

Meeting Date: January 17, 2018

Agenda Item No. 5C

Agenda Item: Craig Mountain WMA-Kesler
Acquisition (**Action**)

Bureau Chief Approval: _____

Prepared by: Katherine Cousins and Gregg Servheen

Background:

This is a fee-title purchase of a 5-acre inholding parcel on the Craig Mountain Wildlife Management Area (WMA). Removing a private inholding will reduce issues with public trespass, alleviate concerns related to the spread of noxious weeds, and help reduce risks associated with wildfire management. The parcel is valued at \$12,500.00.

The property is contiguous with habitats that are important to Species of Greatest Conservation Need, Dworshak Mitigation Target Species, and Focal Species for Craig Mountain including elk, white-tailed deer, pileated woodpeckers, flammulated owls, Columbia spotted frogs, and western toads.

The estimated annual operations and maintenance (O&M) costs are expected to be less than \$900.00. IDFG would not have to pay a fee in lieu of taxes (FILT) as the property is less than 10 acres.

This was a proposal presented to the Commission during Executive Session on July 27, 2017.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:

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

Public Involvement Process:

The public is supportive of Department ownership and management. County commissioners will be contacted and have been supportive of past purchases to improve public access and wildlife habitat on the Craig Mountain WMA.

Justification:

Protecting wildlife habitats while enhancing public access on the Craig Mountain WMA is consistent with the IDFG mission.

Staff Recommendation:

The Lands Committee recommends proceeding forward as a fee-title purchase of the Craig Mountain WMA inholding and wildlife habitat parcel.

Action Requested:

Approval of Commission to proceed with the land acquisition.

Suggested Motion: Commission adopt staff recommendation to approve completion of the Kesler acquisition for the benefit of public access and habitat protection.