearwater), Bob Barowsky (Southwest), Joan Hurlock (Magic Valley), Randy Budge (Southeast), Kenny Anderson (Upper Snake), and Will Naillon (Salmon). The Commission holds most of the regulatory authority for fish and wildlife management, and expresses its overall expectations to the Fish and Game in the strategic plan called *The Compass*.



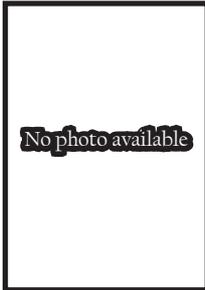
*Kenny Anderson*



*Bob Barowsky*



*Randall Budge*



*Joan Hurlock*



*Will Naillon*



*Fred Trevey*



*Tony McDermott*

## *Our Vision*

The Department shall work with the citizens of Idaho in providing abundant, diverse fish and wildlife and ensuring a rich outdoor heritage for all generations.

# *The Landscape 2013: Key External Factors*

**Economic Slowdown** — The slow economy continues to affect the Department's license revenue, and the Department continues measures to ensure revenue and spending are balanced. Planning for potential reductions to federal funds as a result of national budget management will accompany FY 2014 budget development.

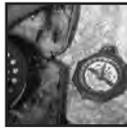
**Narrow Funding Base** — More than 90 percent of Idahoans say wildlife issues are important to them, yet Fish and Game receives no general tax revenue – the agency's revenue almost exclusively comes from license sales, federal aid, mitigation funding, and grants. At-risk species conservation, urban wildlife management, shifting patterns in wildlife-based recreation, and the public's changing expectations of wildlife management and of Fish and Game require involvement and funding beyond that from hunters and anglers. Several stakeholders agree, but agreement on the mechanism is elusive.

**NonResident Hunters** — Nonresident hunting license sales have declined each year since 2008. Significantly higher rates for nonresidents to hunt in Idaho has helped keep costs low for residents but the triple whammy of the economy, the 2009 fee increase, and wolves' effects on elk hunting has changed both the magnitude and pattern of sales, requiring both defensive measures such as internal spending controls and offensive measures such as more intensive outreach including direct mailings and marketing techniques in the print and electronic media.

**Wolf Management** — Wolf management remains highly controversial, but the 2011-2012 hunting and trapping season progressed in an orderly and effective manner. Future management will build on the lessons of this season to make further progress achieving management objectives for wolves and important big game herds suppressed by wolf predation, particularly in the Lolo and Sawtooth Zones. Federal financial commitment to the five-year post-delisting monitoring will be important to transparent and effective management.

**Energy Development** — Idaho has the natural potential for wind, geothermal, hydro, and solar power. Nuclear power generation may also be on the horizon. Energy development in our neighbor states puts Idaho right in the path of several proposed transmission corridors. Potential effects to fish, wildlife, and habitat must be assessed and considered as in-state and out-of-state energy demands are addressed. The effects of landscape-scale energy infrastructure on sage-grouse will be a particular emphasis of the Department evaluation in the coming year as proposals for at least two transmission lines and other wind projects are reviewed.

**Managing Predation** — The Department is taking overt actions to manage predation when it impairs reaching game population objectives. The challenge is to define and find a balance between predators and prey – which is technically difficult, especially when overlaid with legal, policy, or administrative guidelines. Examples include reducing wolf predation on elk to increase elk survival and reducing American white pelican predation on Yellowstone cutthroat trout along the Blackfoot River to improve spawning success. Defining “balance” also includes stakeholders' opinions, which can be difficult to assess scientifically.



**Climate Change** — Collaborative efforts are just beginning for predictive modeling of spatial and temporal effects of climate change on fish, wildlife, and habitat in Idaho and the surrounding states and provinces. All field staff and program managers are challenged with using emerging climate information to adapt their on-the-ground management. Current legal and policy frameworks also may need to be adapted.

**Greater Sage-Grouse** — The Department is providing technical assistance on the development of the Governor's alternative for sage-grouse management in Idaho.

**Invasive Species** — Exotic and invasive plants and animals may alter or convert fish and wildlife habitat and compete, hybridize, or prey on native and other desirable fish and wildlife. The state of Idaho is struggling with how to respond to a rapidly growing list of invasive species and to fund interdiction.

**Off-highway Vehicles** — OHVs continue to increase in numbers, size, and sophistication. About half of Idaho's big game hunters are using OHVs during hunting season. Fish and Game must assess and explain how OHV use affects fish, wildlife, and habitats and also must address existing and potential conflicts between hunters and anglers who use OHVs and those who do not.

**Nature Deficit Disorder** — The average child spends 44 hours per week plugged into electronic media and a mere 30 minutes outside in unstructured play. This disconnection not only has been linked to childhood obesity, attention deficit disorders, and developmental problems, but also will affect the future of wildlife stewardship.

**Idaho State Wildlife Action Plan** — The Idaho State Wildlife Action Plan provides a framework for conserving 229 "species of greatest conservation need" and the habitats upon which they depend. It is the state's guiding document for managing and conserving at-risk species, most of which are not hunted, trapped, or fished. An integrated approach to implementing this strategy across all Fish and Game programs will reduce potential listings under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended.

**Wildlife Diseases** — Increased movement of people, animals, and materials worldwide has increased the potential for native and exotic wildlife diseases to affect Idaho. Additionally, increased human awareness and concern for existing diseases such as hydatid disease, chronic wasting disease, brucellosis, avian influenza, and *Pasteurella* requires a proactive approach to detecting and managing both new and existing diseases.

# GOAL—Fish, Wildlife, and Habitat

SUSTAIN IDAHO'S FISH AND WILDLIFE AND  
THE HABITATS UPON WHICH THEY DEPEND.

## Short-term Objectives

### 1. Maintain State management of delisted wolves.

**Plan:** Continue sport hunting and trapping for the 2012-2013 hunting season, building on lessons learned from our 2011-2012 season. Continue population management statewide and control measures in the Lolo zone and in other zones where known wolf depredation is constraining achievement of elk or other big game management goals in concert with development of a new elk management plan and a predation management plan. Continue to direct livestock depredation management and work with local communities on public safety controls.

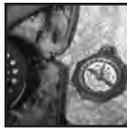
## Mid-term Objectives

### 1. Initiate a review of ungulate management and research.

**Plan:** The Elk Management Plan process was initiated in 2012 and will wrap up in 2013. The plan will address issues relative to current predator effects and expand management and research efforts for action on those units where predators are limiting factors for deer, elk and moose. Additional items will include the following: habitat initiatives, transportation corridors to reduce mortality, survey techniques, and frequency of monitoring and research to improve harvest reporting of ungulates.

### 2. Reach a long-term settlement with Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) for inundation of wildlife habitat for construction and operation of Idaho's federal dams and reservoirs operated for the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS), generating power sold by BPA.

**Plan:** We have addressed in-progress priorities for wildlife habitat mitigation such as the purchase of Hammer Flat (Ada County) and near-term agreement regarding winter operations and mitigation measures at Lake Pend Oreille. We continue to discuss a longer term strategy with BPA regarding a statewide mitigation package to complete BPA's obligation for wildlife mitigation relative to FCRPS construction and operation.



**3. Continue work with the Governor's Office and other states to ensure that sage-grouse are not listed.**

**Plan:** The Governor's Office approved Department representation on the BLM National Technical Team and a BLM Regional Management Team that are working on regulatory mechanisms for BLM lands. Working through this forum and the Governor's Sage-Grouse Task Force will ensure federal conservation planning processes reflect State of Idaho recommendations about needed steps to maintain management classes of sage-grouse habitat on federal lands and the recommendations will also provide a platform for state-led actions. Work through Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and with U.S. Department of Interior leadership to get proper regulatory authority in BLM implemented to ensure listing is not warranted.

## Long-term Objectives

**1. Assess technical and effectiveness merit of the Department developing/leading a range-wide bull trout delisting petition.**



# GOAL—Fish and Wildlife Recreation

MEET THE DEMAND FOR  
FISH AND WILDLIFE RECREATION.

## Short-term Objectives

1. **Develop next steps for the Landowner Appreciation Program to address unresolved issues.**

**Plan:** Review and discuss the issues with the Commission in FY 2013 for next actions related to the units that exceed ten percent controlled hunt allocation to landowners.

2. **Develop and identify off-highway vehicle (OHV) solutions to issues related to use by hunters and the Motorized Hunting Rule (MHR).**

**Plan:** Work with the Commission, hunters, OHV groups, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR) and legislators to clarify and implement changes in Department rules that lead to solutions building on agreement reached with IDPR and Governors' office on approach that: 1) affirms the Commission's authority for the MHR, 2) clarifies the Department's involvement in comments for travel management related to wildlife needs, 3) creates a moratorium of new additions to the MHR, 4) initiates a Department evaluation of the MHR for biological and social benefits, and 5) re-affirms commitment to coordinate with IDPR and not recommend specific alternative formal, large-scale travel plan comments to land management agencies.

3. **Wildlife Management Areas Commercial Activities Policy.**

**Plan:** Develop a policy for Commission approval and subsequent consistent implementation approach.

4. **Initiate mentor hunt program.**

**Plan:** Work with the hunter education instructors and hunters to develop rules for Commission review and action following up on public survey conducted in Spring 2012.



## Mid-term Objectives

### 1. Simplify hunting regulation format and rule complexity.

**Plan:** Initiate with the 2012 cycle and produce regulations in 2013 similar to the 2012-2013 fishing regulations.

### 2. Increase overall acres open to the public through *Access Yes!*

**Plan:** Continue to integrate some federal funding into the *Access Yes!* program to match with license funds to enhance program expansion. As an example, the Department secured a \$1.2 million (\$400,000/yr for 3 years) grant from Natural Resources Conservation Service to help meet the demand for public access to and through private land. In 2011, the Department signed up an additional 20,000 acres of private land and opened access to an additional 16,000 acres of public land using a portion of these federal funds.



# GOAL—Working With Others

IMPROVE PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF  
AND INVOLVEMENT IN FISH AND WILDLIFE  
MANAGEMENT.

## Short-term Objectives

### 1. Engage our stakeholders.

**Plan:** Uphold strong communications with statewide sportsman groups, landowner/business groups and media editorial boards to listen and communicate vision/initiatives in the Business Plan including discussion of broad issues laying the awareness of fiscal constraints of the Department and likely need for fee increase in FY 2014. As part of the planning for the Idaho Wildlife Summit, we are engaging both our traditional and nontraditional stakeholders to solicit input and direction for the Summit design.

### 2. Maintain strong working relationships with the Commission, agency leadership, the Governor and the Legislature.

**Plan:** Ensure the solid working relationships continue with the Commission, and sustain cohesive Department executive and management teams. Maintain the good working relationships with the Governor, his staff and cabinet, and members of the Legislature. In particular, uphold good coordination and dialog with the Office of Species Conservation and the Office of Energy Resources in regard to fish and wildlife issues.





## Mid-term Objectives

1. **Sponsor a Wildlife Summit in August 2012 to bring Idahoans together to understand current Idaho wildlife management programs; to understand existing and anticipated challenges to wildlife management and conservation; to broaden the coalition of support for protecting the Idaho wildlife heritage; and to ensure that Idahoans' expectations are well served.**

**Plan:** The vision is to provide a catalyst for a discussion with the public about wildlife management and whether new ways of doing our business are required to ensure the outdoors is a better place for the next generation - not only with sustainable wildlife populations but for opportunities for hunting, fishing, trapping and other wildlife-based recreation. The Summit is an opportunity to check in with *The Compass* for relevance with the people of Idaho.



# GOAL—Management Support

ENHANCE THE CAPABILITY OF THE DEPARTMENT TO  
MANAGE FISH AND WILDLIFE AND SERVE THE PUBLIC.

## Short-term Objectives

1. **Work to resolve issues among sportsmen about legislation to expand auction tags.**

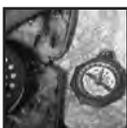
**Plan:** Work with the Commission and sportsmen to assist them with consensus for acceptable outcomes to address a new law increasing the number of auction tags to enhance Department revenues.

2. **Clarify and identify core budget priorities to respond to rapidly changing license and federal revenue streams in FY 2012-13.**

**Plan:** Review all budgets relative to priorities using the zero-based budget reviews previously completed; adjust and reprioritize resources for the FY 2012 - 13 budgets; implement necessary spending management. Be prepared to deal with Federal budget changes.

3. **Evaluate first phase of new tag and license fee structure implemented in 2012, respond to a license structure survey with new proposals, and create strategic marketing approach.**

**Plan:** A Department team is working on this project, including meeting with stakeholder groups and the assistance of a marketing firm along with working with state partner resources. Build on the “*I Hunt/Fish Idaho*” campaign directed at both residents and nonresidents, which includes banner ads on hunting and fishing websites and popular news sites throughout Idaho and the Northwest, e-mails promoting the “*I Hunt/Fish Idaho*” campaign sent to approximately 40,000 license holders who have voluntarily given us their e-mail address, traditional print ads and social media.



**4. Develop strategies for dealing with nonresident hunter license and tag sales loss.**

**Plan:** Review the other western states that sell over-the-counter big game licenses for information to better understand the demographics and other patterns and determine whether or not sales can be recovered in the next few years in order to guide future financial and program planning.

## Mid-term Objectives

**1. Rebalance the Department's portfolio of spending to ensure good return on investment.**

**Plan:** Verify that our major management activities are relevant and on target, which will be informed by the Idaho Wildlife Summit. Solicit team reviews of projects and activities to ensure they are appropriate. Ensure we are not spending too much or too little on Department diversified efforts. Review all budgets, adjust, and reprioritize resources for the FY 2013-14 proposals.

**2. Completion of the GRANTS system that is currently under development.**

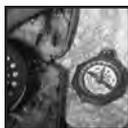
**Plan:** Create better budget tracking by program leaders and facilitate invoicing by this enhanced management of grants.

**3. Evaluate efficiency of statewide catchable trout program.**

**Plan:** Continue evaluation of cost benefit of catchable and fingerling programs in concert with forecasting of key costs such as fish food.

**4. Upgrade resident hatchery infrastructure.**

**Plan:** Review hatchery infrastructure and propose plan for available funds to improve and consolidate the resident hatchery complex for greater efficiency and multi-program capacity.



## Long-term Objectives

### 1. Lay the foundation to broaden the Department's funding base.

**Plan:** The Department will work with legislators and other State agencies to explore new funding sources to build the relationships and coalitions necessary to obtain a new and additional funding source for the Department in the next two to four years.

### 2. Create a contemporary and sustainable model of traditional license funding for programs related to hunting, fishing, and trapping.

**Plan:** This will be informed by our License Restructuring Committee, which has retained a private consultant to look at how we package our products with the intent of evaluating the benefit of offering a selection of products at a reduced rate for both residents and nonresidents. Also, another consultant has also completed modeling buyer resistance to license fee increase to evaluate the effects on revenue and number of licenses purchased that will assist us in better prediction of fee increase proposals. It is imperative that the Department maintain a primary funding base that is self-supporting, stays true to expectations for hunting, fishing, and trapping and other wildlife-based recreation, continues to be fiscally responsible, and live within its means.

### 3. Performance audit of license and Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration funded programs as a first step to determine the public benefit being provided by the work we are currently doing, before recommending or developing a proposal to raise license fees.

### 4. Align our cost accounting system to more effectively track expenditures with goals, objectives and actions of *The Compass*.

**Plan:** Develop new budget system proposal and cost estimates for review and approval in FY2013 or FY2014.



- 5. Secure additional Headquarters, Southwest Region and Panhandle Region office space to meet the needs of the Department. Develop proposals for each of these facilities for inclusion in FY 2013-16 budgets.**

**Plan:** As an interim measure, Headquarters is relocating staff during FY 2013 from a leased building (Park Building) to about 28,000 square feet leased space in the nearby URS Plaza Tower 2 at 701 Morrison Knudsen Dr., creating savings and office improvement while longer-term strategies are developed.

- 6. Continue to seek additional operational efficiencies and effective use of fiscal resources while providing our employees with modern, safe and efficient equipment and working environments. Make employee compensation and retention a top priority using these efficiencies.**

**Plan:** Addressing pay equity issues was advanced during FY 2012 and pay compression will be an employee compensation consideration with available resources in the coming year.



## *Our Mission*

*(Idaho Code Section 36-103)*

All wildlife, including all wild animals, wild birds, and fish, within the state of Idaho, is hereby declared to be the property of the state of Idaho. It shall be preserved, protected, perpetuated, and managed. It shall only be captured or taken at such times or places, under such conditions, or by such means, or in such manner, as will preserve, protect, and perpetuate such wildlife, and provide for the citizens of this state and, as by law permitted to others, continued supplies of such wildlife for hunting, fishing and trapping.



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