

Meeting Date: May 17, 2017

Agenda Item No. 5A

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

Bureau Chief Approval: _____

Prepared by: Brad Compton

Background:

In 2014, the Idaho Legislature passed HB470 creating the Wolf Depredation Control Board; responsible for administering the wolf control fund established by the same bill. Creation of the Board was largely in response to loss of federal funding for wolf depredation control. The Board has no management authority for wolves, which is held by the Fish and Game Commission.

Idaho statute annually transfers up to \$110,000 of Department funds to the Wolf Depredation Control Board for response to, and control of, wolf depredations. The actual amount of the transfer each year is based on matching the amount provided by the livestock industry, up to a maximum of \$110,000. The Department provided \$54,565, \$105,330, and \$95,351 in FY15, FY16, and FY17, respectively. It is anticipated the livestock industry will again come close to contributing the maximum allowed by law in FY18. Additionally, the Board receives an appropriation from the general fund; \$400,000 in FY17.

Previous Commission direction has been to use the sportsmen funds for management and control of wolves for the protection of ungulates in areas with department approved predation management plans.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy issues:

22-5304. Powers and Duties. [effective until June 30, 2019] (1) It is hereby made the duty of the board to administer the wolf control fund including setting the procedures and standards for payment from the fund. In carrying out these duties, the board may cooperate with federal, state, county, city and private agencies, organizations and individuals.

(2) The board has the authority to enter into agreements, including contracts, memoranda of understanding or memoranda of agreement with any federal agency, state agency, political subdivision of the state of Idaho or agency of another state in order to implement the provisions of this act.

(3) The control of wolves under this chapter does not include the payment of compensation for damages. Control activities funded by the board shall be consistent with the provisions of section 36-1107(c), Idaho Code.

(4) The board may contract with the director of the Idaho state department of agriculture (ISDA) for legal and fiscal services as required under this act.

22-5306. Wolf Control Assessments -- use of funds -- fish and game fund transfer. [effective until June 30, 2019] In order to carry out the provisions of this chapter, the following shall occur:

(2) The wolf depredation control board shall use all funds in the wolf control fund, with the exception of moneys transferred from the fish and game fund as provided for in subsections (3), (4) and (5) of this section unless so directed by the fish and game commission pursuant to subsection (3) of this section, for all

activities associated with legal lethal means of control and for the purposes of sections 22-5302 and 22-5304(4), Idaho Code.

(3) Beginning in fiscal year 2015, the state controller shall annually, as soon after July 1 of each year as practical, transfer one hundred ten thousand dollars (\$110,000) from the fish and game fund to the fish and game fund transfer subaccount of the wolf control fund. The fish and game commission, on or before July 1 of each year, is authorized to direct the wolf depredation control board as to the use of such funds and the wolf depredation control board shall comply with the direction of the commission.

Public Involvement Process:

Creation of the Wolf Depredation Control Board received substantial public involvement throughout the legislative public policy process. The Idaho Fish and Game Department and Commission routinely solicit and receive public input on wolf management issues.

Justification:

Commission direction on expenditure of Department funds is required.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends directing the expenditure of up to \$110,000 for management and control of wolves for the protection of ungulates in areas where management objectives are not being achieved.

Staff will have a letter prepared for Commission Chairman signature at conclusion of the agenda item.

Suggested Motion: Commission adopts the staff recommendation to direct the expenditure of up to \$110,000 for the protection of ungulates in areas where management objectives are not being achieved.