



IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

May 2026 Commission Meeting

Agenda Item: Commission Direction for Wolf Depredation Control Board Funds **(Action)**

Presented by: Tricia Hebdon

Position/Title: Assistant Chief, Wildlife

Agenda Item No.: 5B
Supervisor Approval: SR

Background:

The Idaho Wolf Depredation Control Board (WDCB) is responsible for administering the wolf control fund established in Idaho Code 22-5305. The WDCB was legislatively created to administer funding so the level of wolf depredation control service in Idaho functionally remained unchanged following federal Endangered Species Act delisting and associated loss of federal funding for USDA Wildlife Services wolf depredation control activities. The WDCB does not have management authority for wolves but is responsible for allocating funding for wolf depredation control actions authorized by the Commission and the Department. The Commission maintains authority for management and control of wolves.

Idaho Code 22-5306 directs the annual transfer of \$300,000 of Department license funds to the WDCB for response to, and control of, wolf depredations. The WDCB also receives an appropriation from the state general fund (\$392,000 in FY26) and from assessments collected by the state livestock brand inspector and the Idaho Sheep and Goat Health Board.

Previous Commission direction has been to use these funds to prioritize management and control of wolves where ungulate management objectives are not being achieved and in chronic livestock depredation areas.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:

Idaho Code Title 22, Chapter 53 identifies the responsibilities of the WDCB, related responsibilities of the Commission, and funding for administration of wolf depredation control. To maintain eligibility for Idaho's receipt of federal excise tax funds for wildlife conservation, fish management and restoration, and public shooting ranges (such as the Pittman-Robertson Act excise tax on firearms, ammunition, and hunting equipment), the Commission must maintain control of its license funds. Idaho Code 22-5306 maintains this control by authorizing the Commission to direct the WDCB's use of Department funds and requiring the WDCB to comply with Commission direction for funding wolf depredation control activities. Idaho Code 22-5306 directs, as soon after July 1 of each year as practical, the transfer of \$300,000 from the fish and game fund to the wolf control fund (fish and game fund transfer subaccount).

Public Involvement Process:

The Commission and Department routinely solicit and receive public input on wolf management issues throughout the year. Additionally, the public may comment on this



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topic at the hearing prior to the Commission meeting. Like the Commission, the Idaho WDCB conducts its meetings under Idaho's Open Meeting Law and provides the public an opportunity to comment.

Justification:

Idaho law requires Commission direction to the Idaho Wolf Depredation Control Board for expenditure of Department license funds.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommend directing the expenditure of up to \$500,000 of Department funds for management and control of wolves for the protection of ungulates in management units/zones with predation management plans or where management objectives are not otherwise being achieved, and in units where wolf depredations on livestock or other domestic animals are chronic. The total comprises \$300,000 from the annual funding transfer and \$200,000 in carryover funds currently in the WDCB fish and game fund.

Expenditure of fish and game funds would include up to \$400,000 for IDFG-directed control and management actions for the protection of ungulates in units/zones with predation management plans or where management objectives for ungulates are not otherwise being achieved. Expenditure of Department funds would also include providing up to \$100,000 via Department cooperative agreement for nonprofit organization reimbursement of hunters and trappers for expenses incurred during the legal harvest of wolves in units/zones with predation management plans or where management objectives for ungulates are not otherwise being achieved, and in units where wolf depredations on livestock or other domestic animals are chronic.

Staff will prepare a letter for the Chair's signature reflecting the Commission's direction to the Wolf Depredation Control Board.

Suggested Motion:

I move the Commission direct the Idaho Wolf Depredation Control Board to expend up to \$500,000 during state fiscal year 2026 for the protection of ungulates and to address livestock depredations, with the target areas and subdivision of funding as described by staff.