

Idaho Fish & Game News

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Idaho's Wildlife Summit: Starting the Conversation

In 1938, hunters in Idaho killed 2,300 elk and nearly 12,000 deer. That same year, Idahoans passed a voter initiative, unique to the West, that made fish and wildlife management in Idaho what it is today.

In 2010, hunters harvested about 17,000 elk and 44,000 deer. Clearly, hunting and fishing have improved in those 74 years.

But much in Idaho has changed since then.

The population has tripled, and more people live in cities. Challenges to wildlife and wildlife management have changed as well. Elk and deer compete with development on historic winter range in many parts of the state. Competition for available water has increased. Invasive species, such as cheatgrass and knapweed, change important habitats. And some of Idaho's iconic wildlife species, such as sage grouse, wild salmon and mule deer, are in decline.

Still most Idahoans say wildlife issues are important to them. But how they relate to wildlife has changed. Today, a lower proportion of residents hunt and fish, and more enjoy watching wildlife.

While Fish and Game has a solid history of managing for abundant game and fish for hunting, fishing and trapping, the 80 percent of Idaho wildlife that is not hunting or fished needs increased attention. Adequately management will ensure an abundant wildlife resource for our children and grandchildren.

Nine out of ten Idahoans say they care about wildlife, but

the cost of most wildlife management falls on the shoulders of the one in four who actually pays hunting and fishing

fees. This minority is getting smaller. Hunters, anglers and trappers want their license fees spent primarily on the game they pursue. Fish and Game needs to find new means to manage the wildlife that is not hunted or fished but is also enjoyed by most Idahoans.

In 2008, Fish and Game pledged to explore new ways to do just that. Idaho's wildlife generates \$1.4 billion in economic value each year. Investing in this resource today will ensure its value into the future.

It is the future of wildlife that concerns many Idahoans as well as Fish and Game. For generations, hunters have stalked elk and deer on crisp autumn days. Anglers wet lines on lazy summer mornings. On our travels, we stop to admire pronghorn in a field or bighorn sheep watering along a river. Bird watchers travel the state to see more than 400 bird species, and photographers wait patiently to see what the day will bring.

What if these experiences vanish? What kind of wildlife legacy do we want to leave our children and grandchildren? How can we work together to create a positive future for wildlife in Idaho?

The Wildlife Summit will promote discussion of these questions and others to help Idaho's hunters, anglers, trappers,

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Mountain goat on Lake Pond Oreille

Photo by N.S. Nokkentved

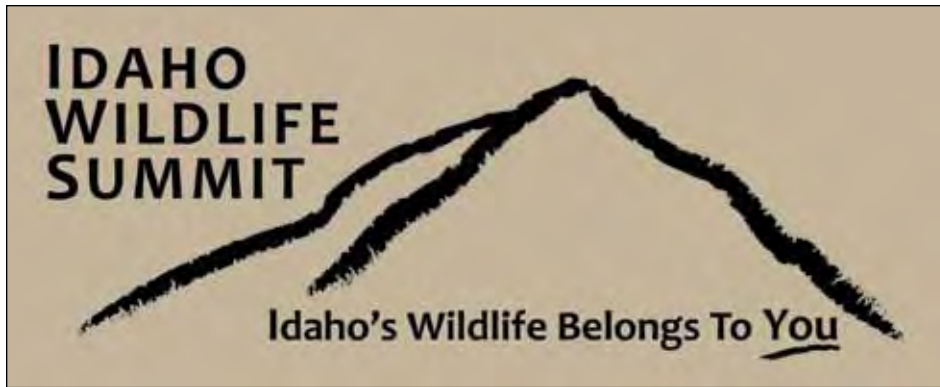
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Getting Idahoans Engaged

The Idaho Wildlife Summit will start Friday afternoon, continue Saturday and ending Sunday noon, August 24 through 26, at the Riverside Hotel in Boise.

The main event will be in Boise. Concurrent satellite events will be at sites in Coeur d'Alene, Lewiston, Salmon, Twin Falls, Pocatello and Idaho Falls. People also may participate online.

The event will open with a reception. The Saturday morning program will feature presentations by Shane Mahoney, biologist and prominent spokesman for wildlife conservation, from Newfoundland in eastern Canada;



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by Toni Hardesty, former director of the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality and now director for The Nature Conservancy-Idaho; and by Jim Posewitz, founder of Orion The Hunter's Institute.

They will set up the issue facing Idaho and the future of wildlife management and of finding broader support for Fish and Game obligations not directly related to hunting and fishing.

Summit participants will be able to exchange ideas during a structured discussion. They will gather four to a table to discuss a series of questions and record their thoughts.

They will then move to different tables and repeat the process with new questions. The aim is to bring together diverse interests to find common ground, ultimately building a broader base of support.

The Summit will wind up Sunday with a summary session, a panel discussion.

At various times throughout the three days, participants will be asked to enter simple responses to a series of questions in an instant electronic "clicker" poll.

Also during the event in Boise and at the six regional sites, informational booths staffed by Fish and Game employees will be available.

Fish and Game Director Virgil Moore emphasized that the Summit is not a referendum nor a vote on any policy or program. It is only the first step, the foundation for the discussion that will continue to define wildlife management in Idaho.

For information go online to <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/summit/>

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bird watchers, wildlife photographers and other wildlife enthusiasts explore their common thread—wildlife. It is a step toward fostering common understanding and inspiring a renewed enthusiasm and commitment for wildlife and wildlife management in Idaho.

The event is also an opportunity for wildlife enthusiasts to learn more about Fish and Game and the challenges it faces in managing wildlife for the future.

In 1938, concerned Idahoans worked together for the benefit of wildlife. Their legacy of a shared responsibility in protecting and managing wildlife remains unchanged. It is up to all wildlife enthusiasts to maintain that legacy while confronting present and future challenges to the wildlife Idahoans love.

After all, Idaho's wildlife belongs to you!



Changes: At a Glance

Idaho population:

- 1938 – 500,000
- 2012 – 1.5 million

How Fish and Game has grown:

- Budget:
 - 1938 – \$300,000.
 - 2012 – \$77 million.
- Employees:
 - 1938 – 11 headquarters employees; 38 conservation officers; 20 fish hatchery employees; three game bird farm operators; and four technicians.
 - 2012 – 567 full-time employees, including 107 conservation officers; 90 part-time and 147 seasonal employees.
- Programs:
 - 1938 – enforcement, rearing and releasing pheasants and fish.
 - 2012 – fisheries, wildlife, administration, communications, engineering and enforcement bureaus; seven regional and one sub-regional offices; 19 fish hatcheries; 32 wildlife management areas.



Wildlife Summit: Featured Speakers to Present a Range of Views

Shane Mahoney:

A life-long hunter and angler, Shane Mahoney is passionate about the future of hunting and sport fishing.

He is a renowned public speaker on the role of hunters and anglers in conserving our wildlife legacy.

Pheasants Forever says: Mahoney is a “powerful and inspiring advocate for what needs to be done to preserve wildlife habitat and our hunting way of life.”

Mahoney suggests that a deeper understanding of man’s lethal interactions with nature and a more profound appreciation of the miracle of

“conservation through wise use” must be developed if we are to safeguard our outdoor traditions.

Born and raised in Newfoundland, Canada, Mahoney is now with Conservation Force-Canada and has spent 20 years investigating diverse phenomena, such as seabird breeding behavior, and the predator-prey relationships and population dynamics of black bears, lynx, moose and woodland caribou.

He has a master’s degree from Memorial University of Newfoundland, and he is working on a doctorate at the University of Calgary in Alberta.

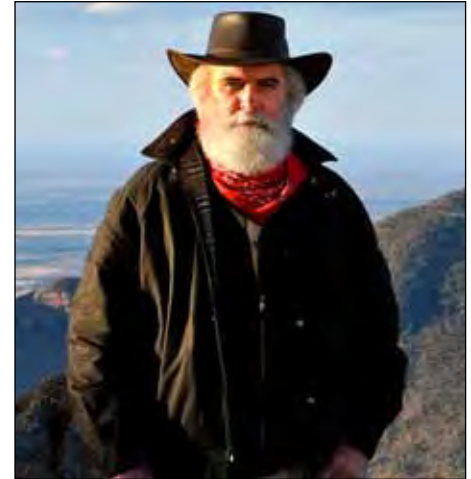


Photo courtesy of Shane Mahoney



Photo courtesy of The Nature Conservancy

Toni Hardesty:

Born and raised on an Idaho cattle ranch, Toni Hardesty recently was named director of The Nature Conservancy in Idaho.

She oversees the Conservancy’s work around the state, focusing on projects that protect land and water for wildlife, nature, and people.

Hardesty is an avid hiker and backpacker. She also enjoys wildlife watching, skiing and cooking.

Before joining The Nature Conservancy, she served eight years as director of the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, where she was

responsible for leading efforts to preserve the quality of Idaho’s air, land and water.

Hardesty has a bachelor of science degree in environmental health from Boise State University.

Her environmental career began in Boise as an air quality intern in the Division of Environmental Quality. In 1988, she moved to Seattle and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

In 2003, she returned to the Department of Environmental Quality as a special projects coordinator for the Air Quality Division, and as administrator of the Water Quality Division, overseeing surface, ground and drinking water.

Jim Posewitz:

In 1993, Jim Posewitz founded Orion The Hunter’s Institute because he saw a need for education about the ethics of hunting.

Orion is dedicated to the preservation of ethical hunting and wildlife resources.

Born and raised in Wisconsin, Posewitz moved to Montana in 1953

to pursue wildlife management studies. He holds a master’s degree in fish and wildlife management from Montana State University.

He spent 32 years with the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, and led the agency’s ecological program for 15 years.

He has published four books: “Beyond Fair Chase,” Inherit The Hunt,” Rifle in Hand – How Wild America Was Saved,” and his latest, “Taking a Bullet for Conservation.”



Photo courtesy of Jim Posewitz

Idaho Fish and Game Policy

Idaho wildlife management policy is set by seven volunteer commissioners. The Idaho Fish and Game Commission’s policy decisions are based on research and recommendations by the professional staff of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and with input from the governor’s office, the state Legislature, hunters, anglers and the public.



Idaho's Wildlife Conservation Legacy Spans Almost 150 Years

In Idaho and the rest of the nation, the wildlife conservation movement rose out of concern for the steep decline in wildlife populations in the late 19th century.

- 1864: Idaho's first game laws were established by the First Idaho Territorial Legislature. Lawmakers closed seasons on big game animals from February to July to protect dwindling populations, but they did not provide for enforcement.
- 1886: Audubon Society formed for the preservation of wild birds.
- 1887: Boone and Crockett founded out of concern over decline of wildlife populations.
- 1899: The Idaho Fifth State Legislature established the Fish and Game Department. Charles Arbuckle was appointed as the first state game warden. Deputy wardens were hired. The department budget was \$1,500, of which \$1,200 was salary. Deputies were to be paid half of each fine for which they could get a conviction.
- 1900: The Lacey Act, the first federal law protecting wildlife – prohibiting the interstate transport of wild game.
- 1902: National Association of Game and Fish Wardens and Commissioners – formed the base of cooperation among state wildlife agencies. It was the first organized effort to establish hunting permits and use revenues for wildlife enforcement.
- 1903: License fees in Idaho were established at \$1 for resident males, women did not have to have a license, and nonresidents were \$5.
- 1903: National Wildlife Refuge system established. The first refuge was at Pelican Island in Florida. President Roosevelt established 50 refuges nationwide.
- 1907: First Idaho fish hatchery built at Hay Spur. First ring-necked pheasant rearing facilities built in Ada County.



IDFG Photo

- 1915: Elk transplanted to Idaho from Yellowstone Park.
- 1918: Migratory Bird Treaty Act regulated hunting of migratory birds and established waterfowl as a shared international resource.
- 1932: First Idaho check station set up for enforcement. Jerome game bird farm is built at a cost of \$700.
- 1933: Chukar released in Idaho. First release of 100 birds was from the Lapwai bird farm near Lewiston.
- 1934: Migratory bird hunting and conservation stamp act provided a funding source for wetland and waterfowl habitat acquisitions. The sale of federal duck stamps has raised more than \$750 million to buy more than 5.3 million acres of wetlands.
- 1936: Six members of the Ada County Fish and Game League pushed for a nonpolitical form of wildlife management, governed by a commission that appointed a director. It was modeled on an act approved by Missouri voters a few years earlier. It was rejected by Idaho lawmakers.
- 1937: Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act established cooperation among federal and state fish and wildlife agencies, the sporting

arms industry and conservation groups to help fund wildlife habitat restoration.

- 1938: Citizens of Idaho approved an initiative that established a Fish and Game Commission and a fish and wildlife management department that hired only trained enforcement personnel and professional wildlife managers and offered civil service protection for employees. The Idaho State Fish and Game Commission Act took the Fish and Game Department out of politics. Paraphrased, the law says all wildlife within the state belongs to the state and is to be preserved, protected, perpetuated and managed. The state's wildlife may be captured or taken only at such times or places, under such conditions, by such means or 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.
- 1950: The Dingell-Johnson Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act added anglers and the fishing and boating industries to help fund habitat restoration and promote sport fishing.



Idaho Public Television's Dialogue call-in program on June 14, will feature Fish & Game Director Virgil Moore and Commissioner Randall Budge, talking about the Wildlife Summit. For details go online to <http://idptv.state.id.us/>.