Idaho Fish and Game Commission
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
November 17-18, 2026
Clearwater Regional Office
3316 16th St.,
Lewiston, Idaho 83501

Note: Times on the agenda are approximate and subject to change.

November 17

8:00 a.m. Commission Field Tour –
Tour of Clearwater Commercial Timber Lands: A review of current forest practices and impacts/benefits to big game habitats, populations, and hunting opportunities and access. Tour will focus on GMU 10A north of Dworshak Reservoir.

5:00 p.m. Dinner

7:00 p.m. Public Meeting

November 18

8:00 a.m. 1. Opening Comments
–Chairman Cheirrett

8:10 a.m. 2. Agenda Changes (Action)
–Chairman Cheirrett

8:15 a.m. 3. Review of Public Comment
–Chairman Cheirrett and Director Fredericks

8:30 a.m. 4. Consent Calendar (Action)
a. Meeting Minutes
b. Financial Report

5. Action Items for Commission Approval (Action Requested by Department)

8:45 a.m. A. Administrative Rules – Adoption of Pending Rules (Action)
- CWD Management Restrictions
- Electronic Tagging for Game Birds

–Amber Worthington, Deputy Director

9:00 a.m. B. Petition for Rulemaking: Establishment of Sacred Resource Protection Zone (Action)
–Amber Worthington, Deputy Director

9:15 a.m.	C. Petition for Rulemaking: Overturn Regulatory Restrictions Regarding Certain Controlled Hunt Applications, Tag Exchange, and Unused Tags (Action) –Amber Worthington, Deputy Director
9:30 a.m.	D. Petition for Rulemaking: Amend Enclosure Requirements for Snakes (Action) –Amber Worthington, Deputy Director
9:45 a.m.	E. Spring Season Modifications, Steelhead Fisheries (Action) –Chris Sullivan, Anadromous Fisheries Coodrinator
10:15 a.m.	F. Montpelier Reservoir Bag Limit Change for Illegally Introduced Bass (Action) –Lance Hebdon, Chief, Fisheries
10:25 a.m.	G. Mountain Lion, Black Bear, and Gray Wolf Nonresident Tag Discount Order (Action) –Rick Ward, State Wildlife Manager
10:35 a.m.	H. Selection of IFWF Commission Liaison (Action) –Hilarie Engle, Foundation Development Coordinator
10:40 p.m.	6. General IFWF Update –Hilarie Engle, Foundation Development Coordinator
10:45 p.m.	7. Final Update: Non-Resident Tag Draw –Tara Reichert, Chief, Communications
11:00 p.m.	8. Overview of Important Licensing Dates and Procedures –Tara Reichert, Chief, Communications
11:15 p.m.	9. Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Update –Stacey Dauwalter, Wildlife Health Program Coordinator
11:30 p.m.	10. Moose Bighorn Sheep Mountain Goat Status Update and Season Setting Preview –Hollie Miyasaki, Wildlife Staff Biologist
12:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m.	11. Update on Captive Elk Facility Ingress and Egress –Eric Freeman, Upper Snake Regional Wildlife Manager
1:30 p.m.	12. Deer and Elk Scoping Results –Rick Ward, State Wildlife Manager
1:50 p.m.	13. Big Willow Elk Depredation Project Summary –Josh Royse, Regional Supervisor
2:10 p.m.	14. Craig Mountain Wildlife Management Area (WMA) Overview, Opportunities, and Challenges

	–Jessica Barker, Regional Wildlife Biologist
2:30 p.m.	15. Mule Deer Buck Vulnerability Project Update –Paul Atwood, Senior Wildlife Research Biologist
2:50 p.m.	16. Strategic Habitat Conservation Planning in the Magic Valley Region –Bradley Dawson, Regional Technical Assistance Manager –John Guthrie, Regional Habitat Manager
3:20 p.m.	Break
3:35 p.m.	17. Application of IDAPA 13.01.16.450.03.i.–Director or Regional Supervisor Authorization to Place Ground Sets on Snow-Covered Routes –Carson Watkins, Regional Supervisor
3:55 p.m.	18. Appoint Commissioner Representative to WAFWA (Action) –Chairman Cheirrett
4:00 p.m.	19. Set the 2027 Commission Calendar –Chairman Cheirrett
4:10 p.m.	20. Director's Report –Director Fredericks
4:20 p.m.	21. Commissioner Reports –Commissioners
4:30 p.m.	22. Planning for Next Meeting –Chairman Cheirrett
	23. Executive Session I.C. 74-206 (1) (c) (f) (Action Item–votes for convening/ending session; no final action will occur in executive session.)
4:35 p.m.	24. Litigation Position (Action)
5:00 p.m.	Adjourn

Meetings of the Commission during field trips and catered meals are open to public attendance, but additional arrangements may be involved for those who wish to attend. For more information on such arrangements, please contact Elizabeth Page at (208) 334-3771. During field trips and catered meals, the Commission may engage in brainstorming activities and informal discussions of regional and general interest, but the Commission will not take up any item for action.

Agenda Item 4.

Consent Calendar

4. a. Minutes
   - July 15th – 16th, 2026
   - August 12th, 2026

   b. Financial Report

Idaho Fish and Game Commission
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Regional Office
July 15-16, 2026
Jerome, Idaho

July 15

MISCELLANEOUS

Public Meeting

Chairman Jordan Cheirrett called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. MDT and reviewed the rules of conduct for the hearing and reported that all public comments would be reviewed by the Commission at the Thursday business meeting. Commissioners Dave Bobbitt, Don Ebert, Tim Murphy, Jordan Cheirrett, Mike Roach, and Ron Davies were present.

The following individuals provided in person testimony: Tristen Warner, Jim Warner, Casey Ramsey, Gary Peck, Tal Sampson, Nicole Swatherd, and Steve Miller.

July 16

MISCELLANEOUS

Chairman Cheirrett called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. MDT. Commissioners Dave Bobbitt, Don Ebert, Tim Murphy, Mike Roach, Jordan Cheirrett and Ron Davies were present.

Review of Public Comment

Seven individuals provided oral testimony during the public comment period, with several comments addressing Agenda Items 5.E. and 5.F., as well as broader wildlife management and hunting policy topics.

- Three commenters addressed the Lifetime License Program. Commenters expressed support for maintaining the current allocation of nonresident tags but encouraged the Department and Commission to review the program to address situations in which resident lifetime license holders later become nonresidents while continuing to receive resident-priced benefits. Commenters stated they believe nonresident lifetime license holders should pay nonresident license fees and expressed concerns regarding fairness and equitable opportunity for resident and nonresident hunters.
- Three former members of the Hunting and Advanced Technology (HAT) Working Group expressed appreciation to the Department, Commission, and HAT Working Group members for addressing advancements in hunting technology and advancing related recommendations. Commenters thanked those involved in developing and supporting the legislation and encouraged continued support for the Idaho Sportsmen's Legacy Group and its efforts to demonstrate broad public support for hunting-related proposals.

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- A representative of the Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation expressed appreciation for the Department's partnership on bighorn sheep conservation projects and the additional opportunities those partnerships have created. The commenter also requested Commission support for the proposed lottery tag agenda item (Agenda Items 5.E. and 5.F.).
- A nonresident landowner with a ranch in Unit 74 described longstanding habitat improvement efforts on approximately 20,000 acres and encouraged the Department and Commission to consider establishing a landowner program that recognizes conservation contributions regardless of the landowner's state of residency.
- One written comment encouraged the Department and Commission to consider additional restrictive regulations for captive elk operations to reduce the risk of disease transmission.

Consent Calendar

Minutes
- April 9th, 2026
- May 6th – 7th, 2026
- May 29th, 2026

Financial Report
Winter Feeding Advisory Committee Appointments/Reappointments

26-44 Commissioner Roach made a motion to accept the meeting minutes with minor non-substantive change to the May 2026 Commission meeting minutes, revising the location of the meeting as written in the minutes from "Boise, Idaho," to "Coeur d'Alene, Idaho," where the meeting occurred. Commissioner Bobbitt seconded the motion. Motion carries.

LEGISLATION

Administrative Rules: Adoption of Proposed Rules – Electronic Tagging for Certain Game Birds

Amber Worthington, Deputy Director, presented (Appendix 59, Exhibit 54.

26-45 Commissioner Bobbitt made a motion to adopt the proposed rules as presented, with authority for the Department to make non-substantive edits in the proofreading process that do not alter the sense, meaning or effect of the rules. Commissioner Roach seconded the motion. Motion carries.

Administrative Rules: Adoption of Proposed Rules – Chronic Wasting Disease Management Restrictions Revision

Amber Worthington, Deputy Director, presented (Appendix 59, Exhibit 55).

26-46 Commissioner Davies made a motion to move the Commission adopt the proposed rules as presented, with authority for the Department to make non-substantive edits in the proofreading

process that do not alter the sense, meaning of effect of the rules. Commissioner Ebert seconded the motion. Motion carries.

FISCAL

FY28 Budget Approval

Jon Oswald, Bureau Chief, Administration, presented (Appendix 59, Exhibit 56).

26-47 Commissioner Bobbitt made the motion that the Commission approve the State Fiscal Year 2028 budget request as presented and allow the Department to modify the request as necessary for minor administrative items if they arise. Commissioner Murphy seconded the motion. Motion carries.

MISCELLANEOUS

Recipients of the Commission Community Challenge Grant

Ellary TuckerWilliams, Legislative and Community Engagement Coordinator, presented (Appendix 59, Exhibit 57).

26-48 Commissioner Davies made the motion that the Commission approve the recommendations of the regional and statewide review committees and permit staff to announce the outcome of FY 2027 Commission Community Challenge Grant process. Commissioner Bobbitt seconded the motion. Motion carries.

MANAGEMENT PLANS

Release of the 2027 and 2028 Bighorn Sheep Tags for Auction and Lottery

Hollie Miyasaki, Wildlife Staff Biologist, presented (Appendix 59, Exhibit 58).

26-49 Commissioner Bobbitt moves the Commission release the 2027 and 2028 bighorn sheep auction tag to the Wild Sheep Foundation to conduct an auction and the 2027 and 2028 bighorn sheep lottery tag to the Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation to conduct a lottery. Commissioner Roach seconded the motion. Motion carries.

Discount Order for 2027 and 2028 Bighorn Sheep Lottery Tag Applications

Hollie Miyasaki, Wildlife Staff Biologist, presented (Appendix 59, Exhibit 59).

26-50 Commissioner Murphy moves the Commission adopt discounted fees as presented by staff for all Bighorn Sheep Lottery Tag Special Controlled Hunt applications for the July 2027 and July 2028 drawings. Commissioner Davies seconded the motion. Motion carries.

SEASON SETTING AND RULES

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2027 – 2028 Nonresident Tag Limits and 2027 Outfitter Set-aside and Allocation

Rick Ward, State Wildlife Manager, presented (Appendix 59, Exhibit 60).

26-51 Commissioner Ebert moves that the Commission adopt staff recommendations in the summary tables presented to us for setting limits for nonresident general season uncapped Elk Zone A and B tags and Regular and White-tailed Deer tags. Commissioner Bobbitt seconded the motion. Commissioners Ron Davies and Tim Murphy opposed. Motion carries.

26-52 Commissioner Ebert moves that the Commission adopt the staff recommendations in the summary tables presented to us for the set-aside and allocation of general season uncapped Elk Zone A and B tags and regular and white-tailed deer unit tags for use by persons with an agreement for services by a licensed outfitter. Commissioner Bobbitt seconded the motion. Commissioners Ron Davies and Tim Murphy opposed. Motion carries.

26-53 Commissioner Ebert moves that the Commission grant the Director the authority and discretion to hold 163 tags from the December 2026 nonresident draw. Commissioner Bobbitt seconded. Motion carries.

2026 – 2027 Sage-grouse Season Setting

Jennifer Struthers, Wildlife Staff Biologist, presented (Appendix 59, Exhibit 61).

26-54 Commissioner Bobbitt moves the Commission adopt staff recommendations for the 2026 – 2027 sage-grouse hunting seasons and bag and possession limits, including those specific to sage-grouse take by falconry. Commissioner Davies seconded the motion. Motion carries.

Sage-grouse Discount Order – Falconry

Jennifer Struthers, Wildlife Staff Biologist, presented (Appendix 59, Exhibit 62).

26-55 Commissioner Bobbitt moves the Commission adopt a discount order for sage-grouse tags for falconry as presented. Commissioner Ebert seconded the motion. Motion carries.

MISCELLANEOUS

Silver Creek Property Exchange

Casey Pozzanghera, Lands/Mitigation Program Coordinator, presented (Appendix 59, Exhibit 63).

26-56 Commissioner Roach moves the Commission to complete the Silver Creek property exchange in Blaine County, as presented by staff. Commissioner Murphy seconded the motion. Motion carries.

DRAFT

Commission Appointment to Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board

Jon Rachael, Deputy Director, presented (Appendix 59, Exhibit 64).

26-57 Commissioner Davies moves that the Commission appoint Derick Attebury to serve as our representative on the Idaho Outfitters and Guide's Licensing Board for a 3-year term. Commissioner Bobbitt seconded the motion. Motion carries.

SEASON SETTING AND RULES

Season Modification, Fall Chinook Salmon Fisheries

John Cassinelli, Anadromous Fisheries Program Manager, presented (Appendix 59, Exhibit 65).

26-58 Commissioner Ebert moves that the Commission adopt the summer and fall Chinook Salmon bag and possession limit modifications as recommended by the Department. Commissioner Murphy seconded the motion. Motion carries.

MISCELLANEOUS

Idaho Fish and Game Commission Recognition: Betty Grandy , "Hunting as the State Sport for Idaho"

Jon Rachael, Deputy Director, presented (Appendix 59, Exhibit 66).

The Commission recognizes Betty Grandy in getting Hunting approved as the State Sport for Idaho.

ISDA Domestic Cervid Industry Update

Scott Liebsle, ISDA, State Veterinarian, and Chanel Tewalt, ISDA, Director, presented (Appendix 59, Exhibit 67).

Statewide Wolf Management Status Update

Cory Mosby, Wildlife Program Coordinator, presented (Appendix 59, Exhibit 68).

Big Willow Elk Depredation and Translocation Update

Regan Berkley, Regional Wildlife Manager, and Kenny Randall, Regional Wildlife Biologist, presented (Appendix 59, Exhibit 69).

Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Improvement Projects

Houston Kimes, Regional Wildlife Biologist, Farm Bill Coordinator, presented (Appendix 59, Exhibit 70).

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IFWF Update

Hilarie Engle, Executive Director, Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation (IFWF), presented (Appendix 59, Exhibit 71).

REPORTS

Director's Report

Director Fredericks highlighted items from each Bureau in the Director's Report (Appendix 59, Exhibit 72).

Commissioner's Reports

Commissioner reports stand as written (Appendix 59, Exhibit 73).

MISCELLANEOUS

Planning for Next Meeting

The next meeting will be November 17th – 18th, 2026, in Lewiston, Idaho.

Executive Session

26-59 Commissioner Ebert moved, and Commissioner Bobbitt seconded a motion, that the Commission go into executive session under Idaho Code 74-206 subsections 1 (c) (f). Motion carries.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Dave Bobbitt, Don Ebert, Tim Murphy, Mike Roach, Jordan Cheirrett, and Ron Davies.

The Commission discussed property acquisition and litigation matters.

26-60 Commissioner Bobbitt moved, and Commissioner Davies seconded a motion, that the Commission come out of executive session with the record to reflect that no final action was taken. Motion carries.

Open Session

Adjourn 3:10 p.m. MDT

Jordan Cheirrett
Chairman

Jim Fredericks
Secretary

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Idaho Fish and Game Commission
Special Meeting –August 12, 2026
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Legislative Conference Call
Boise, Idaho

A meeting of the Idaho Fish and Game Commission was held by telephone conference, attended by Commissioners Dave Bobbitt, Don Ebert, Tim Murphy, Mike Roach, Jordan Cheirrett, and Ron Davies.

IDFG staff present: Director Jim Fredericks, Deputy Director, Jon Rachael, Deputy Director, Amber Worthington, Ellary TuckerWilliams, Elizabeth Page, Deputy Attorney General, Owen Moroney, Tara Reichert, Justin Williams, Lance Hebdon, Shane Roberts, Rick Ward, and Tricia Hebdon.

IDFG staff participating via phone: Carson Watkins, JJ Teare, Josh Royse, Brian Pearson, Jon Guthrie, Dan Garren, Matt Pieron, Dennis Newman, Camille Behr, and Andy Smith.

There were no members of the public in attendance.

Chairman Cheirrett called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. MDT.

SEASON SETTINGS

Guiding Principles for Outfitter Allocation

Director Fredericks provided a summary of discussions held earlier in the week between Commissioners Ebert, Bobbitt, and Davies and representatives of the outfitting industry regarding potential legislation to restructure the outfitter allocation framework. The meeting was constructive, and provided an opportunity for all participants to ask questions, express concerns, share ideas, and better understand past discussions as we consider future directions.

Director Fredericks summarized the general principles of concurrence reached during the meeting with outfitting industry representatives:

- Develop a narrower definition of outfitter "services," including consideration of a process to validate that tags verified or certified by outfitters meet the intent of the law.
- Establish an enforcement mechanism within the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board (IOGLB) to ensure compliance with definitions, rules, and statute.
- Create an additional fee for allocated tags, with the amount to be determined.
- Separate outfitter allocation from the nonresident portion of a unit or zone so future adjustments to nonresident tags would not automatically affect outfitter allocation.
- Establish outfitter tag allocation in rule at the unit or zone level based on the highest use during the 2024 and 2025 seasons, with allocated tags not exceeding the number of nonresident tags available in a given unit or zone. This would not include backcountry deer units.

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- Fix allocation in all units and zones, eliminating the opportunity for total allocation growth at the expense of nonresident tags.
- Establish the sum of allocated tags as a statewide ceiling for allocation.
- Require outfitters to participate in a process to demonstrate and verify their use of allocated tags to ensure the tags serve their intended purpose.
- For capped elk zones, reduce resident, nonresident, and allocated tags proportionally if tag numbers are reduced. If tag caps increase, outfitter allocation would remain fixed and would not increase.

Director Fredericks noted that one outstanding issue remained unresolved. Industry representatives expressed concern about the possibility of future reductions to fixed outfitter allocation numbers if the Commission further reduced nonresident participation. Industry representatives indicated that foregoing future allocation growth was a reasonable trade-off only if the existing allocation numbers remained certain.

Director Fredericks explained that the meeting concluded with mutual respect and recognition that the Department needed guidance from the full Commission on whether and how to proceed with developing the proposed framework.

The Commission expressed general support for moving forward with the proposed outfitter allocation principles, recognizing the need for a clear definition of outfitter services, effective enforcement, and an acceptable compromise. Commissioners acknowledged the constructive discussions and compromises made by the outfitting industry. The Commission emphasized that additional details would need to be developed before a final framework could be established.

26-61 Commissioner Ebert moves that the Commission direct the Department to move forward with the principles as they were presented. Commissioner Bobbitt seconded the motion. Motion carries.

Adjourn 9:30 a.m. MST

Jordan Cheirrett
Chairman

Jim Fredericks
Secretary

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IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

November 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *4B*
Agenda Item: *Financial Report (Consent Calendar)* ***Supervisor Approval:*** *JO*
Presented by: *Jon Oswald*
Position/Title: *Chief, Bureau of Administration*

Background:
Update the Commission on the Financial Status of the Department.

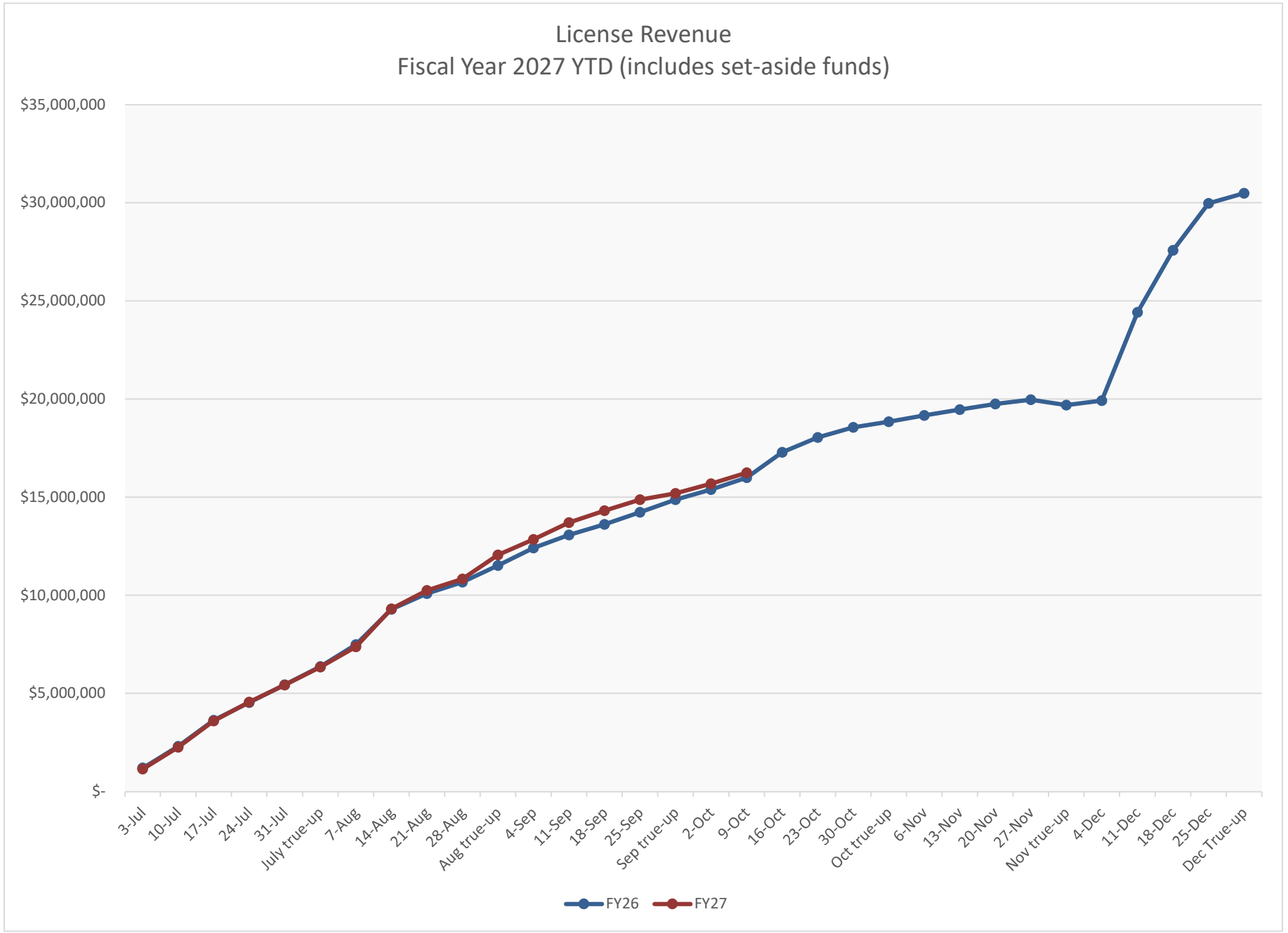
Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
N/A.

Public Involvement Process:
N/A.

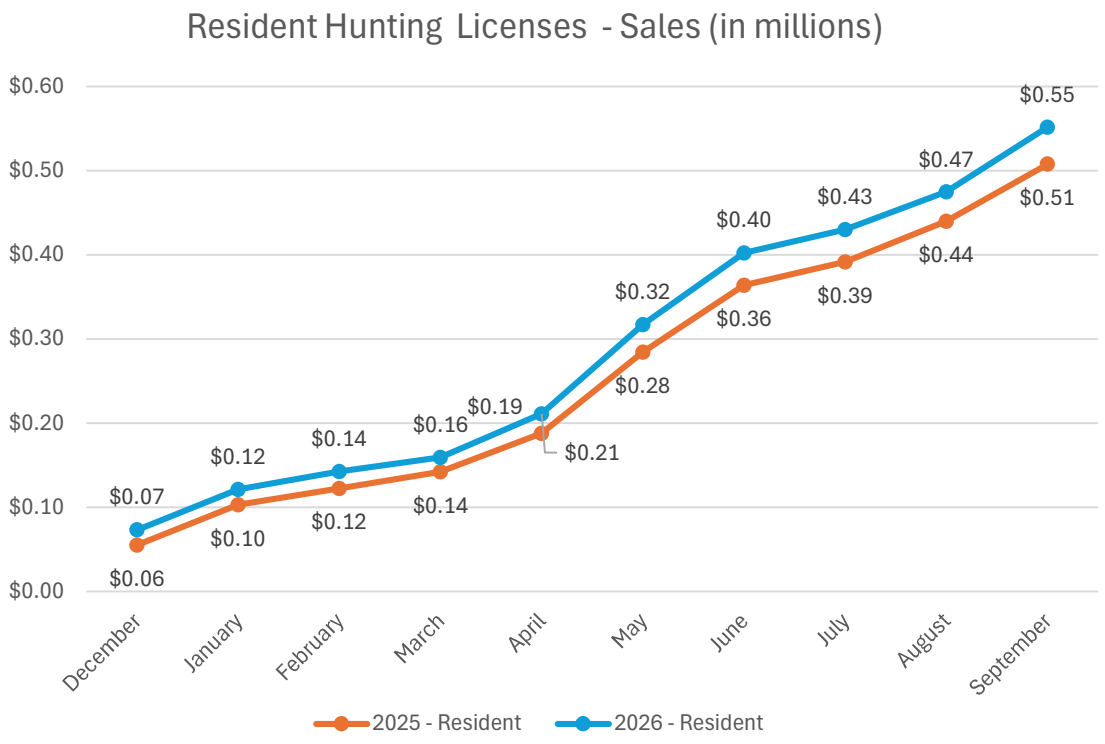
Justification:
N/A.

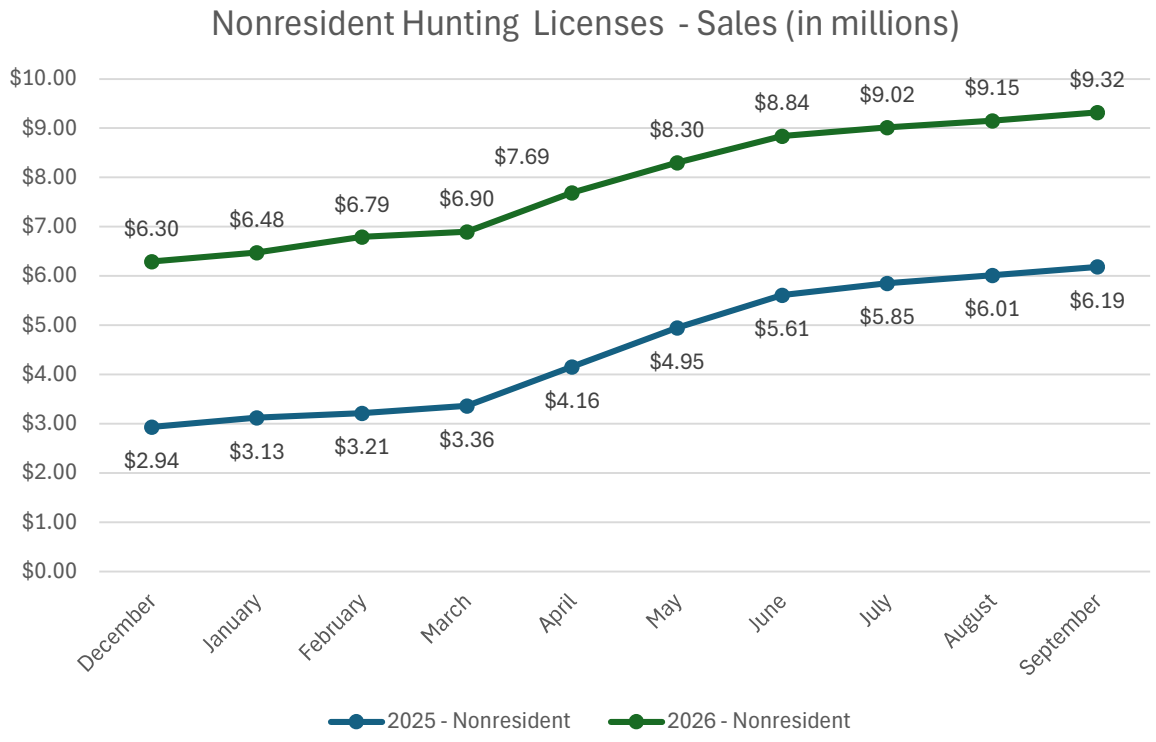
Staff Recommendation:
N/A.

Suggested Motion:
N/A.

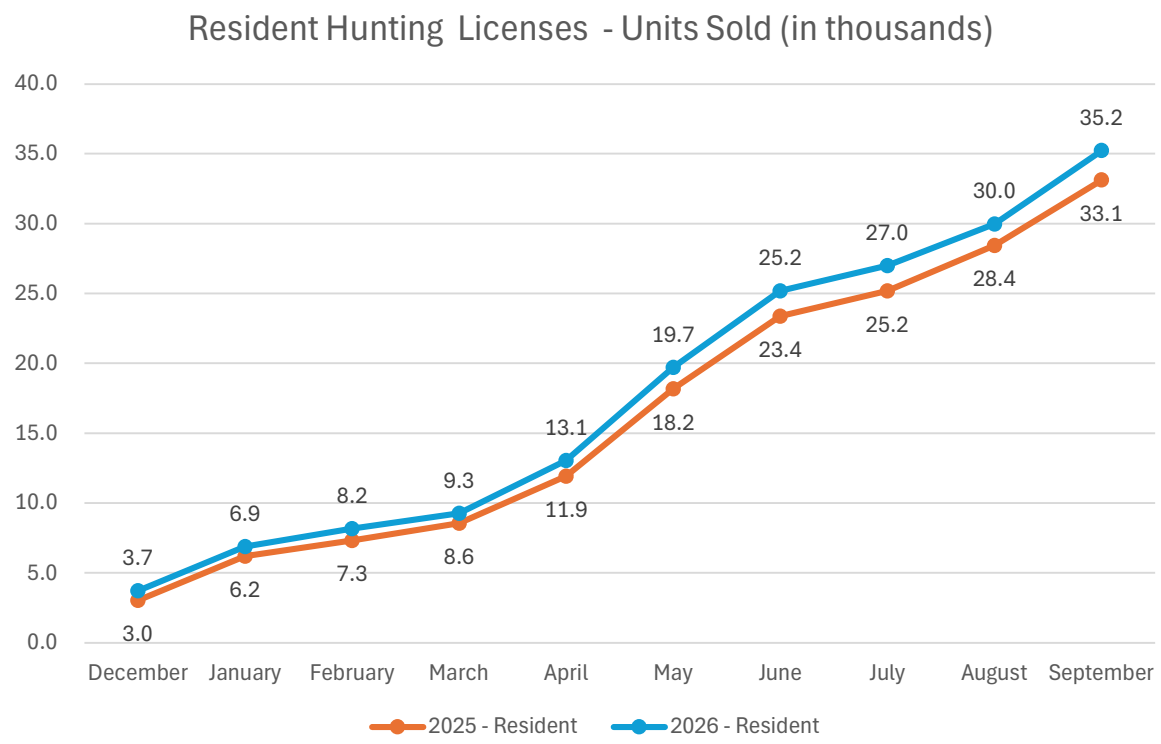

License Revenue
Fiscal Year 2027 YTD (includes set-aside funds)
$35,000,000
$30,000,000
$25,000,000
$20,000,000
$15,000,000
$10,000,000
$5,000,000
$-
3-Jul
10-Jul
17-Jul
24-Jul
31-Jul
July true-up
7-Aug
14-Aug
21-Aug
28-Aug
Aug true-up
4-Sep
11-Sep
18-Sep
25-Sep
Sep true-up
2-Oct
9-Oct
16-Oct
23-Oct
30-Oct
Oct true-up
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Dec True-up
FY26
FY27

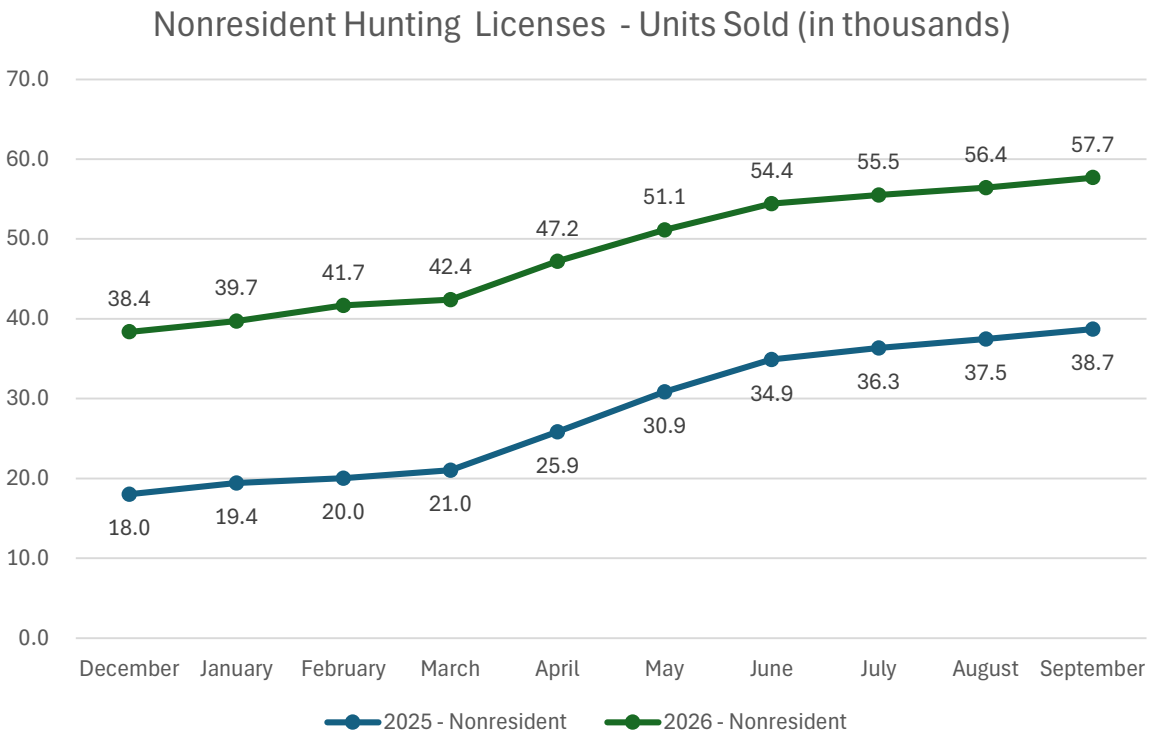
Hunting License Sales



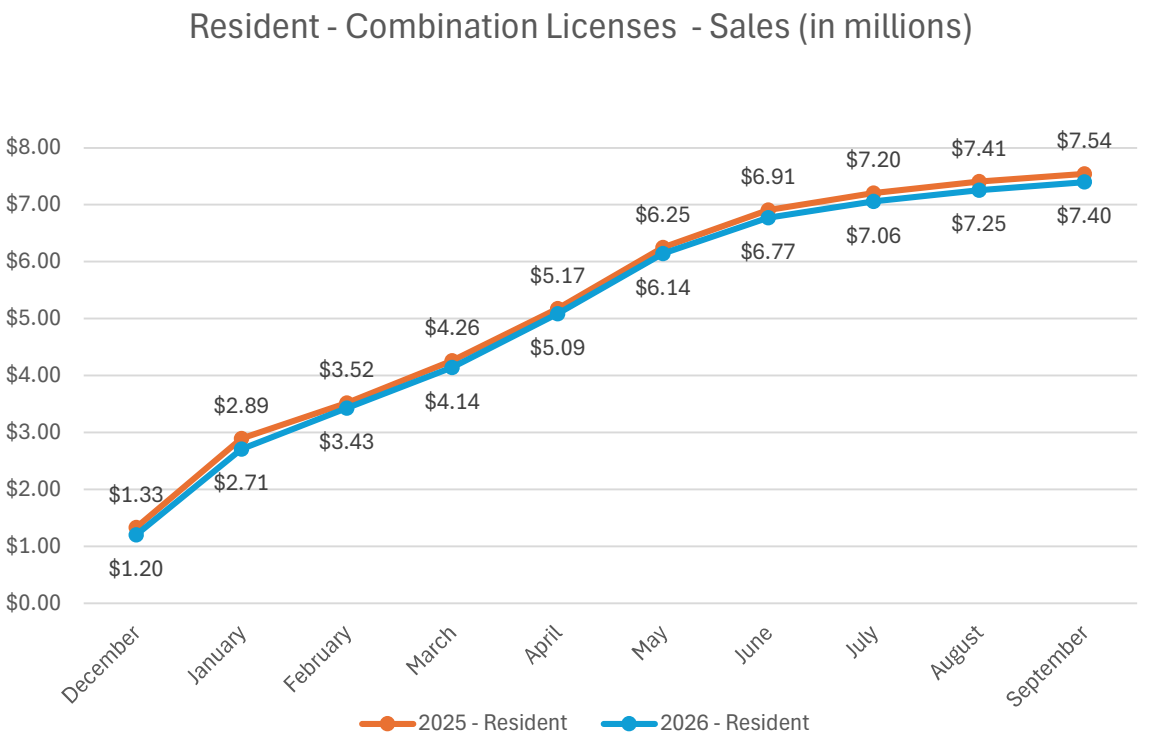


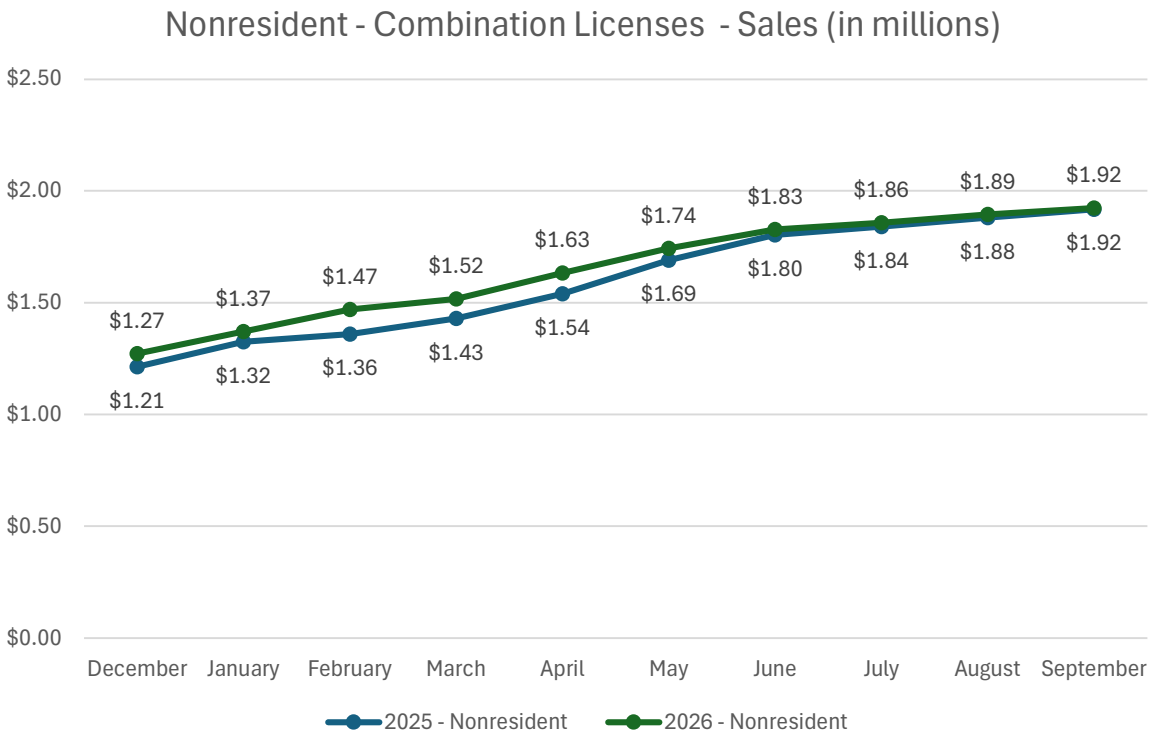
Hunting Licenses, Quantity Sold



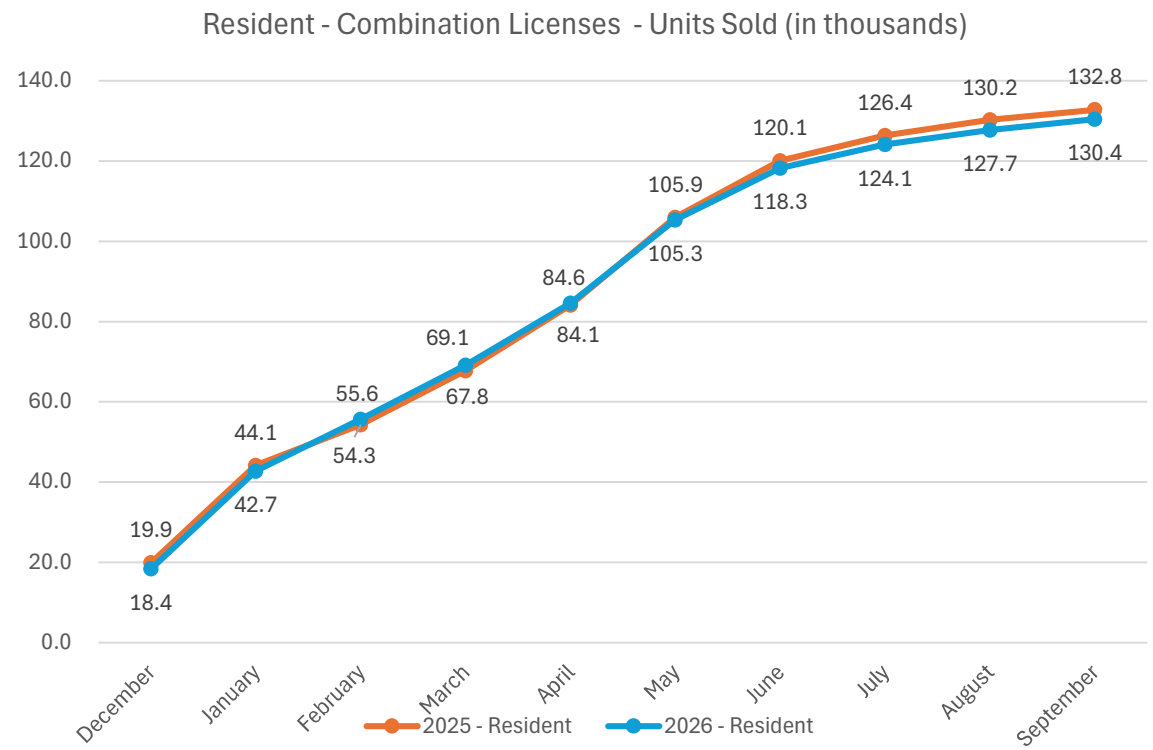


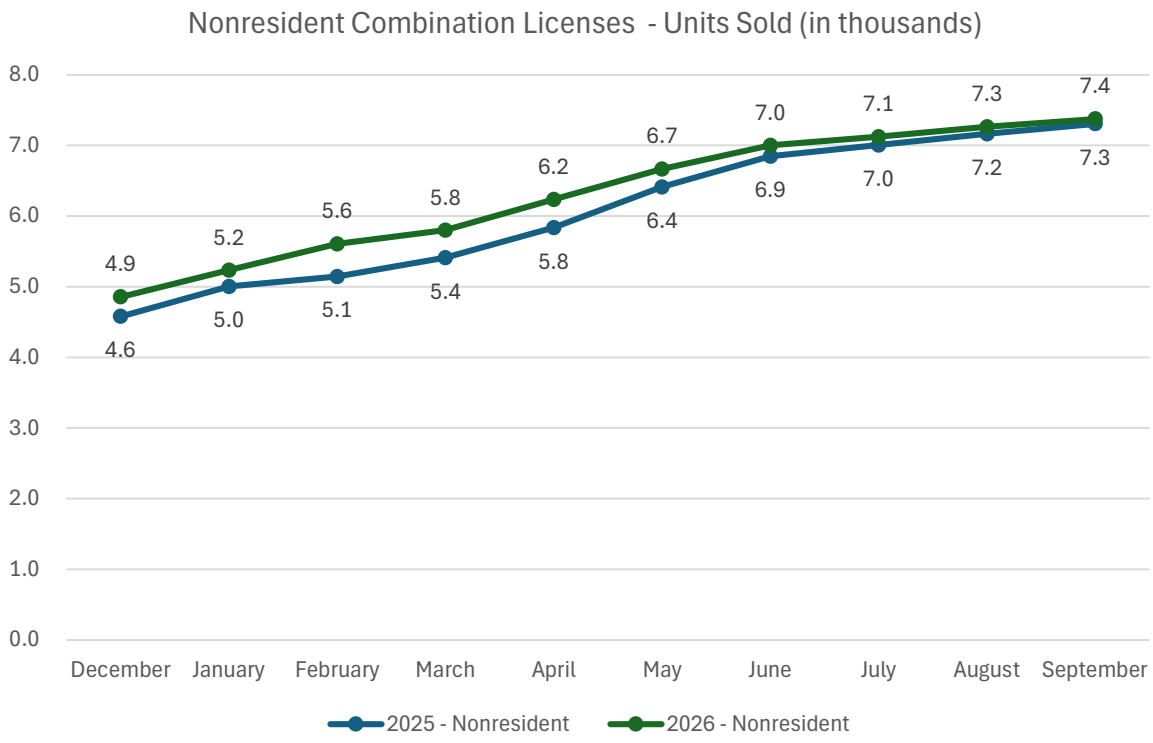
Combo License Sales



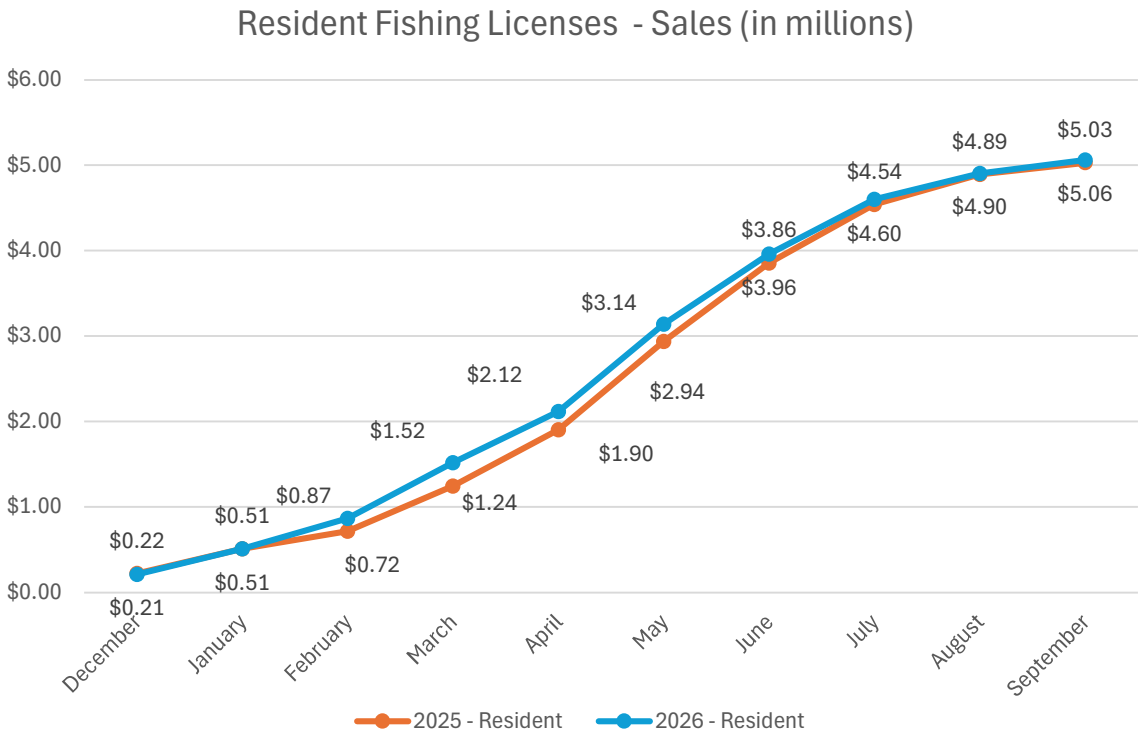


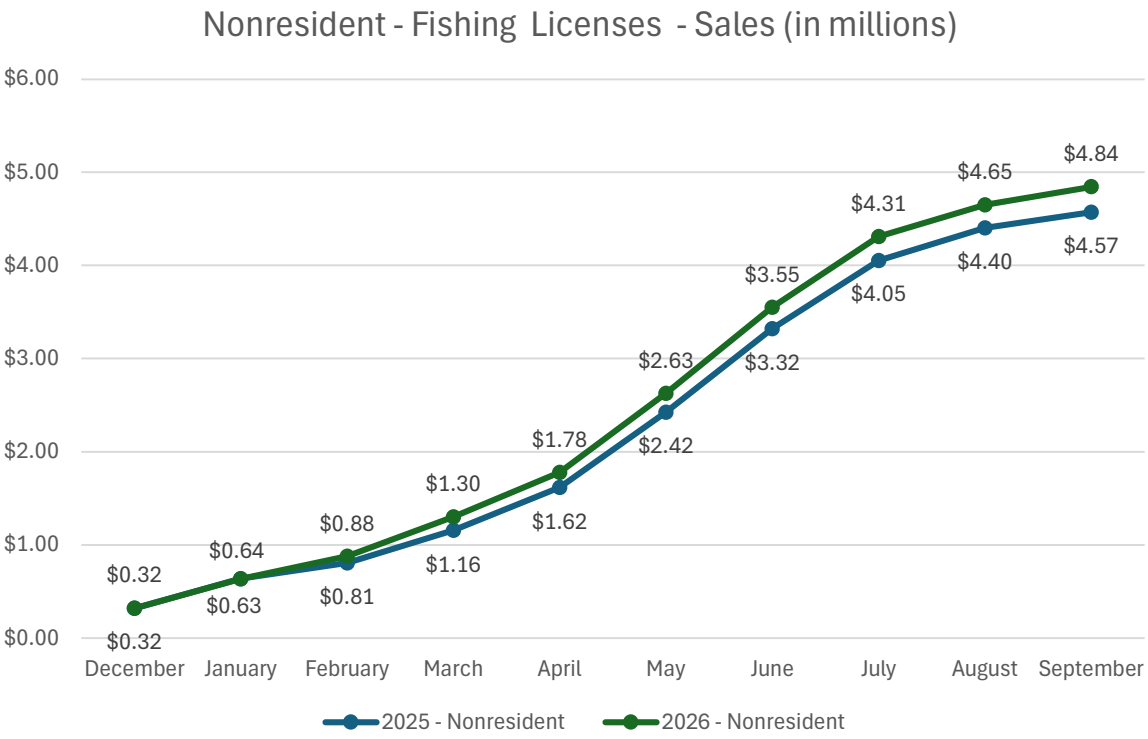
Combo Licenses, Quantity Sold



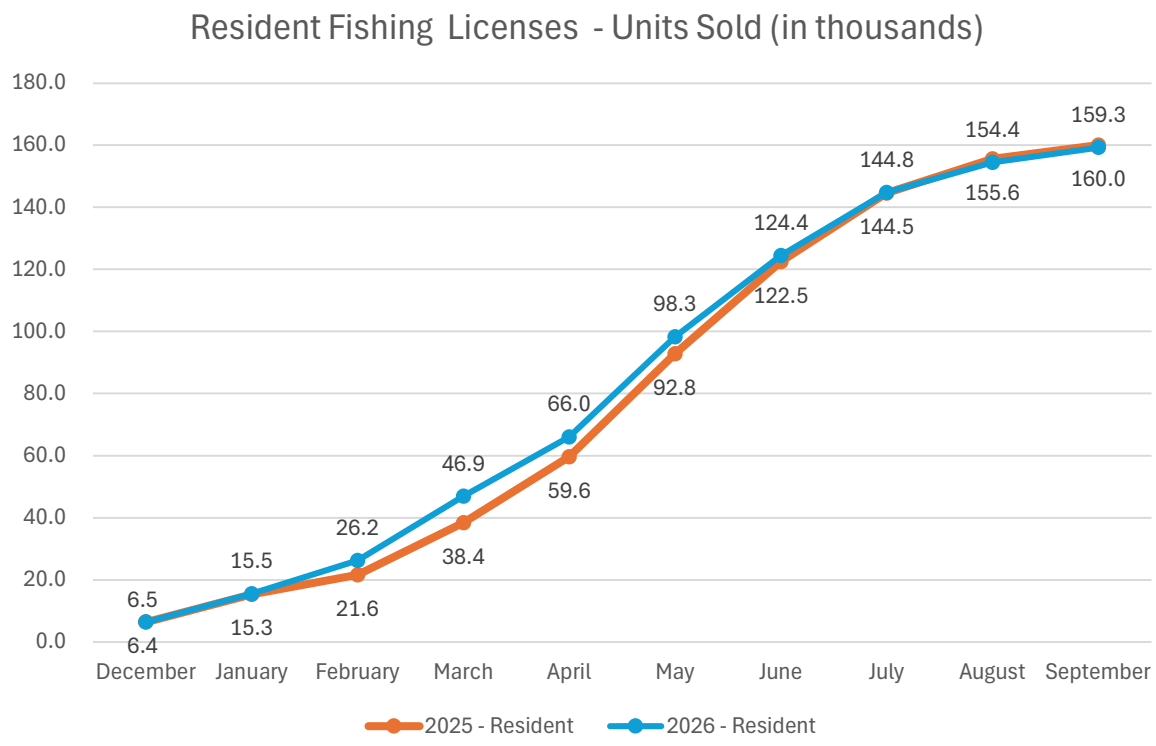


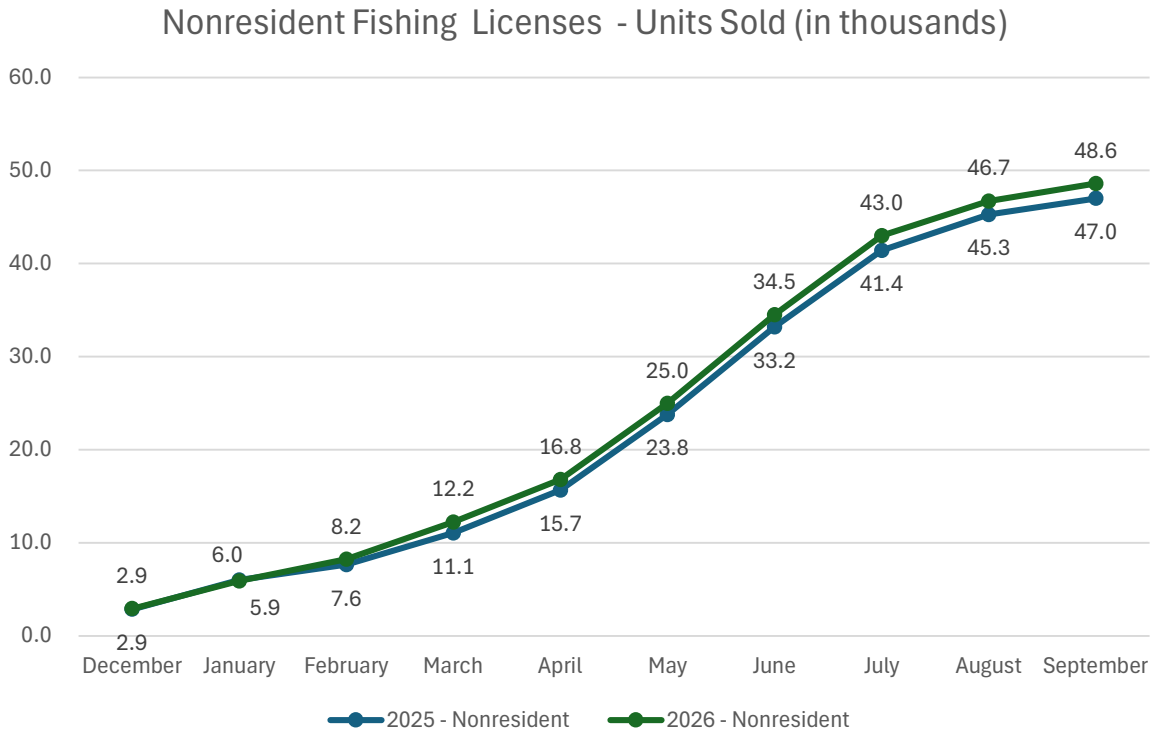
Fishing License Sales





Fishing Licenses, Quantity Sold





IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

November 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *5A*
Agenda Item: *Administrative Rules: Adoption of Pending Rules* ***(Action)*** ***Supervisor Approval:*** *JF*
Presented by: *Amber Worthington*
Position/Title: *Deputy Director of Programs and Policy*

Background:
The Commission previously approved proposed rules this year. The rules shown below are now up for review to adopt as pending.

IDAPA 13.01.09 – The proposed rulemaking revises two sections from chapter 13.01.09 – Rules Governing Taking of Game Birds and Upland Game Animals to provide the opportunity for electronic tagging for certain game birds.

IDAPA 13.01.10 - The proposed rulemaking revises one section from chapter 13.01.10 – Rules Governing Importation, Possession, Release, Sale, or Salvage of Wildlife to manage Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) management zones down to the specific Game Management Unit.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
Idaho Code 36-104 grants authority to the Commission to set seasons and promulgate IDAPA rules. Idaho Code 67, Chapter 52 (Idaho Administrative Procedure Act) governs the process for considering, adopting, and implementing IDAPA rules. Idaho Code 67-5224 provides for adoption of pending rules for additional public notice and comment.

Public Involvement Process:
Public involvement for rulemaking occurs through Commission meetings, negotiated rulemaking and the publication of proposed rules in the Administrative Bulletin.

The proposed rules are open for a 21-day public comment period and at the time of this draft, we received 46 responses with most in favor of e-tagging and few comments around the CWD management zone rule change. The pending rule is the same as the proposed rule the Commission adopted at their July meeting.

Justification:
Idaho Code (Idaho Administrative Procedure Act) governs the process for considering, adopting, and implementing IDAPA rules.

Staff Recommendation:
The Staff recommendation for pending rule language is presented by chapter on the following pages. These include pending rules for:

13.01.09 – Rules Governing Taking of Game Birds and Upland Game Animals
13.01.10 – Rules Governing Importation, Possession, Release, Sale, or Salvage of Wildlife

Suggested Motion: I move the Commission adopt the pending rules as presented, with the authority for the Department to make non-substantive edits in the proofreading process that do not alter the sense, meaning, or effect of the rules.

13.01.09 – RULES GOVERNING TAKING OF GAME BIRDS AND UPLAND GAME ANIMALS

BREAK IN CONTINUITY OF SECTION

100. GAME BIRD TAGS.

01. Game Tags. No person may hunt game birds anywhere within the state, except licensed shooting preserves, without having in possession the appropriate game tag as required by Section 36-409, Idaho Code. (3-31-22)

02. General and Controlled Hunt Tags. The Commission may authorize general or controlled hunts by proclamation. (3-31-22)

a. A general hunt game tag is valid in any general hunt for the calendar year. (3-31-22)

b. A controlled hunt tag is valid only for the controlled hunt for which the tag was drawn. For turkey only, a controlled hunt tag is also valid in any general hunt for the calendar year. (3-31-22)

03. Game Bird Tag Validation and Attachment. Any person who kills a game bird for which a game tag is required under Section 36-409(c), Idaho Code, must immediately validate the appropriate tag ~~and securely attach the validated tag to the carcass~~. Tags may be paper or electronic, as determined by the hunter at time of purchase. Electronic tag validation requires submission via the Department's official mobile app. Paper tag validation means completely removing the two (2) triangles on the tag corresponding to the day and month of the kill date. The validated tag must remain attached to the carcass during transit to the place of final storage or final consumption. (3-31-22)

BREAK IN CONTINUITY OF SECTION

152. UPLAND GAME BIRD PERMIT (DEPARTMENT-STOCKED BIRDS).

01. Upland Game Bird Permit. Any person eighteen (18) years of age or older hunting for or having a pheasant in his or her possession on Fort Boise, C.J. Strike, Montour, Payette River, Sterling, Market Lake, Mud Lake, Cartier, or Niagara Springs Wildlife Management Areas, or at other locations where the Department stocks pheasants, as identified by Commission proclamation, must have a valid paper or electronic Upland Game Bird Permit in possession.

(3-31-22)

02. Permit Limit. Each Upland Game Bird Permit has a limit of six (6) roosters (cocks). Multiple permits may be purchased. (3-31-22)

03. Permit Validation. Any person harvesting a pheasant where an Upland Game Bird Permit is required must immediately validate their Permit upon reducing a pheasant to possession. Tags may be paper or electronic, as determined by the hunter at time of purchase. Electronic tag validation requires submission via the use of the Department's official mobile app. Paper tags must be validated by entering the harvest date and location in ~~Non-Erasable~~ permanent ink~~,~~ and removing a notch from the permit for each pheasant taken. (3-31-22)

13.01.10 – RULES GOVERNING IMPORTATION, POSSESSION, RELEASE, SALE, OR SALVAGE OF WILDLIFE

BREAK IN CONTINUITY OF SECTION

150. CWD MANAGEMENT RESTRICTIONS.

01. Designation of CWD Management Zone. The Commission may designate CWD Management Zone(s) where wildlife is subject to increased risk of acquiring CWD based on presence of CWD-infected animals and information on wildlife movement. The Director may designate CWD Management Zone(s) on a temporary basis, for a period not to exceed ninety (90) days and subject to Commission review. (4-6-23)

02. Prohibitions. It is unlawful to: (4-6-23)

a. Import into Idaho the carcass or any part of deer, elk, or moose from another state, Canadian province, or country (other than Canada) with any documented CWD; (4-6-23)

b. Transport the carcass or any part of deer, elk, or moose out of ~~any CWD~~ the Game Management ~~Zone~~ Unit of harvest or salvage within a ~~to any portion of the state that is not a designated~~ CWD Management Zone; or (4-6-23)

c. Possess the carcass or any part of deer, elk, or moose that: has been imported from another state, Canadian province or country with a documented case of CWD; or transported out of any CWD Management Zone to or across any part of the state that is not a designated CWD Management Zone. (4-6-23)

03. Exceptions. This section does not apply to: (4-6-23)

a. Domestic cervids regulated under Chapter 37, Title 25, Idaho Code; (4-6-23)

b. Meat that is cut and wrapped; (4-6-23)

c. Quarters or deboned meat that does not include brain or spinal tissue; (4-6-23)

d. Edible organs, excluding brains; (4-6-23)

e. Hides without heads; (4-6-23)

f. Upper canine teeth (ivories); (4-6-23)

g. Finished taxidermy; (4-6-23)

h. Dried antlers; (4-6-23)

i. Cleaned and dried skulls or skull caps; (4-6-23)

j. Skull caps that do not include brain or spinal tissue; or (4-6-23)

k. Head or tissue from a CWD Management Zone, provided it is presented to the Department for sampling purposes, with the Department to keep possession for appropriate tissue disposal. (4-6-23)

IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

March 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *5B*
Agenda Item: *Petition for Rulemaking: Establishment of Sacred Resource Protection Zone* ***(Action)*** ***Supervisor Approval:*** *JF*
Presented by: *Amber Worthington*
Position/Title: *Deputy Director of Programs and Policy*

Background:
The Commission and the Department received the included petition notice for rulemaking on August 8, 2026, asking to recognize their petition to Montana and take up the same request. Their request is to add a 50 kilometer 'Sacred Resource Protection Zone' around all national parks and to make it illegal to shoot game animals with radio collars, neck bands, ear tags and/or other markers. The petition also requests "Adding section to Wolf Hunting Regulations for Varmint hunting as well as to ban the Use of Predator Calls within 15 miles of protective Corridors, refuges, or Sacred Resource Protection Safety Zone."

The press release, which was included with the petition, explains that the request is in response to Mollie's Pack - a well-known wolf pack out of Yellowstone National Park - now living outside of the Park's boundaries and no longer under National Park protection. The release goes on to say that Protect the Wolves (the petitioner) formally petitioned Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho in 2017, requesting the same rule changes and never received a response. Staff could not find any record of a formal petition from 2017.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
Under Idaho Code 67-5230, any person may petition an agency requesting rulemaking. The agency must: deny the petition in writing, stating its reasons for denial, or initiate rulemaking. The Commission must act on the petition no later than its first regular meeting scheduled seven (7) or more days after submission of petition.

Public Involvement Process:
Department staff received this petition as a written letter.

Justification:
Idaho Code 67-5230 requires the Commission to act on petitions for IDAPA rulemaking, either by initiation of rulemaking or by written petition denial.

Staff Recommendation:
Staff have no recommendations.

Sample Motion #1:
I move the Department initiate negotiated rulemaking to consider placing a safety zone around the stretch of Yellowstone National Park that lies in Idaho, make it illegal to shoot

game animals with identifiable markers, and ban the use of predator calls within 15 miles of the safety zone, protective corridors, and refuges.

Sample Motion #2:
I move to deny the petitioners' request for rulemaking that considers placing a safety zone around Yellowstone National Park, makes it illegal to shoot game animals with identifiable markers, and bans the use of predator calls within 15 miles of the safety zone, protective corridors, and refuges.

From:	Director Of Tribal Cultural Resources
To:	rules; Commissioner, Panhandle; Commissioner, Salmon; Commissioner, Southwest
Cc:	Erik Molvar; Samantha Miller
Subject:	Indigenous Founded Advocacy Group Renew Call to establish "Sacred Resource Protection Zone" To protect Sacred Resources The Mollies Pack
Date:	Saturday, August 1, 2026 2:09:31 PM
Attachments:	Sacred-Resource-Protection-Zone-Montana-petition.pdf

CAUTION: This email originated outside the State of Idaho network. Verify links and attachments BEFORE you click or open, even if you recognize and/or trust the sender. Contact your agency service desk with any concerns.

Good Afternoon,
Attached is our Press Release as well as initial SRPZ petition Submission. We will be re-presenting our petition in Person at your next scheduled meeting November 17-18, 2026 in Lewiston under **Legal Authority:** Submit under **Idaho Code § 67-5230**, which allows any person to petition an agency to adopt, amend, or repeal a rule. was initally submitted in 2017 with zero response from you!!!!!! We are Submitting Once again with more support!!! We are past tired of the Wasichus lawmakers ignoring our Religous resources as well as our Religous freedoms sand beliefs!!!

Roger Dobson
Director of Tribal Cultural Resources
Protect The Wolves™
714-750-6878

For Immediate Release
July 17, 2026
Contact:
Roger Dobson, Protect the Wolves™, (714) 750-6878, roger@protectthewolves.com
Erik Molvar, Western Watersheds Project, (307) 399-7910, emolvar@westernwatersheds.org
Dr. Bridgett vonHoldt, Princeton University, 609-258-7021, vonholdt@princeton.edu

Indigenous member founded wolf conservation group renew call for Sacred Resource Protection Zone, banning wolf hunting and trapping to protect Mollie's Pack

HAILEY, Ida. – Mollie's Pack, one of Yellowstone National Park's most well-known and fabled wolf packs, recently was recorded living outside the protective boundaries of the National Park. This development has triggered a fresh call for the states of Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana to establish a Sacred Resource Protection Zone to encompass non-park lands within 50 km (31 miles) of the boundaries of Yellowstone and Grand Teton

National Parks. In 2017, Protect the Wolves, an Indigenous-led wolf advocacy group, officially petitioned the state governments of Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho to create this Sacred Resource Protection Zone to ban wolf hunting and trapping on lands surrounding the National Parks.

"We have waited patiently for the states of Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho to respond to our petition to create a Sacred Resource Protection Zone around these parks, but the state wildlife agencies have yet to even respond,]" said Roger Dobson, a Cowlitz Tribal Member and Director of Tribal Cultural Resources with Protect the Wolves. "It's long past time for the states to implement wolf protection for the lands surrounding Yellowstone and Grand Teton. Wolves are sacred to our culture and religions as Indigenous peoples, as are the lands of Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks, yet state governments have so far failed to grant park wolves the essential protections they need to fulfill their natural role in the Yellowstone ecosystem."

A recent study shows that wolves living inside National Parks – protected from killing and harassment by humans – are suffering a high incidence of social disruption and pack disintegration due to human-caused wolf-killings outside park boundaries. Across five National Parks (Yellowstone, Grand Teton, Voyageurs, Yukon-Charley, and Denali), 82% of wolves that died of human causes over the previous 35 years died at the hands of trophy hunting and state and federal agencies' officially-sanctioned killing outside park boundaries. In some cases, entire packs were wiped out, according to the research. Of the five National Parks, Yellowstone and Grand Teton had the highest proportion of their wolves killed by humans.

"The gray wolves of the northern Rocky Mountains represent one of North America's most important wild wolf populations, both ecologically and genetically," said Dr. Bridgett vonHoldt, wolf geneticist and lead author of the study. "Maintaining connected, socially intact packs is essential for preserving genetic diversity and the long-term resilience of the population. Establishing a buffer zone around Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks that limits hunting and trapping would significantly help reduce unnecessary mortality of Park-associated wolves and better protect the genetic and ecological processes that these iconic populations support."

"The science is clear that state management of wolves outside these crown jewel National Parks has not shown sufficient restraint or responsibility to keep Park wolves alive," said Erik Molvar, a wildlife biologist and Executive Director with Western Watersheds Project. "The dispersal of Mollie's Pack – unusually large, beloved to the public, and also ecologically unique due to their penchant for specializing in bison as a primary prey – moving outside the Park boundaries into wolf habitats where trophy

hunting is allowed, it puts a fine point on the need to establish the Indigenous-led Sacred Resource Protection Zone to give National Park wolves the protections they need to survive."

Another recent study found that wolves in the broader Yellowstone population are beginning to lose their genetic diversity due to the overall population in the Parks and the surrounding region being too small to meet Minimum Viable Population thresholds.

Indigenous leaders have long called for wolf protections. Numerous tribal groups have signed an international Wolf Treaty, which recognizes a sacred relationship between wolves and Indigenous peoples, criticizes trophy hunting and lethal control in response to livestock losses, and calls for further expanded recovery of wolf populations with connectivity linkages in currently unoccupied parts of their historic range.

"The state governments should have listened to Indigenous voices and created this Sacred Resource Protection Zone around Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks, to prevent the killing of National Park wolves,]" said Dobson. "[In this new study, we now have definitive proof that the failure of state governments to protect wolves on the lands surrounding Yellowstone and Grand Teton are causing serious unnatural disruptions for wolf packs and preventing these wolves from living out their lives in a natural and undisturbed way."

"State governments in Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming have had their chance to grant National Park wolves a zone of protection around these National Parks, but they were irresponsible, and ramped up wolf-killing instead," said Molvar. "Now that the federal government has lost its court battle to keep wolves off the endangered species list, it's time to end the killing by extending federal protections throughout the lower 48 states. In the meantime, the states surrounding Yellowstone and Grand Teton need to establish this Sacred Resource Protection Zone around the Parks to stop the loss of National Park wolf packs."

"The killing of wolves and disruption of wolf packs living in in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks is completely unnecessary and preventable, and with Mollie's Pack now living outside Yellowstone, the federal government should step in to prevent it," said Dobson. "It is imperative that government agencies including fish and game departments begin to recognize our sacred cultural beliefs, like the beliefs of all other religions, and our special relationship to the species that Native Americans hold as sacred."

In recent decades, numerous famous wolves like "06," the breeding female of the Lamar Canyon Pack, killed in 2012, and her daughter "Spitfire," who succeeded her as the Lamar Canyon breeding female and was killed in 2018, were shot by trophy hunters outside Yellowstone. Scientific research shows that wolf-elk-bison interactions are complex, and the alteration of predator-prey dynamics from trophy hunting outside the Parks could interfere with the ecological recovery of Yellowstone that has been

accomplished as a result of wolf reintroduction.

Roger Dobson
714-750-6878
Director of Tribal Cultural Resources
Protect The Wolves
PO Bx 1516 Lucerne Valley Ca 92356

###

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MFWP Tracking Number:05232017

To request a change to regulations under the authority of the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
MFWP We are requesting that this Petition be considered at the Meeting either June 7th, in Kalispell, or August 10th in Helena.

SECTION I:

1. Person or organization requesting the change
Organization: Protect The Wolves™ Pack a Native American Group

Name of primary contact person: Roger Dobson, Director of Media.
Patricia Herman, President
Address: 27946 Henry Mayo, Castaic CA 91384
Telephone number: 406-219-8690
Email address: roger@protectthewolves.com

2. Rulemaking Authority – Petition to the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission pursuant amend hunting regulations and hunting areas pertaining to wolves pursuant to the Montana Gray Wolf Management Plan.

3. Overview – To amend the Sections/ add Sections

Add 50 km Sacred Resource Protection Zone surrounding all National Parks within Montana.

Marked or Radio-Collared Animals – To be changed from Legal to Illegal. It is illegal to shoot game animals that have radio collars, neck bands, ear tags and/or other markers,
Making it illegal to take an animal with a collar on it.

Adding Section to Wolf Hunting Regulations for Varmint hunting as well to ban the Use of Predator Calls with 15 miles of protective Corridors, refuges, or Sacred Resource Protection Safety Zone.

4. Rationale – To save taxpayers the cost of collaring wildlife an expense that MFWP finds necessary to install new collars each year, in addition to prevent the human-caused mortality of humanized wildlife, legal or otherwise (wildlife that have become accustomed to human presence, such

as in Yellowstone, or Glacier etc, wherein they are unaware of human threat due to hunting or otherwise) that venture outside of National Parks. Those Resources are not only state but they are federal resources; they are sacred tribal resources, as well as public resources. As Such, need their Federal Protections within the SRPSZ. These Wildlife reside within National Parks are not State Resources and fall under National Park Protections regulations which include Sacred sites and resources for the Indigenous.

SECTION II:

5. Date of Petition: Will be emailed to Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks

6. Category of Proposed Change

☐ Hunting/Trophy areas surrounding all designated National Parks including Yellowstone and Glacier etc. The Sacred Resources in these areas have been humanized. Wildlife that are used to being near Humans as the resources of all the people of the United States, Tribes included, due to these being sacred resources.

7. The proposal to Amend Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Wolf Hunting Regulations

☐ Amend Wolf Regulations to add Section that includes establishing A SACRED RESOURCE PROTECTION SAFETY ZONE of 50km surrounding All National Parks within Montana including Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks, etc and that wolves within this zone must be protected from any and all human-caused mortality to the greatest extent possible. Further banning the use of Predator Calls within 15 miles of established Sacred Resource Protection Zone

☐ Add new line item designated National Park Resources adding the following: Wolves in the greater Yellowstone ecosystem, or other National Park ecosystems are resources of the public of the United States of America, and as such will not be managed by Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks as Trophy Game Animals. (These Public Resources are Protected under not only the Indian Trust, but the Public Trust, as well as National Park Policy and cannot be managed at the hands of special interest hunter or rancher groups

Wolf Regulations shall be amended to ban all hunting of predators in the SRPSZ; this is defined as thirty minutes after sunset to thirty minutes before dawn or sunrise. The hunting and the killing of predator animals including Coyotes is likely to result in the mistaken ID take of predatory animals and of gray wolves. It has already been used as an excuse in illegal takes in various states prior to making this request.

A Further Amendment Montana Wolf Regulations shall preclude and ban the use of the “Calls” of Predatory Animals within 16 miles of the established SRPSZ. Hunters shall not be allowed to call the Grey Wolf and other predators from closer than 15 miles of the SRPSZ the safety zone of the National parks and refuge boundaries.

Montana Wolf Regulations shall also be amended to preclude the use of bear bait in the SRPSZ zone. This practice has resulted and does result in the mistaken ID shooting of Grizzly Bear a threatened and federally protected species. It is not legal for hunters to feed or chum wild animals with bait other than permitted bear bait sites. Many of these bear bait sites are in the SRPSZ and directly adjacent to cattle ranches. Bear Bait shall result in attracting the Gray Wolf to inappropriate locations. This shall not be allowed in the SRPSZ

8. Effective date This proposed change requires either immediate implementation,
or a delay in the setting or initiation of any wolf hunting season in Montana. Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks is attempting to manage federal public resources without involving all parties that should be included in the management of our federal, public and Indian trust
resources under mentioned trusts with those sacred resources (Indigenous Sites are but 1 of our Sacred Resources) within Yellowstone National Park, or other National Parks are being currently federally protected.

9. Supporting documentation: See Attachment A

10. Economic or Fiscal Impacts: Continued hunting as Trophy Animals, or as Predatory Animals will impact greatly the ability of not only Yellowstone National Park, but also all National Parks, and National Wildlife Refuges (being a designation to protect and preserve their natural heritage for the use and enjoyment of the people), impair the ability of

these National Parks and National Wildlife Refuges to continue drawing visitors for the viewing of wolves and other wildlife.

11. Definitions. For the purpose of this regulation, definitions shall be as set forth in Montana Statutes and we petition the Commission also to adopt the following definition:
(a) “Human-caused mortality” means any legal or illegal human-caused gray wolf death that occurs during an open gray wolf hunting season or at any other time, including gray wolves taken by the Department, gray wolves taken under that authority or taken under Lethal Take Permits and known natural and accidental gray wolf deaths. Shall be represented in Montanas target quotas.

12. Should Montana Fish Wilflife and Parks refuse to give this matter the Public Comment Period worthy of a national resource, not merely a state resource, then Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks will be in direct conflict with the mandates placed upon them by the Trusts as a Trustee.
(a)Further The State of Montana needs to acknowledge the death of the female wolf known as “The White Lady” that Yellowstone National Park officials had to euthanize due to the actions of a poacher. Necropsy results prove this human-caused mortality was from gunshot wounds. While this crime most likely occurred in Montana, current lax regulations in Wyoming make this type of event likely in Wyoming as well. Wyoming Trustees need to be accountable for including resource loss and reflect such in their trophy areas.

The Grey Wolf Management Plan Shall include adequate regulatory mechanisms to ensure the preservation of the grey wolf species in the (SRPSZ). This requirement includes and is not limited to regulations, which clearly define each element of the crime of illegal take of a Gray Wolf. This shall include clear definition of the penalty for said illegal take which shall be a clear deterrent to a violation of this law. It is mandatory that the deterrent include a loss of hunting license/privilege for an appropriate period of time and restitution in the amount to be determined from public input and from the science of wolf management to date. The laws shall be clear and irrefutable if you kill a wolf illegally you will lose your ticket to hunt and you will pay. You may go to jail depending upon the gravity of your offense. The mandatory jail term offense shall be clearly defined

SECTION 3: WGF Commission Staff Only

Date received:

MFWP staff action:

MFWP authority

Tracking Number:

Date petitioner was notified of receipt of petition and pending action:

Meeting date for MFWP consideration:

IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

March 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *5C*
Agenda Item: *Petition for Rulemaking: Overturn Regulatory Restrictions Regarding Certain Controlled Hunt Applications, Tag Exchange, and Unused Tags* ***Supervisor Approval:*** *JF*
(Action)
Presented by: *Amber Worthington*
Position/Title: *Deputy Director of Programs and Policy*

Background:
The Department received the included petition for rulemaking on August 15, 2026 to "…Overturn Regulatory Restrictions Barring General Tag Holders from Second Controlled Hunt Applications, Enforcing a July 31 General Tag Exchange Ban, and Imposing Complete Financial Forfeiture on Unused Tags Post-August 1."

The petitioners ask the Commission to (*verbatim*):

1. Immediately Rescind the restrictions prohibiting general tag holders from applying for and participating in the second controlled hunt period.
2. Abolish the July 31 General Tag Exchange Ban, restoring reasonable in-season flexibility.
3. Reform the Refund and Forfeiture Schedule to eliminate the August-to-December 0% refund cliff.
4. Engage stakeholder groups in open public discourse prior to enacting rules that restrict traditional hunting flexibility.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
Under Idaho Code 67-5230, any person may petition an agency requesting rulemaking. The agency must: deny the petition in writing, stating its reasons for denial, or initiate rulemaking. The Commission must act on the petition no later than its first regular meeting scheduled seven (7) or more days after submission of petition.

Public Involvement Process:
Department staff received this petition as a written letter.

Justification:
Idaho Code 67-5230 requires the Commission to act on petitions for IDAPA rulemaking, either by initiation of rulemaking or by written petition denial.

Staff Recommendation:
Staff recommend denying the petition. These rules were thoroughly vetted by staff, the public and the Commission in 2024 and 2025, with adoption by the Commission in November 2025 and adoption by the Legislature in the Session of 2026. There are no restrictions around general tag holders participating in the second controlled hunt period.

The July 31st deadline for tag exchange is in place to ensure a tag isn't first hunted on prior to exchange. The refund period was modified for the same reason – prior to the new rule change, a hunter could not get a refund after August 31 and now, a hunter cannot get a refund after July 31. Lastly, to the request for open public discourse prior to enacting the rules, the rules were in review for two years with 11 public engagement opportunities and multiple notices of opportunities. Per the Idaho Administrative Procedures Act, the agency is always required to engage the public.

Sample Motion #1:
I move the Department initiate negotiated rulemaking to consider overturning the regulatory restrictions around second controlled hunt period and tag exchanges and refunds.

Sample Motion #2:
I move to deny the petitioners' request for rulemaking that considers overturning the regulatory restrictions around second controlled hunt period and tag exchanges and refunds.

FORMAL PETITION AND COMPLAINT

BEFORE THE FISH AND GAME COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF IDAHO

IN THE MATTER OF: A Formal Protest and Legal Petition to Overturn Regulatory Restrictions Barring General Tag Holders from Second Controlled Hunt Applications, Enforcing a July 31 General Tag Exchange Ban, and Imposing Complete Financial Forfeiture on Unused Tags Post-August 1.

I. STATEMENT OF INTEREST AND STANDING

The undersigned responsible sportsmen, conservation groups, citizen stakeholders, and advocates of public wildlife rights hereby submit this Amended Formal Complaint and Petition for Regulatory Relief to the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) and the Idaho Fish and Game Commission. Petitioners challenge the administrative restrictions barring citizens who have purchased a deer or elk tag from applying for the second controlled hunt period, prohibiting general tag exchanges after July 31, and enforcing a confiscatory 0% refund policy for tags left un-hunted due to routine schedule shifts occurring from August onward.

II. STATEMENT OF THE GRIEVANCE

IDFG has enforced an interlocking set of restrictive administrative rules:

- Categorically prohibiting citizens holding a general or initial tag from applying for the second controlled hunt period.
- Enforcing a hard July 31 cutoff deadline, after which no general season deer or elk tag exchanges are permitted.
- Imposing an aggressive sliding-scale cutoff that yields a 0% refund for tags left un-hunted due to ordinary life and schedule changes post-August 1.

These rules penalize proactive hunters who fund conservation early. By denying flexibility when personal, professional, or environmental conditions shift mid-year, the Department treats tag investments as punitive fees rather than public trust privileges, damaging household food security and causing direct financial injury.

III. LEGAL AND ECONOMIC ARGUMENTS

Arbitrary Administrative Action: Wildlife management regulations must be reasonably related to biological sustainability. Historical data shows that secondary and late-season opportunities account for negligible, controlled harvests. Punitive calendar cutoffs (the July 31 exchange ban and the August-December zero-refund wall) bear no rational nexus to herd management, serving merely as administrative convenience at the expense of license-holders.

Economic Injury: Idaho's hunting economy generates over $2.1 billion annually and nearly $155 million in state and local tax revenue. Arbitrarily locking out flexible participation and trapping hunter capital through absolute forfeiture rules directly harms rural small businesses, outfitters, and local tax bases that depend on dynamic hunter mobility.

IV. PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Petitioners respectfully request that the Idaho Fish and Game Commission and IDFG take the following corrective actions:

1. Immediately Rescind the restrictions prohibiting general tag holders from applying for and participating in the second controlled hunt period.
2. Abolish the July 31 General Tag Exchange Ban, restoring reasonable in-season flexibility.
3. Reform the Refund and Forfeiture Schedule to eliminate the August-to-December 0% refund cliff.
4. Engage stakeholder groups in open public discourse prior to enacting rules that restrict traditional hunting flexibility.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED this 15th day of August, 2026.

(Submitted by Responsible Idaho Sportsmen, Citizen Stakeholders, and Public Trust Advocates)



IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

November 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *5D*
Agenda Item: *Petition for Rulemaking: Amend Enclosure Requirements for Snakes* ***(Action)*** ***Supervisor Approval:*** *JF*
Presented by: *Amber Worthington*
Position/Title: *Deputy Director of Programs and Policy*

Background:
The Commission and the Department received the included petition for rulemaking on September 21, 2026 to modify the rules related to captive wildlife and amend the enclosure requirements, "to require that, for snake enclosures, the length be at least the length of the snake."

The Commission adopted rules for IDAPA chapter 13.01.10, Rules Governing Wildlife Importation, Possession, Release, Sale, or Salvage – for one of the Zero-Based Regulation phases - during their November 2022 Commission meeting. At that time, modifications concerning animals were made to section 261, Prevention of Escape of Captive Wildlife, but there were no revisions around reptiles.

The petitioner, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals Foundation, is asking for an amendment to 13.01.10 section 261, that will add provisions specific to snake enclosures to be of a size that allows for the full stretch of the snake's length, deemed to be "…one of their most fundamental physical and behavioral needs…"

The petition points out the Department's requirement of enclosures structured to make it impossible for animals to escape. It goes on to suggest that not only does captivity stress brought on by an ill-sized enclosure lead to a compromise of the snake's wellbeing and potential of human-directed aggression, it also can create an escape-driven response and possible escape.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
Under Idaho Code 67-5230, any person may petition an agency requesting rulemaking. The agency must: deny the petition in writing, stating its reasons for denial, or initiate rulemaking. The Commission must act on the petition no later than its first regular meeting scheduled seven (7) or more days after submission of petition.

Public Involvement Process:
This petition was received as a written letter by the Commission Chairman and Director.

Justification:
Idaho Code 67-5230 requires the Commission to act on petitions for IDAPA rulemaking, either by initiation of rulemaking or by written petition denial.

Staff Recommendation:
Staff recommend proceeding with the negotiated rulemaking process.

Sample Motion #1:
I move the Department initiate negotiated rulemaking to consider amending IDAPA chapter 13.01.10.261 to modify enclosure requirements for snakes.

Sample Motion #2:
I move to deny the petitioner's request for rulemaking that would consider amending rule to modify enclosure requirements for snakes.

AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF ALL ANIMALS

PETA FOUNDATION

PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL TREATMENT OF ANIMALS FOUNDATION

Washington
1536 16th St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
202-483-PETA

Los Angeles
2624 W. Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90026
323-644-PETA

Norfolk
501 Front St.
Norfolk, VA 23510
757-622-PETA

September 21, 2026

Via e-mail

Jordan Cheirrett
Commission Chairman
Idaho Fish and Game Commission
jordan.cheirrett@idfg.idaho.gov

Cc: Jim Fredericks
Director
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
jim.fredericks@idfg.idaho.gov

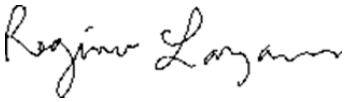
Re: Petition Requesting Rulemaking to Amend Chapter 10 to Require That Snake Enclosures Provide at Least Enough Space for Snakes to Fully Extend

Dear Commission Chairman Cheirrett:

Pursuant to the Idaho Administrative Procedure Act, Idaho Code Ann. § 67-5230, I am submitting the attached petition for rulemaking on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, Inc., and Constance J. Larsen-Witte, urging the Idaho Fish and Game Commission to amend the enclosure requirements, as described in Idaho Admin. Code r. 13.01.10.261, to require that, for snake enclosures, the length be at least the length of the snake.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Regina Lazarus
Senior Counsel
Regulatory Affairs
PETA Foundation
1536 16th St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
(862) 283-1517
ReginaL@petaf.org

PETA FOUNDATION IS AN OPERATING NAME OF THE FOUNDATION TO SUPPORT ANIMAL PROTECTION.

ENTITIES:

- PETA U.S.
- PETA Asia
- PETA India
- PETA France
- PETA Australia
- PETA Germany
- PETA Switzerland
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

Petition
Before the Idaho Fish and Game Commission

September 21, 2026

Requesting Rulemaking to Amend Chapter 10 to Require That Snake Enclosures Provide at Least Enough Space for Full Extension

Submitted on Behalf of

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, Inc.
501 Front Street, Norfolk, Virginia 23510

Constance J. Larsen-Witte
Ada County, Idaho

Submitted by

Regina Lazarus
Senior Counsel
PETA Foundation
1536 16th Street N.W., Washington, DC 20036

Reviewed by

R. Mason Payne, DVM, cVMA
Wildlife Veterinarian, Captive Animal Law Enforcement
PETA Foundation
1536 16th Street N.W., Washington, DC 20036

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I. INTRODUCTION

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, Inc. (PETA) and Constance J. Larsen-Witte (collectively "Petitioners") submit this petition pursuant to the Idaho Administrative Procedure Act, Idaho Code Ann. § 67-5230, which provides that "[a]ny person may petition an agency requesting the adoption, amendment, or repeal of a rule."[1] The Petitioners request that the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG or "Department"), through the Idaho Fish and Game Commission ("Commission"), commence rulemaking proceedings to amend the enclosure requirements, as described in Idaho Admin. Code r. 13.01.10.261 (Prevention of Escape of Captive Wildlife), applicable to captive wildlife facilities, to require that, for snake enclosures, the length be at least as long as the snake.[2] The Petitioners also propose minimum width and height dimensions as described in section V.

The Department requires that, for all animals, cages or enclosures must be of sufficient size to give the animal "ample space for exercise and to avoid being overcrowded." Idaho Admin. Code r. 13.01.10.261(02). To give effect to that requirement, the Department adopted measurable enclosure dimension standards for facilities to follow and IDFG agents to enforce objectively. Yet, since the early 1990s, reptiles have remained the only category of captive wildlife excluded from specific enclosure-length requirements. *See* Idaho Admin. Code r. 13.01.10.261(02)(a), 13.01.10.400(08)(c)(i) (2016) (effective July 1, 1993). The extensive scientific literature that has emerged in the decades since makes clear that this omission is no longer defensible. As the example below demonstrates, the absence of measurable enclosure standards for reptiles results in snakes being confined in enclosures that are too small to accommodate one of their most fundamental physical and behavioral needs: the ability to fully stretch out.

Earlier this year, PETA alerted the Department to a python being confined by a commercial wildlife facility in an enclosure measuring less than half the snake's length.[3] *See* Figure 1. The investigating officer noted in his report that "reptiles are exempt from IADPA enclosure size requirements" and took no action to enforce IDFG's general rule requiring an enclosure to be of "sufficient size." Idaho Admin. Code r. 13.01.10.261(02); Ex. 1, at 4 (Case Report). While the general rule should provide all animals with meaningful protection and promote safety, it becomes a vague aspiration when applied to reptiles without supplemental enclosure-size specifications, doing little to safeguard captive snakes or the public.

[1] "Person" means "any individual, partnership, corporation, association, governmental subdivision or agency, or public or private organization or entity of any character." Idaho Code Ann. § 67-5201(21).

[2] "Captive wildlife facility" means a "[f]acility where the operator obtains, possesses, or propagates wildlife for any purpose, including commercial, rehabilitation, private ownership (including private park) or sale." Idaho Admin. Code r. 13.01.10.010(03). Subject to exceptions that are not relevant here, "wildlife" means "any form of animal life, native or exotic, generally living in a state of nature." Idaho Code Ann. § 36-202(g); Idaho Admin. Code r. 13.01.10.010.

[3] *See* Letter from Regina Lazarus, Senior Couns., PETA Found., to Justin Williams, Bureau Chief, IDFG (Jan. 21, 2026) (on file with PETA).



Figure 1. Python in a small enclosure at the Idaho Reptile Zoo on January 16, 2026.

As detailed herein, measurable enclosure standards are critical for snakes, as objective evidence-based research indicates that a snake's physical and behavioral welfare depends on having enough space to fully stretch. Enclosures that prevent full extension do not allow normal postural movement and increase the risk of injury. Moreover, inadequately sized enclosures subject snakes to captivity stress that can trigger defensive and escape behaviors that pose safety risks.

Accordingly, the Petitioners respectfully request that the Department amend its rule to include a clear and objectively enforceable minimum snake enclosure length standard that is at least the length of the snake.

All authorities cited in this petition are incorporated by reference; electronic/hard copies will be provided upon request.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PETITIONERS

PETA is a Virginia non-stock corporation and an animal-protection charity dedicated to protecting animals from neglect, abuse, and all forms of cruelty. PETA U.S. is the largest animal rights organization in the world. PETA entities have more than 10.4 million members and supporters globally, including over 26,000 in Idaho. PETA operates, in part, to promote and advance the principle that animals are not ours to abuse in any way and carries out its mission through public education, investigations, research, animal rescue, legislation, special events, celebrity involvement, protest campaigns, and other activities—including those related to reptiles.

In 2021, PETA persuaded Zoo Med Laboratories, a major reptile habitat supplier to large retailers (e.g., PetSmart, Amazon, and Walmart), to remove from its website misleading messaging that snakes may be held in an enclosure only half the length of their bodies.[4] Sparked

[4] *See* Rachel Showalter, *Central Coast Reptile Supplier Removes Snake-Care Guidance After PETA Lawsuit*, KCBX (June 21, 2021, 5:00 AM), https://www.kcbx.org/pets-animals/2021-06-21/central-coast-reptile-supplier-removes-snake-care-guidance-after-peta-lawsuit; *see generally* Complaint, PETA v. Zoo Med Lab'ys, No. 2020 CA 004123

by PETA's 2024 petition for rulemaking, the Colorado Department of Agriculture amended its regulations applicable to pet stores, breeders, animal rescues, and sanctuaries licensed under the Pet Animal Care and Facilities Act to require them to provide snakes enough space to fully extend.[5] In 2026, after PETA filed a lawsuit against reptile retailers Reptmart and Snakes at Sunset for making false and misleading claims and failing to provide relevant information on snake welfare,[6] both retailers settled the dispute and agreed to replace misinformation about snake care and snake enclosure size on their websites with accurate, evidence-based language.[7] Their websites now message that snakes require space to fully stretch.[8]

Constance J. Larsen-Witte is a resident of the State of Idaho, County of Ada. She holds a deeply rooted commitment to the humane, compassionate, and dignified treatment of animals, including animals kept in cages or otherwise confined. She believes that animals are entitled to protection from unnecessary suffering, neglect, and inhumane treatment, and that those who have custody or control of animals have a responsibility to ensure their basic welfare and humane treatment. Her concern for the welfare of animals is longstanding and sincere. For many years, she has supported PETA's work to prevent cruelty and promote the humane treatment and protection of animals. Her support for these efforts reflects her personal commitment to advocating for animals who cannot advocate for themselves and to ensuring that their welfare and humane treatment are given appropriate consideration.

III. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Idaho Admin. Code r. 13.01.10.261 is part of the IDFG's Chapter 10 "Rules Governing Importation, Possession, Release, Sale, or Salvage of Wildlife" administered by the IDFG under the authority of the Commission. *See* Idaho Code Ann. § 36-104(b)(6). This rule recognizes that humane treatment is part and parcel of containment and escape prevention management and requires that an enclosure "be of sufficient size" to give the confined animal "ample space for exercise and to avoid being overcrowded." Idaho Admin. Code r. 13.01.10.261(02). For all animals, *except reptiles*, the Department translates this requirement into measurable standards by stipulating minimum cage or enclosure lengths. *See* Idaho Admin. Code r. 13.01.10.261(02)(a). Minimum width requirements are set in relation to cage length. *Id.* 13.01.10.261(02)(b).

B (D.C. Super. Ct. Sept. 24, 2020), https://www.peta.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/PETA-v-Zoo-Med-Complaint.pdf.

[5] *See* 48 Colo. Reg. 754, 774 (June 2025) (describing 8 Colo. Code Regs. § 1202-15:12.11.15 (effective July 15, 2025)). The amended snake enclosure rule provides licensees until January 1, 2027, to comply with the enclosure length requirement, presumably because of the large number of snakes housed by some breeders.

[6] *See* Complaint, PETA v. MM Reptiles, Inc., No. 2025-CAB-005772 (D.C. Super. Ct., Aug. 28, 2025).

[7] *See* Notice of Voluntary Dismissal with Prejudice, PETA v. MM Reptiles, Inc., No. 2025-CAB-005772 (D.C. Super. Ct., Feb. 9, 2026); *First Snake Rights Victory! Retailers Pull Care Misinformation After PETA Lawsuit*, PETA (Feb. 10, 2026), https://www.peta.org/media/news-releases/first-snake-rights-victory-retailers-pull-care-misinformation-after-peta-lawsuit/.

[8] *See Responsible Care and Ownership*, REPTMART, https://reptmart.com/responsible-reptile-care-ownership/ (last visited Sept. 18, 2026); *Responsible Care and Ownership*, SNAKES AT SUNSET, https://snakesatsunset.com/responsible-care-and-ownership/ (last visited Sept. 18, 2026).

IV. ARGUMENT IN SUPPORT OF REQUESTED ACTION

Requiring Enclosures That Are at Least As Long As the Snake Is a Critical Baseline Requirement to Prevent Escape Behavior, Reduce Public Safety Risks Inherent in Inadequate Confinement, Promote Humane Conditions, and Accommodate Normal Behavior and Posturing.

The Petitioners urge the Department to amend the enclosure length requirements outlined in Idaho Admin. Code r. 13.01.10.261(a), which, unlike for all other animals, lack specificity for reptiles, to require snake enclosures to be at least as long as the snake. This establishes a measurable benchmark, grounded in objective, evidence-based recommendations, that works in tandem with the rule's underlying goal—to ensure that enclosures "be of a sufficient size to give the animal or bird confined ample space for exercise and to avoid being overcrowded." Idaho Admin. Code r. 13.01.10.261.

A. Inadequate Enclosure Space Drives Escape Behavior in Snakes and Increases Safety Risks for Humans.

The Department requires enclosures to be designed to prevent escapes. *See* Idaho Admin. Code r. 13.01.10.261. But subjecting snakes to captivity stress—caused by enclosures that fail to accommodate rectilinear posturing—creates foreseeable safety risks to caretakers and the public, as well as compromises snake welfare. Human-directed aggression in snakes is "[o]ften related to fear/stress, defense, and escape behavior," and is "[c]ommon in overly restrictive and exposed (including excessive ambient light for nocturnal species), deficient and inappropriate environments."[9] In other words, the very conditions produced by inadequate enclosure standards—including insufficient space to fully stretch—are precisely those known to precipitate defensive and escape-driven responses.

Empirical evidence reinforces this connection. A field study on free-ranging cottonmouths found that "snakes with elevated levels of baseline [corticosterone ('CORT')] at first encounter were more likely to strike than exhibit a threat display when approached in the field."[10] The researchers concluded that "baseline CORT levels can be important correlates of defensive

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[9] Clifford Warwick et al., *Spatial Considerations for Captive Snakes*, 30 J. VETERINARY BEHAV. 37, 41 (2019), https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1558787818302211 [hereinafter *Spatial Considerations*].; *see also* Sneha Krishnan et al., *The Effect of Varied Enrichment Types on Snake Behavior*, 53 J. ZOO & WILDLIFE MED. 266, 267 (2022), https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35758568/ ("Captivity-related chronic stress behaviors are thought to include increased abnormal behavior, behavioral inhibition, vigilance behavior, excessive hiding, fearfulness, frequency of startle, aggression, reproductive behavior, dietary indiscretion, and behavioral complexity."); *see* Albert Martínez Silvestre, *How to Assess Stress in Reptiles*, 23 J. EXOTIC PET MED. 240, 241 (2014), https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1557506314000986 (listing aggression as a specific behavior parameter that indicates chronic stress).

[10] Mark W. Herr et al., *Stressed Snakes Strike First: Hormone Levels and Defensive Behavior in Free Ranging Cottonmouths (Agkistrodon piscivorus)*, 243 GEN. & COMPAR. ENDOCRINOLOGY 89, 89 (2016), https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0016648016303641?via=ihub. CORT levels are "used as a direct proxy for the amount of stress an animal is experiencing." *Id.*

behavior" and that, if this relationship is causal, "environmental challenges that increase baseline stress levels of populations may elevate cottonmouth defensive behavior."[11] Thus, heightened stress does not merely affect physiological health; it may directly influence how snakes respond to perceived threats, shifting behavior toward more immediate and potentially dangerous defensive actions. This relationship has important consequences for animal-human interactions.

Accordingly, requiring that enclosures provide at least enough space for a snake to fully stretch aligns with the Department's objectives to prevent the escape of captive wildlife and promote safety, while, as explained below, also addressing animal welfare.

B. The Omission of Enclosure Dimension Requirements Puts Snake Welfare at Risk.

Spatially restrictive snake enclosures that do not accommodate straight-line body posturing fail to meet a basic requirement for snake health and welfare, as rectilinear body posturing is an essential component of snake biology.[12] Over forty problematic physical or behavioral conditions are causally linked to confining a snake in an overly restrictive enclosure.[13] These include, but are not limited to:

> 'interaction with transparent boundaries' (a behaviour where snakes push against a glass or plastic transparent barrier), hyperalertness (high levels of nervousness), flattened body posture, rapid body movement (jerky or jumpy), head hiding and co-occupant aggression[,] [v]arious illnesses and other issues include[ing] respiratory disease, rostral abrasions from suspected repeated attempts to escape, ventral contact dermatitis and bowel constipation.[14]

Researchers have found more objective scientific evidence establishing the need for snakes to be able to fully stretch in all enclosures than is available for dogs, cats, and birds, and note the absence of scientific data or related objective opinion to support keeping snakes in enclosures where they cannot fully extend.[15] Notwithstanding the scientific consensus that an enclosure must be at least 1 x snake length (SL), and the problematic health and welfare issues associated with enclosures that do not meet this minimum requirement, "[c]aptive snakes may be the only vertebrates where management policy commonly involves deprivation of the ability and probable welfare need to freely extend the body to its natural full length."[16]

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[11] *Id.*
[12] *See* Clifford Warwick et al., *Getting It Straight: Accommodating Rectilinear Behavior in Captive Snakes—A Review of Recommendations and Their Evidence Base*, 11 ANIMALS 4 (2021), https://www.mdpi.com/2076-2615/11/5/1459 [hereinafter *Getting It Straight*].
[13] *Spatial Considerations*, *supra* note 9, at 41–42.
[14] Jadan Hutchings & Matthew Crane, *Recent Scientific Insights into the Spatial Needs of Captive Snakes*, INT'L J. ZOOLOGY 2 (2025), https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1155/ijz/3548045; *see Spatial Considerations*, *supra* note 9, at 41–42.
[15] *See Getting It Straight*, *supra* note 12, at 16; Hutchings & Crane, *supra* note 14, at 5.
[16] *Spatial Considerations*, *supra* note 9, at 37.

In 2021, a group of nineteen prominent experts specializing in snake-related veterinary medicine, biology, animal welfare, and husbandry carried out a significant scientific investigation, which was subsequently published in a peer-reviewed academic journal.[17] One of the authors, Clifford Warwick, summarized the study and findings as follows:

> This major review meticulously analysed the available reports and guidance materials pertaining to recommended enclosure sizes for snakes. Of the peer-reviewed reports analysed, 25 recommended minimum enclosure sizes consistent with the 'one snake length' (1 x SL) principle or greater, and 6 recommended enclosure sizes of less than 1 x SL. Accordingly, the great majority of the scientific literature conformed with the 1 x SL enclosure principle as a minimum provision. Moreover, whilst all of the scientific literature recommending the 1 x SL principle as a minimum enclosure dimension could be traced back to peer-reviewed scientific evidence and material, none of the literature recommending less than 1 x SL enclosures originated from scientific work; instead, all of that material was derived from hearsay opinion.
>
> The recommendation from this major review and analysis (and many others) was that snakes should be able to fully stretch their bodies in all dimensions. The minimum stipulation that indicates 1 x SL as a single dimension should be interpreted as meaning that this constitutes an absolute minimum to allow a straight-line body posture: it does not indicate that one single dimension allowing straight-line posture is a true acceptable minimum in respect of accommodating true normal behaviour. In all other (non-snake) species it is correctly expected that the ability to adopt a stretched-out posture automatically infers in all dimensions. Regardless of the vast amount of evidence showing snakes need to fully stretch at will, there are no scientific or other reasons to conclude the contrary position.[18]

An article published in 2025 described how researchers with the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development Animal Welfare Unit—an entity whose role is to deliver evidence-based information to relevant industries—examined recent peer-reviewed literature comparing the welfare of snakes kept in smaller enclosures with those housed in larger enclosures that allow the snakes to fully stretch out and move freely.[19] The researchers found no

[17] *See generally Getting It Straight*, *supra* note 12.
[18] Letter from Clifford Warwick to Brandon J. DeCuir, Chairman, La. Wildlife & Fisheries Comm'n (Sept. 25, 2024) (on file with PETA).
[19] *See* Hutchings & Crane, *supra* note 14, at 5.

peer-reviewed literature recommending restrictive housing for captive snakes.[20] They concluded that "snake welfare is enhanced when the snake is given space to stretch out and explore."[21]

The following includes a sampling of peer-reviewed scientific research, some of which the 2021 publication cited and others that are more recent. Combined, the literature reviews, field and captive animal observations, and experiments present consistent findings that snakes need space to fully extend.

- B.M. Cargill et al., *A Survey Exploring the Impact of Housing and Husbandry on Pet Snake Welfare*, ANIMAL WELFARE 193, 193–208 (2022);
- Clifford Warwick, *Psychological and Behavioral Principles and Problems*, *in* HEALTH AND WELFARE OF CAPTIVE REPTILES 239, 267–68 (Clifford Warwick et al. eds., 2d ed. 2023), https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-030-86012-7;
- Clifford Warwick, *Reptilian Ethology in Captivity: Observations of Some Problems and Evaluation of Their Aetiology*, 26 APPLIED ANIMAL BEHAV. SCI. 3–4 (1990), https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/applied-animal-behaviour-science/vol/26/issue/1;
- Clifford Warwick & Catrina Steedman, *Naturalistic Versus Unnaturalistic Environments*, *in* HEALTH AND WELFARE OF CAPTIVE REPTILES 487, 487–508 (Clifford Warwick et al. eds., 2d ed. 2023);
- Clifford Warwick et al., *Assessing Reptile Welfare Using Behavioural Criteria*, 35 IN PRAC. 123, 234–31 (2013), https://bvajournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1136/inp.f1197;
- Clifford Warwick et al., *Getting It Straight: Accommodating Rectilinear Behavior in Captive Snakes—A Review of Recommendations and Their Evidence Base*, 11 ANIMALS (2021);
- Clifford Warwick et al., *Reptile Expos: An Analysis and Recommendations for Control*, FRONTIERS ANIMAL SCI. 7 (2024), https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/animal-science/articles/10.3389/fanim.2024.1335982/full;
- Clifford Warwick et al., *Spatial Considerations for Captive Snakes*, 30 J. OF VETERINARY BEHAV. 37, 47 (2019);
- Dimple R. Waghela et al., *Ecology of Snakes in Captivity in Rajiv Gandhi Zoological Park, Katraj, Pune, Maharashtra*, 25 ASIAN J. ENV'T & ECOLOGY 199, 203 (2026), https://journalajee.com/index.php/AJEE/article/view/894/2077;
- Lance Jepson, *Inspecting Pet Shops*, 37 IN PRAC. 333, 343 (2015), https://bvajournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1136/inp.h3396;
- Marisa S. Spain et al., *Effects of Habitat Modifications on Behavioral Indicators of Welfare for Madagascar Giant Hognose Snakes (Leioheterodon madagascariensis)*, 7 ANIMAL BEHAV. & COGNITION 70, 70–81 (2020), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338982217_Effects_of_Habitat_Modifications_on_Behavioral_Indicators_of_Welfare_for_Madagascar_Giant_Hognose_Snakes_Leioheterodon_madagascariensis;
- Mike Jessop et al., *Evidential Thresholds for Species Suitability in Captivity*, *in* HEALTH AND WELFARE OF CAPTIVE REPTILES 509, 514 (Clifford Warwick et al. eds., 2d ed. 2023);
- Neil D'Cruze et al., *Dropping the Ball? The Welfare of Ball Pythons Traded in the EU and North America*, 10 ANIMALS (2020), https://www.mdpi.com/2076-2615/10/3/413;

[20] *Id.*
[21] *Id.*

- *Opinion on the Space Requirements for Snakes in Vivaria Within Pet Selling Establishments*, ANIMAL WELFARE COMM. 16 (June 5, 2023), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/647dc7c35f7bb700127fa45c/AWC_opinion_space_snakes_vivaria_pet_selling_establishments.pdf;
- Phillip C. Arena & Clifford Warwick, *Spatial and Thermal Factors*, *in* HEALTH AND WELFARE OF CAPTIVE REPTILES 417, 425, 429–30 (Clifford Warwick et al. eds., 2d ed. 2023);
- Robert W. Mendyk & Clifford Warwick, *Arbitrary Husbandry Practices and Misconceptions*, *in* HEALTH AND WELFARE OF CAPTIVE REPTILES 561, 561–82 (Clifford Warwick et al. eds., 2d ed. 2023);
- John V. Rossi, *General Husbandry and Management*, *in* MADER'S REPTILE AND AMPHIBIAN MEDICINE AND SURGERY 109, 118–23 (2019), https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/B9780323482530000167;
- Stephen L. Barten & Gregory J. Fleming, *Current Herpetologic Husbandry and Products*, *in* CURRENT THERAPY IN REPTILE MED. & SURGERY 2, 2–12 (2014), https://veteriankey.com/current-herpetologic-husbandry-and-products/;
- Tina Hollandt et al., *Animal-Appropriate Housing of Ball Pythons (Python regius)—Behavior-Based Evaluation of Two Types of Housing Systems*, 16 PLOS ONE (2021), https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0247082.

Study after study has produced consistent findings that a captive snake's enclosure must be at least long enough to allow a snake to fully stretch, unobstructed by any object within the enclosure, to accommodate the snake's welfare. They should also be spacious enough to accommodate essential amenities such as heaters, basking areas, hiding spots, water pools, and vegetation without overcrowding. And, because many snake species "may reasonably be expected to move while adopting straight-line behaviour and manifest multiple activity habits (ie involve combinations of subterranean, aquatic, terrestrial, and arboreal patterns), increasingly authors are taking a precautionary view that all enclosures for all species ought to allow snakes to stretch and move in all dimensions."[22] To allow for the fundamental rectilinear behavior associated with locomotion and comfort, Warwick and others maintain that, as an absolute minimum containment condition, terrestrial snakes must receive space equivalent to the length of the snake (primary linear dimension); the other enclosure dimensions must not be less than forty percent of the primary linear dimension.[23] Arboreal snakes must receive space equivalent to the length of the snake in primary linear and vertical dimensions; the width dimension must not be less than 40% of the primary dimension.[24]

The objective advice within the scientific literature—that enclosures must provide snakes space to fully stretch—has been adopted in Colorado and by prominent veterinary organizations and retailers in the pet industry. Examples include:

[22] B.M. Cargill et al., *A Survey Exploring the Impact of Housing and Husbandry on Pet Snake Welfare*, ANIMAL WELFARE 193, 204 (2022).
[23] *Spatial Considerations*, *supra* note 9, at 46.
[24] *Id*.

- On May 15, 2025, the Colorado Department of Agriculture adopted amended regulations that expressly require pet stores, breeders, animal rescues, and sanctuaries licensed under the Pet Animal Care and Facilities Act to provide snakes enough space to extend fully.[25]

- The British Veterinary Association educates the public that the ball python "[n]eeds enough space to stretch out in full."[26]

- A publication by the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA)—an organization whose members include veterinarians who primarily care for snakes living in the homes of hobbyists—advises: "As a rule of thumb, the diagonal of the enclosure should, as a minimum, be approximate to the length of the snake. There should be enough space for the snake to display normal behaviour, move around freely, and the enclosure should be sturdy and escape-proof."[27]

- Petco—one of the largest pet supply companies in the United States—updated its reptile care sheets to recommend enclosures that allow snakes to stretch out fully.[28]

- In 2021, reptile supply company Zoo Med Laboratories removed the misleading guidance (i.e., that snakes may be held in an enclosure only half the length of their body) from its website.[29]

- In 2026, reptile retailer Reptmart updated its website to state: "Snakes require adequate space to stretch out the entire length of their bodies in all directions . . . ."[30] Likewise, Snakes at Sunset's updated website states: "Snakes must be able to fully stretch their bodies in all directions and move freely within their enclosure."[31]

In light of the extensive scientific consensus on snakes' spatial needs, the Department's continued omission of a minimum enclosure length requirement that ensures snakes can fully stretch out is both inappropriate and irresponsible. This omission invites subjective and inconsistent interpretation of the general requirement to provide an enclosure of "sufficient size" to give the snake "ample space for exercise and to avoid being overcrowded," and, as described above, results in a lack of enforcement. Idaho Admin. Code r. 13.01.10.261(02).

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[25] *See* 48 Colo. Reg. 754, 774 (June 2025) (describing 8 Colo. Code Regs. § 1202-15:12.11.15 (effective July 15, 2025)).
[26] *Think Twice: Is This Pet Right for You?*, BRITISH VETERINARY ASS'N, https://www.bva.co.uk/take-action/our-policies/exotic-pets-non-traditional-companion-animals (last visited Sept. 18, 2026).
[27] *Pet Snakes in the UK – World Snake Day*, BSAVA (July 14, 2023), https://www.bsava.com/article/pet-snakes-in-the-uk-world-snake-day/.
[28] *Compare, e.g.*, *Corn Snake Care Sheet*, PETCO (Oct. 22, 2025), https://www.petco.com/content/content-hub/home/articlePages/caresheets/corn-snake.html#habitat-setup ("Since habitats should be large enough for an adult corn snake to stretch out fully, a 40-gallon breeder or larger tank is recommended.") *with Corn Snake Care Sheet*, PETCO (Mar. 2011), https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/24485850/corn-snake-care-sheet-petco ("size – appropriate size and shape habitat for an adult colubrid to accommodate normal behavior and exercise, at least a 40 breeder").
[29] *See* Showalter, *supra* note 4.
[30] *Responsible Care and Ownership*, REPTMART, *supra* note 8.
[31] *Responsible Care and Ownership*, SNAKES AT SUNSET, *supra* note 8.

C. Accreditation Guidance Recognizes the Importance of Space for Snakes to Fully Extend.

Idaho Admin. Code r. 13.01.10.261 directs the Department to consider the standards or guidelines promulgated by accreditation entities as potential sources for identifying additional enclosure specifications. Although accreditation organizations have not published extensive, species-wide welfare standards addressing minimum enclosure dimensions for snakes, some guidance that exists recognizes the importance of providing enough space for snakes to fully extend.

The European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA), whose accredited institutions are expected to house animals in accordance with their biological and welfare needs, publishes Best Practice Guidelines and Welfare Standards for a variety of animals, including reptiles. In its 2025 Best Practice Guidelines for the Möllendorff's Ratsnake—the only snake-specific husbandry guideline published by EAZA—the association states that: "**Enclosures must be large enough to allow individuals to explore and extend the full length of their body** but small enough that they can be monitored safely without excessive disturbance."[32] This guidance reflects EAZA's recognition that the ability to fully stretch out is a basic consideration in snake husbandry and enclosure design.

A similar principle appears in guidance issued by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). The AZA's Animal Care Manual for the Eastern Massasauga states: **"Holding enclosures used to house massasaugas should be at least as long as the snake and half as wide**."[33]

Collectively, these examples in accreditation guidance and peer-reviewed scientific literature provide strong support for measurable enclosure standards that ensure snakes have enough space to fully extend.

[32] Charlie Frelon et al., *Reptile Taxon Advisory Group Best Practice Guideline for Möllendorff's Ratsnake* (*Elaphe moellendorffi*), EAZA 15 (2025), https://eazawebsite-prod.s3.nl-ams.scw.cloud/uploads/2025_Moellendorff_s_ratsnake_EAZA_Best_Approved_0a5c5ccffc.pdf (emphasis added).

[33] *Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake (Sistrurus catenatus catenatus) Care Manual*, AZA 10 (2013), https://assets.speakcdn.com/assets/2332/eastern_massasauga_rattlesnake_care_manual_2013.pdf (emphasis added).

V. PROPOSED RULE CHANGES

The Petitioners request that the Idaho Fish and Game Commission make the following changes to the Prevention of Escape of Captive Wildlife rule, Idaho Admin. Code r. 13.01.10.261, to add the underlined text as described below.

02. For all animals, cages or enclosures will be of sufficient size to give the animal or bird confined ample space for exercise and to avoid being overcrowded. (4-6-23)

> **f.** For snake enclosures, the minimum dimensions of enclosures shall be relative to the length of the body and tail, and
>
> **i.** for arboreal species, shall be at least the length of the snake on the longest side and in height, and shall not be less than forty percent (40%) of that length on the shortest side;
>
> **ii.** for terrestrial species, shall be at least the length of the snake on the longest side and shall not be less than forty percent (40%) of that length on the shortest side, and in height.

Exhibit 1

Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Case Report

Date of Incident	Case Number	County
01/16/2025 12:00	FG2026-E1142	Ada

People

Suspect

Name (First, Middle, Last)	Gender	Height	Weight	Date of Birth
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]

Drivers License #	Drivers License State	Hair	Eyes	Age	Sales Record Phone
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]

Address	City	State	Zip
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]

Offenses & Charges

Warning
W32700000-11 - 4/20/2026 - [redacted]

Location of violation
IDAHO REPTILE ZOO

Offenses

Offense 1	IDAPA	Description
36-105(2)	13.01.10	Fail to follow Large Commercial Wildlife Facility permit conditions

Species	Sex	Unlawful Animal Quantity
N/A	Unknown	0

Comments
[redacted] moved the Idaho Reptile Zoo from [redacted] to [redacted]. He was told that he would need to renew his large commercial wildlife permit for the new location. [redacted] never renewed the permit and continued to operate and run the Idaho Reptile Zoo without a permit. [redacted] was warned.

Offense 2	IDAPA	Description
36-701(d)	N/A	Import/Export/Release wildlife without permit.

Species	Sex	Unlawful Animal Quantity
Snake (other)	Unknown	0

Comments
[redacted] was in possession of 5 reticulated pythons. Reticulated pythons are a LACEY Act species and require a federal permit, as well as an IDFG import permit. [redacted] did not have any permits for the reticulated species. [redacted] was educated and warned.

Offense 3	IDAPA	Description
36-701(d)	N/A	Import/Export/Release wildlife without permit.

Species	Sex	Unlawful Animal Quantity
Snake (other)	Unknown	0

Comments
[redacted] was in possession of 2 Burmese pythons. Burmese pythons are a LACEY Act species that require a federal permit, as well as an IDFG import permit (not a conventional house hold pet). [redacted] did not have any permits for the Burmese pythons. [redacted] was educated and warned.

Offense 4	IDAPA	Description
36-701(d)	N/A	Import/Export/Release wildlife without permit.

Species	Sex	Unlawful Animal Quantity
Snake (other)	Unknown	0

Comments
[redacted] was in possession of 2 Green Anaconda's. Green Anaconda's are deleterious wildlife and a LACEY Act species that require a federal permit, as well as an IDFG import permit (not a conventional house hold pet). [redacted] did not have any permits for the Green Anacondas. [redacted] was educated and warned.

Offense 5	IDAPA	Description
36-701(d)	N/A	Import/Export/Release wildlife without permit.

Species	Sex	Unlawful Animal Quantity
N/A	Unknown	0

Comments
[redacted] was in possession of 3 Galapagos Tortoise's that were sent to him from Florida. Galapagos Tortoises require an IDFG import permit (not a conventional house hold pet). [redacted] did not have any permits for the Galapagos Tortoise's. [redacted] was educated and warned.

Warning
W3270000-12 - 4/16/2026 - [redacted]

Location of violation
IDAHO REPTILE ZOO

Offenses

Offense 1	IDAPA	Description
36-701(d)	N/A	Import/Export/Release wildlife without permit.

Species	Sex	Unlawful Animal Quantity
Alligator, Caiman, Crocodile	Unknown	7

Comments
[redacted] was in possession of 14 American Alligators. [redacted] has 7 American Alligators on his inventory from 2025. 7 American Alligators are new and have no permits associated. [redacted] admitted to purchasing and importing an albino alligator from Louisiana without a permit. [redacted] admitted to taking in 5 juvenile alligators as well from an Idaho resident, again, without a permit. [redacted] was educated and warned.

Offense 2	IDAPA	Description
36-701(d)	N/A	Import/Export/Release wildlife without permit.

Species	Sex	Unlawful Animal Quantity
Snake (other)	Unknown	1

Comments
[redacted] was in possession of a Western Diamondback Rattlesnake. This is not a conventional house hold pet, nor a native reptile. [redacted] admitted to importing the Western Diamondback Rattlesnake from Arizona without a permit. [redacted] was educated and warned.

Offense 3	IDAPA	Description
36-701(d)	N/A	Import/Export/Release wildlife without permit.

Species	Sex	Unlawful Animal Quantity
Snake (other)	Unknown	1

Comments
[redacted] was in possession of a Mexican West Coast Rattlesnake. Which is not a conventional house hold pet, nor a native reptile. M[redacted] admitted to importing the Mexican West Coast Rattlesnake from Arizona without a permit. [redacted] was educated and warned.

Offense 4	IDAPA	Description
36-701(d)	N/A	Import/Export/Release wildlife without permit.

Species	Sex	Unlawful Animal Quantity
Snake (other)	Unknown	1

Comments
[redacted] was in possession of a Southern Pacific Rattlesnake. Which is not a conventional house hold pet, nor a native reptile. [redacted] admitted to importing the Southern Pacific Rattlesnake from Arizona without a permit. [redacted] was educated and warned.

Offense 5	IDAPA	Description
36-701(d)	N/A	Import/Export/Release wildlife without permit.

Species	Sex	Unlawful Animal Quantity
Snake (other)	Unknown	1

Comments
[redacted] was in possession of a Albino Prairie Rattlesnake. Which is not a conventional house hold pet, although Prairie Rattlesnakes are native to Idaho, this albino Prairie Rattlesnake was not found in the wild and imported into the state. [redacted] admitted to importing the Albino Prairie Rattlesnake from Florida without a permit. [redacted] was educated and warned.

Warning
W3270000-13 - 5/27/2025 - [redacted]

Location of violation
IDAHO REPTILE ZOO

Offenses

Offense 1	IDAPA	Description
36-701(d)	N/A	Import/Export/Release wildlife without permit.

Species	Sex	Unlawful Animal Quantity
Alligator, Caiman, Crocodile	Unknown	1

Comments
[redacted] was in possession of a Morelet's Crocodile. Which is not a conventional house hold pet, nor a native reptile. [redacted] admitted to importing the Morelets Crocodile from Florida without a permit. [redacted] was educated and warned.

Offense 2	IDAPA	Description
36-701(d)	N/A	Import/Export/Release wildlife without permit.

Species	Sex	Unlawful Animal Quantity
Alligator, Caiman, Crocodile	Unknown	1

Comments
[redacted] was in possession of a Morelet's Crocodile. Which is not a conventional house hold pet, nor a native reptile. [redacted] admitted to importing the Morelets Crocodile from Florida without a permit. [redacted] was educated and warned. [redacted] also exported the Morelet's Crocodile to Florida without a permit. [redacted] was educated and warned.

Warning
W3270000-14 - 8/22/2025 - [redacted]

Location of violation
IDAHO REPTILE ZOO

Offenses

Offense 1	IDAPA	Description
36-701(d)	N/A	Import/Export/Release wildlife without permit.

Species	Sex	Unlawful Animal Quantity
Snake (other)	Unknown	2

Comments
[redacted] was in possession of 2 Gaboon Vipers. Which is not a conventional house hold pet, nor a native reptile. [redacted] admitted to importing the Gaboon Vipers from Florida without a permit. [redacted] was educated and warned.

Offense 2	IDAPA	Description
36-701(d)	N/A	Import/Export/Release wildlife without permit.

Species	Sex	Unlawful Animal Quantity
Snake (other)	Unknown	2

Comments
[redacted] was in possession of 2 Gaboon Vipers. Which is not a conventional house hold pet, nor a native reptile. [redacted] admitted to exporting the Gaboon Vipers to Florida without a permit. [redacted] was educated and warned.

Warning
W3270000-15 - 1/16/2025 - [redacted]

Location of violation
IDAHO REPTILE ZOO

Offenses

Offense 1	IDAPA	Description
36-701(d)	N/A	Import/Export/Release wildlife without permit.

Species	Sex	Unlawful Animal Quantity
Alligator, Caiman, Crocodile	N/A	1

Comments
[redacted] was in possession of a Broad Snout Camian. Which is not a conventional house hold pet, nor a native reptile. [redacted] admitted to importing the Broad Snout Camian from Florida without a permit. [redacted] was educated and warned.

Offense 2	IDAPA	Description
36-701(d)	N/A	Import/Export/Release wildlife without permit.

Species	Sex	Unlawful Animal Quantity
N/A	Unknown	0

Comments
[redacted] was in possession of a Desert Tortoise. Which is not a conventional house hold pet, nor a native reptile - and is on the (Federal) Endangered Species List (Threatened) requiring permits for possession. [redacted] admitted to possessing the Desert Tortoise without a permit. [redacted] claimed the Desert Tortoise died during his facility move (brought out of hibernation too early). [redacted] was educated and warned.

Case Narratives

Case Narrative (Philip Stamer)

April 2026 - Ada County, ID.

Over the last several years IDFG has received complaints, tips, etc. regarding the Idaho Reptile Zoo run by Tyler [redacted]. Many complaints have been about animal husbandry or types of animals being held in captivity. I SCO Stamer investigated these claims through social media, and in person visits in plain clothes to document the condition and type of animals being kept.

I first visited the Idaho Reptile Zoo at their previous location [redacted] - Boise on September 9th, 2024. [redacted] and the Idaho Reptile Zoo moved locations to [redacted] in the Fall of 2025. During this time [redacted] visited with IDFG staff regarding the move and his requirement to update his large commercial wildlife facility for his new location. I visited the new location on February 7th, 2026 and April 11th, 2026.

During my visits/ investigation I found that [redacted] was in possession of the follow animals without proper federal permits or IDFG import/ export permits:

Green Anaconda - 2 (Imported from Oregon and Utah/ Listed Federally as deleterious wildlife/ Lacey act species)
Morelet's Crocodile - 1 (Imported from Florida)
Galapagos Tortoise - 3 (Imported from Florida Exported Back to Florida)
Gaboon Viper - 2 (Imported from Florida and Exported back to Florida)
American Alligator - 7 (Imported Albino from Louisiana, others taken in from Idaho resident without permit)
Broad Snout Caiman - 1 (Imported from Florida)
Southern Pacific Rattlesnake - 1 (Imported from Arizona)
Mexican West Coast Rattlesnake - 1 (Imported from Arizona)
Western Diamondback Rattlesnake - 1 (Imported from Arizona)
Prairie Rattlesnake (Albino) **- 1** (Imported from Florida)
Desert Tortoise - 1 (Imported from unknown without permit)
Reticulated Python - 5 (Imported from unknown - Lacey Act Species requiring federal permit)
Burmese Python - 2 (imported from unknown - Lacey Act Species requiring federal permit)

That is a total of **28** animals that require a permit. [redacted] did not get a single permit to possess/ import or export any of those animals. Additionally, [redacted] was operating his new location for months without updating his Large Commercial wildlife permit.

On April 13th, 2026, RCO Brian Jack, IDFG biologist Ryan Walrath and I arranged to meet with [redacted] and do a site visit. We arrived at the Idaho Reptile Zoo and discussed the violations and what is required by [redacted] to obtain his new Large Commercial Wildlife Facility Permit. [redacted] admitted he had imported/exported and possessed animals without permits as well as admit to not renewing his new Large Commercial Wildlife Facility Permit.

A warning was issued for each species of animal possessed/ imported without a permit as well as exported without a permit. Additionally, [redacted] was given a warning for operating a Large Commercial Wildlife Facility without a permit, and given a formal letter from IDFG stating that he must get a Large Commercial Wildlife Facility Permit within 30 days.

During my visits, I did not observe any issues with animal husbandry - reptiles are exempt from IDAPA enclosure size requirements. However, during our interview, [redacted] admitted many animals had perished during the move of zoo locations claiming *they came out of brumation too soon*. [redacted] also claimed to have euthanized several Argentine Tegu's do to his inability to continue to care for them.

Lastly, [redacted] has IDFG violation history regarding the possession and import of animals without an IDFG permit. With new guidance, it was decided that each of of the new violations would be documented with warnings and a formal education would occur with [redacted]. Moving forward [redacted] is expected to get proper permits and keep up with his Large Commercial Wildlife Facility Permit.

END OF REPORT.

Officers

Officer/Party top		
Name Stamer, Philip	Title Senior CO	Email Philip.Stamer@idfg.idaho.gov
Address 15950 N. Gate Blvd., Nampa ID 83687		Phone 208-465-8465
Comments None		

Approved By: Ben Cadwallader

IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

November 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *5E*
Agenda Item: *Spring Season Modifications, Steelhead Fisheries* ***(Action)*** ***Supervisor Approval:*** *LH*
Presented by: *Chris Sullivan*
Position/Title: *Anadromous Fisheries Coordinator*

Background:
This agenda item concerns an update on steelhead returns, ongoing fall fisheries, and proposed changes to bag limits for spring steelhead fisheries. Fisheries staff will update the Commission on fall salmon and steelhead fisheries and current forecasted estimates for steelhead in the 2026-27 return year. Bag limit reductions were implemented in the fall 2026 fisheries via emergency order. Changes were needed to minimize impacts to natural-origin steelhead and ensure hatchery broodstock needs are met.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
Idaho Statute 36-104(b)2 gives the Commission the authority to make a rule or proclamation establishing seasons and methods for the taking of fish. Fishing Rules are provided in IDAPA 13.01.11

Public Involvement Process:
Public meetings and online solicitation to seek input on the 2025-2027 fishing seasons and rules were conducted statewide in 2024 as part of the triennial season setting process.

Justification:
Salmon and steelhead mitigation hatcheries were built to mitigate or compensate for fishing opportunity lost as a result of hydropower development. The proposed season would provide anglers the opportunity to fish for returning adult hatchery steelhead produced at Idaho mitigation hatcheries.

Staff Recommendation:
The Department recommends the Commission approve the proposed bag limit changes to the spring 2027 steelhead fisheries. Those changes are highlighted in red in the supplemental steelhead rules table and include restricting fisheries in the Clearwater basin to catch-and-release only, while reducing the bag and possession limits on the Snake, Salmon, and Little Salmon rivers from three (3) daily nine (9) in possession, to two (2) daily six (6) in possession.

Suggested Motion:
I move the Commission adopt the steelhead bag limit modifications as recommended by the Department.

2027 SPRING STEELHEAD FISHERIES BAG LIMIT REDUCTIONS
November 18, 2026

I. BAG LIMITS

A. Snake, Salmon, and Little Salmon rivers and Hells Canyon Reservoir

1. The daily bag limit is reduced to two (2) steelhead per day for the spring 2027 steelhead seasons.

B. Clearwater, North Fork Clearwater, South Fork Clearwater, and Middle Fork Clearwater rivers

1. The daily bag limit is reduced to zero (0) steelhead and the fisheries are catch-and-release only for the spring 2027 steelhead seasons.

Steelhead Seasons and Limits

River Section	Spring Season (Season limit: 20 fish) Possession limit: 3-times daily bag limit						Fall Season (Season limit: 20 fish) Possession limit: 3-times daily bag limit					
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Snake River	Jan 1 - Apr 30 ~~3~~ 2 fish per day				Closed		Jul 1 - Aug 31 catch-and-release		Sep 1 - Dec 31 3 fish per day			
Clearwater River - lower	Jan 1 - Apr 30 ~~3 fish per day~~ catch-and-release only				Closed		Jul 1 - Aug 31 catch-and-release		Sep 1 - Dec 31 2 fish per day			
Clearwater River - upper*	Jan 1 - Apr 30 ~~3 fish per day~~ catch-and-release only				Closed		Jul 1 - Sep 9 catch-and-release		Sep 10 - Oct 14 2 fish per day	Oct 15 - Nov 9 catch-and-release	Nov 10 - Dec 31 2 fish per day	
North Fork Clearwater River*	Jan 1 - Apr 30 ~~3 fish per day~~ catch-and-release only				Closed				Sep 1 - Dec 31 2 fish per day			
South Fork Clearwater River*	Jan 1 - Apr 30 ~~3 fish per day~~ catch-and-release only				Closed		Jul 1 - Sep 9 catch-and-release		Sep 10 - Oct 14 2 fish per day	Oct 15 - Nov 9 catch-and-release	Nov 10 - Dec 31 2 fish per day	
Salmon River - lower	Jan 1 - Apr 30 ~~3~~ 2 fish per day				Closed		Aug 1 - Aug 31 catch-and-release		Sep 1 - Dec 31 3 fish per day			
Salmon River - middle	Jan 1 - Mar 31 ~~3~~ 2 fish per day				Closed				Sep 1 - Dec 31 3 fish per day			
Salmon River - upper	Jan 1 - Apr 30 ~~3~~ 2 fish per day				Closed				Sep 1 - Dec 31 3 fish per day			
Little Salmon River	Jan 1 - May 15 ~~3~~ 2 fish per day				Closed				Sep 1 - Dec 31 3 fish per day			
Hells Canyon Reservoir	Jan 1 - May 31 ~~3~~ 2 fish per day				Closed				Sep 1 - Dec 31 3 fish per day			
Boise River	Open when steelhead are present 2 fish per day											

IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

November 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *5F*
Agenda Item: *Montpelier Reservoir Bag Limit Change for Illegally Introduced Bass* ***(Action)*** ***Supervisor Approval:*** *LH*
Presented by: *Lance Hebdon*
Position/Title: *Fisheries Bureau Chief*

Background:
Montpelier Reservoir is located in the Southeast Region and is a popular fishing destination. Anglers primarily target stocked rainbow trout, tiger trout, and kokanee. In addition, the reservoir supports self-sustaining populations of introduced panfish and native Bonneville Cutthroat Trout that provide additional fishing opportunity, and in the latter case native species conservation value. The 2025-2030 Fisheries Management Plan prescribes the management direction for rainbow trout and tiger trout as general, kokanee and panfish as yield, and cutthroat trout as quality. During summer 2026, staff became aware of the establishment of Largemouth Bass in Montpelier Reservoir likely from an unauthorized and thereby illegal introduction. Largemouth Bass are known to be an effective predator of trout and kokanee in small and medium-sized reservoirs. Predation by Largemouth Bass would counteract efforts to provide traditional and preferred fishing opportunities in this reservoir. Currently, Largemouth Bass are regulated under the regional general rule which includes a six bass bag limit, none under 14" within the 2025-2027 fishing seasons and rules booklet. Because this population is newly established, much of the population is young and does not exceed 14". Increasing angler harvest by removing bag and length limits and allowing spearfishing for Largemouth Bass in Montpelier Reservoir is a logical first step to reduce the predatory impact of this unauthorized introduction as other management options are considered.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
Idaho Statute 36-104(b) provides the commission authority to set fishing seasons and limits.

Public Involvement Process:
No formal public input was collected. However, the management direction for this water was publicly vetted during 2024 while developing the 2025-2030 Fisheries Management Plan.

Justification:
This action allows IDFG to update the fishing season & rules in response to the unauthorized establishment of Largemouth Bass – a species that is likely to negatively impact trout and kokanee in Montpelier Reservoir.

Staff Recommendation:
The staff recommends that the Commission remove the bag and length limits and allow spearfishing for Largemouth Bass in Montpelier Reservoir

Suggested Motion:
I move the Commission remove the bag and length limits and allow spearfishing for Largemouth Bass in Montpelier Reservoir.

IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

November 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *5G*
Agenda Item: *Mountain Lion, Black Bear, and Gray Wolf Nonresident Tag Discount Order* ***(Action)*** ***Supervisor Approval:*** *SR*
Presented by: *Rick Ward and Cory Mosby*
Position/Title: *State Wildlife Manager, Large Carnivore Program Coordinator*

Background:
For several years, the Commission has discounted nonresident black bear, mountain lion, and gray wolf tags in certain units to encourage additional harvest of these species where predation is a factor limiting prey populations or is causing livestock depredations or other conflicts. Many sportsmen, livestock operators, and landowners have requested the Commission take action to reduce the impacts of predation throughout the state. Reducing the price of these tags has resulted in increased nonresident participation and harvest of these species in the desired units.

Current Discount Order 24-47 was enacted by the Commission on November 9, 2024, was revised on May 22, 2025 to include three additional units for mountain lion tag discounts, and is set to expire December 31, 2026.

Based on a finding of biological and public need to encourage continued participation in the hunting of black bears and mountain lions in certain units, and in the hunting and trapping of wolves statewide, Department staff recommend continuation of the discount of nonresident tag fees as specified below.

- The fees for discounted nonresident mountain lion and black bear tags are $41.75 and $31.75 for discounted nonresident gray wolf tags.
- Discounted nonresident tag fees for mountain lion (either sex) and black bear (either sex) will apply only for units 4, 4A, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 16A, 17, 19, 20, 20A, 26, 27, 33, 34, 35, 36, and those portions of units 21 and 28 within the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness.
- Discounted nonresident tag fees for mountain lion (either sex) only will apply for units 10A, 11, 41, 42, and 45.
- Discounted nonresident tag fees for gray wolf (either sex) will apply statewide.

Staff propose to continue the same discounts for the upcoming two-year big game season setting cycle (through December 31, 2028).

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
Idaho Code §36-415 authorizes the Commission to discount tags for specific species, units, areas, zones, or gender to encourage licensed sales or to encourage hunting, fishing or trapping.

Public Involvement Process:
The Department has not directly engaged the public on this topic, but this Commission action item was publicly noticed and can be addressed during the public hearing portion of the meeting.

Justification:
A new order is necessary to extend tag fee discounts for the upcoming big game season setting cycle (2027 and 2028 seasons) to increase hunting opportunity and encourage participation in black bear, mountain lion, and gray wolf hunting.

Staff Recommendation:
Staff recommends adoption of discount order 26-61 which would be effective January 1, 2027, for nonresident black bear, mountain lion, and gray wolf tags for calendar years 2027 and 2028.

Suggested Motion:
I move the Commission adopt discount order 26-61 for nonresident black bear, mountain lion, and gray wolf tags for 2025 and 2026 as presented by staff.

BEFORE THE IDAHO FISH AND GAME COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF NONRESIDENT TAG FEE DISCOUNTS FOR MOUNTAIN LION, BLACK BEAR, AND GRAY WOLF	**)** **)** **)** **)**	**ORDER 26-61**

On, November 19, 2026, the Idaho Fish and Game Commission reviewed the status of Order 24-47 for tag fee discounts for mountain lion, black bear, and gray wolf, which was set to expire on December 31, 2026.

Therefore, under the authority of Idaho Code Section 36-415, based on a finding of biological and public need to encourage continued participation in the hunting of mountain lion and black bear in certain units, and in the hunting and trapping of wolves statewide, the Idaho Fish and Game Commission hereby ORDERS the discount of non-resident tag fees for mountain lion and black bear to $41.75 and the discount of non-resident tag fees for gray wolf to $31.75, each inclusive of vendor issuance fee, for certain units as follows:

- Discounted nonresident tag fees for mountain lion (either sex) and black bear (either sex) will apply only for units 4, 4A, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 16A, 17, 19, 20, 20A, 26, 27, 33, 34, 35, 36, and those portions of units 21 and 28 within the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness.
- Discounted nonresident tag fees for mountain lion (either sex) only will apply for units 10A, 11, 41, 42, and 45.
- Discounted nonresident tag fees for gray wolf (either sex) will apply statewide.

This Order supersedes and replaces Order 24-47, and it shall be effective through December 31, 2028, for tags sold for calendar years 2027 and 2028.

_____

Jim Fredericks
Secretary of the Commission

IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

November 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *5H*
Agenda Item: *Selection of IFWF Commission Liaison* ***Supervisor Approval:*** *AW*
(Action)
Presented by: *Hilarie Engle*
Position/Title: *Foundation Development Coordinator*

Background:
The Idaho Fish & Wildlife Foundation's (IFWF) Board of Directors has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of Fish and Game and the Fish and Game Commission. A term of the MOU is that the Commission will designate a Commissioner who may attend IFWF board meetings as the liaison between IFWF and the Commission. The Commission designates a liaison annually. Commissioner Murphy served as the liaison for 2026.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
The Commission has the policy authority to define its relationship with the Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation and to designate a liaison.

Public Involvement Process:
N/A.

Justification:
A Commission liaison is important for the implementation of the MOU and relationship with the IFWF.

Staff Recommendation:
Staff recommends the following motion to designate a Commission liaison for 2027.

Suggested Motion:
I move that Commissioner XXXX serves as the 2027 Commission Liaison to the Idaho Fish & Wildlife Foundation.

IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

November 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *6*
Agenda Item: *General IFWF Update* ***Supervisor Approval:*** *AW*
Presented by: *Hilarie Engle*
Position/Title: *Foundation Development Coordinator*

Background:
The Commission has requested updates about the Idaho Fish & Wildlife Foundation activities.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
N/A.

Public Involvement Process:
N/A.

Justification:
Requested by the Commission.

Staff Recommendation:
N/A – Informational only.

Idaho Fish & Wildlife Foundation Update

1. The Foundation awarded $120,367 in the 2026 Competitive Grant Cycle.
    - Trout Unlimited-Hudlow Meadows Floodplain Restoration, $10,000 (Region 1)
    - USFS-SCNF-Rattlesnake Spring Wildlife Friendly Fence Replacement, $3,372 (Region 7)
    - Henry's Fork Foundation-First & Second Creek Fish Passage Improvement Project, $10,000 (Region 6)
    - Future Public School-Expanding Access to Outdoor Idaho via McCall Outdoor Science School, $7,500 (Region 3)
    - Friends of the Teton River-Little Fox Creek Process Based Restoration, $10,000 (Region 6)
    - IDFG, Clearwater Region-Dev. Of Drone Based Thermal Monitoring Program for White-tailed Deer and Depredation Response in the Clearwater Region, $9,495
    - The Salmon Fly Project, Generating Baseline Macroinvertebrate Data for the Teton Canyon of the Teton River, $10,000 (Region 6)
    - Nez Perce Tribe, Instream Flow Monitoring in the South & Middle Forks of the Clearwater River, $10,000 (Region 2)
    - Teton Regional Land Trust-Woods Creek Fen Tribal Interpretive Signage & Parking Lot Improvement Project, $10,000 (Region 6)
    - Kaniksu Land Trust-New Public Access at Balanced Rock, $7,500 (Region 1)

- IDFG, Region 5-Improving Water Availability for Wildlife on the Big Desert, $35,000

2 The Foundation's next scheduled board meeting will be held virtually on December 4th, 2026.

IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

November 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *7*
Agenda Item: *Final Update: Nonresident Tag Draw* ***Supervisor Approval:*** *AW*
Presented by: *Tara Reichert*
Position/Title: *Chief, Bureau of Communications*

Background:
This presentation will provide a final update on the implementation of the Nonresident Draw for 2026 nonresident general season deer and elk tags, including review of fiscal impacts and nonresident customer behavior throughout 2026.

At the May 2025 meeting, the Commission approved temporary rule to issue nonresident general season deer and elk tags through a draw framework for the 2026 season. This approval was made after having received recommendations at the January 2025 meeting to move to a draw system from the Nonresident Tag Issuance Advisory Group, and after receiving feedback from staff regarding options to develop the draw framework at the March 2025 meeting.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
Under Idaho Code, Title 36-104 provides the privilege of drawing by lot for a controlled hunt permit or tag authorizing the person to whom issued to hunt, kill, or attempt to kill any species of wild animals or birds designated by the commission under such rules as it shall prescribe.

Idaho Code, Title 36-416 establishes fees for licenses, permits, and tags.

Idaho Administrative Rules, 13.01.04 Rules Governing Licensing and 13.01.08 Rules Governing the Taking of Big Game Animals, establish rules governing licensing, nonresident tag quotas, eligibility for applying for/buying tags, and how leftover/unsold/returned tags are available to residents and nonresidents.

Public Involvement Process:
The 10-member Nonresident Tag Issuance Advisory Group was formed by soliciting applications from the public at large. Other members of the public were welcome to provide their feedback to the group, which was used during the review process and when developing recommendations.

Public comment opportunities (in-person or written) were available in conjunction with Commission meetings in January, March, and May 2025.

Justification:
Informational presentation to ensure the Commission to aware of the status of implementation for the 2026 Nonresident Draw.

Staff Recommendation:
N/A – Informational only.

Suggested Motion:
N/A – Informational only.

IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

November 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *8*
Agenda Item: *Overview of Important Licensing Dates and Procedures* ***Supervisor Approval:*** *AW*
Presented by: *Tara Reichert*
Position/Title: *Chief, Communications Bureau*

Background:
Throughout the year, there are key dates, deadlines, and processes for sportspeople to be aware of related to the purchase of their licenses and/or tags. The presentation is intended to provide an overview of those key dates and all options that our public has within those dates, including application and tag sale dates, tag exchange processes and deadlines, and refund opportunities.

Given that the Idaho Department of Fish and Game has recently made a number of changes to how licenses and tags are issued throughout the year, staff would like to provide an opportunity to highlight all of the methods in which sportspeople can apply for or purchase their licenses and tag, and if their original plans change, what options they might have to ensure they still have an opportunity to get out into the field.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
Under Idaho Code, Title 36-104 provides the privilege of drawing by lot for a controlled hunt permit or tag authorizing the person to whom issued to hunt, kill, or attempt to kill any species of wild animals or birds designated by the commission under such rules as it shall prescribe.

Idaho Code, Title 36-416 establishes fees for licenses, permits, and tags.

Idaho Administrative Rules, 13.01.04 Rules Governing Licensing and 13.01.08 Rules Governing the Taking of Big Game Animals, establish rules governing licensing, nonresident tag quotas, eligibility for applying for/buying tags, and how leftover/unsold/returned tags are available to residents and nonresidents.

Public Involvement Process:
Public involvement for the key dates and changes highlighted in this presentation were available through the public commenting process for negotiated rulemaking, and public comment opportunities (in-person or written) available in conjunction with Commission meetings in January, March, and May 2025.

Justification:
Informational presentation to ensure the Commission to aware key licensing dates, deadlines, and sale opportunities.

Staff Recommendation:
N/A – Informational only.

Suggested Motion:
N/A – Informational only.

IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

November 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *9*
Agenda Item: *Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Update* ***Supervisor Approval:*** *SR*
Presented by: *Stacey Dauwalter*
Position/Title: *Wildlife Health Program Coordinator*

Background:
Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a fatal, neurological disorder of deer, elk, moose and caribou, caused by abnormally folded proteins called prions. The disease has no known cure, is contagious between animals, and can be contracted from a contaminated environment. Infected animals can live for years, shedding the prion into the environment all along, before showing symptoms of the disease and eventual death. The resilient nature of prions allow them to remain in the environment, outside of an animal, for long periods of time.

IDFG has been conducting CWD surveillance on deer and elk since 1997 and has tested over 44,250 samples. IDFG continues to conduct annual statewide surveillance. Surveillance and management of CWD is adaptive to changes in CWD prevalence and geographic spread. The goal is to minimize the amount and spread of CWD in Idaho to keep deer, elk and moose populations healthy.

The Commission has instituted mandatory sampling requirements for harvested deer in Units 14, 18, 23, 63A, 64, 69, and the portion of Unit 1 within Boundary County east of the Selkirk Mountains crest. Mandatory sampling is needed in these areas to get the sample size needed to adequately assess prevalence, or amount, and spread of disease. Units 14, 18, 23, and the portion of Unit 1 are also designated as CWD management zones, with carcass movement restrictions and a ban on the public feeding of deer, elk and moose to try and prevent spread and decrease prevalence.

The Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) has reported CWD detections in Idaho's captive cervid industry at facilities in Units 1, 63A, 64, and 69. Staff will overview our current understanding of captive detections during the presentation.

In the 2025-2026 sampling year, IDFG—with the help of hunters—collected 6,126 CWD samples for testing. Twenty-two (22) of these samples tested positive for CWD. One (1) from Unit 18, three (3) from the CWD management zone in Unit 1, sixteen (16) from Unit 14, and two (2) from Unit 15 near its border with Unit 14 (the first detections to date in Unit 15). Sampling data collected between 2017 and 2025 was used to evaluate hunter sampling participation and compliance. A summary document was developed, and highlights will be presented during the presentation.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
Idaho code §§ 36-104(b) and 36-201 (2023), authorize the Commission to adopt rules governing the classification, protection, importation, transportation, possession and sale of wildlife and wildlife parts of captive and free-ranging wildlife, including disease threats like Chronic Wasting Disease (IDAPA 13.01.06, "Rules Governing the Classification and Protection of Wildlife" and 13.01.10, "Rules Governing Importation, Possession, Release, Sale, or Salvage of Wildlife").

Public Involvement Process:
IDFG has conducted outreach on CWD sampling efforts, CWD status, CWD surveillance hunts, and through local public meetings. Public will have the opportunity to comment on this topic at the Commission meeting public hearing.

Justification:
This agenda item is for Commission information on Chronic Wasting Disease.

Staff Recommendation:
N/A – Informational only.

IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

November 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *10*
Agenda Item: *Moose, Bighorn Sheep, & Mountain Goat Status Update and Season Setting Preview* ***Supervisor Approval:*** *SR*
Presented by: *Hollie Miyasaki*
Position/Title: *Wildlife Staff Biologist*

Background:
IDFG staff traditionally present a biennial report on the status of moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goats and a list of issues and preliminary proposals being considered at the November Commission meeting preceding adoption of harvest regulations in January of each odd-numbered year. In January 2027 the Commission will set hunting seasons for moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goats for the 2027 and 2028 hunting seasons.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
Idaho Statute 36-104 authorizes the Commission to establish rules for the taking of wildlife consistent with state policy.

Public Involvement Process:
Public input is received year-round through contacts with interested hunters and other members of the public. Proposals and additional information will be developed and circulated statewide for public review during December-January. Public input will be summarized and considered to guide development of IDFG's recommendations to the Commission in January.

Justification:
This agenda item is intended to inform Commissioners of current status, statewide projects and management issues, and anticipated season setting proposals for moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goats for the 2027 and 2028 seasons.

Staff Recommendation:
N/A – Informational only.

Suggested Motion:
N/A – Informational only.

IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

November 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *11*
Agenda Item: *Update on Domestic Elk Facility Ingress and Egress in the Upper Snake Region* ***Supervisor Approval:*** *SR*
Presented by: *Eric Freeman and Matt Pieron*
Position/Title: *Upper Snake Regional Wildlife Manager, Upper Snake Regional Supervisor*

Background:
In 2005, statutory authority over domestic cervid facilities in Idaho shifted from IDFG to the Department of Agriculture (ISDA). However, continued collaboration between IDFG and ISDA is required to manage ongoing issues related to ingress of wildlife and egress of captive cervids. While ingress and egress are not new issues at these facilities, both, and especially reported and observed ingress, have recently increased. Further, as domestic elk at several facilities in eastern Idaho have recently tested positive for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), there is heightened potential for disease transmission.

This presentation will detail IDFG's supporting role in managing ingress at these facilities, in collaboration with ISDA. We will share a brief synopsis of recent ingress/egress events and an in-depth report on IDFG actions, including the lethal removal of 160 wild deer at several facilities over the past 12 months. We will discuss impacts to wild resources, the public, and IDFG (staff and budgets). Inherent to this discussion is the risk of CWD transmission to wild cervids and the associated negative consequences for wild cervid populations.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
Idaho Code 36-104(2) grants authority to the Commission to determine when an open season may be declared for the taking of wildlife. IDFG is charged with preserving, protecting, perpetuating, and managing the state's wildlife (IC 36-103). IDAPA 13.01.08 establishes rules regarding the take of big game animals. Captive cervid industry requirements in Idaho are outlined in statute (25-3701) and IDAPA (02.04.19).

Public Involvement Process:
N/A.

Justification:
This presentation is informational for the Commission and is intended to provide an update on staff efforts pertaining to ingress and egress of cervids from captive facilities.

Staff Recommendation:
N/A – Informational only.

IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

November 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *12*
Agenda Item: *Deer and Elk Scoping Results* ***Supervisor Approval:*** *SR*
Presented by: *Rick Ward*
Position/Title: *State Wildlife Manager*

Background:
In summer 2026, staff conducted a pre-season scoping process to gather input from deer and elk hunters on potential season-setting alternatives for the 2027/2028 seasons. Abundance surveys have indicated deer and elk populations are above management objectives in some areas and the scoping questions asked hunters how they would most like to take advantage of the additional opportunity. Invitations were sent to 21,971 unique email addresses, targeting hunters with relevant licenses in three management areas: the Brownlee Zone (elk), Island Park (mule deer and elk), and Mountain Valley mule deer in GMUs 58, 59, and 59A. The Department received more than 1,700 comments across five scoping questions, and follow-up emails summarizing results were sent to all participants on October 9 thanking them for their participation.

All proposals allowed respondents to choose up to two preferred alternatives, including a "none of the above" option, followed by an opportunity to provide written comments. For Brownlee Zone elk, hunters selected extra elk tags and additional controlled hunts as preferred alternatives, with a notable proportion of respondents selecting "none of the above". For Island Park mule deer and elk, extending the general season and expanding either-sex controlled hunts received the strongest support, along with broad interest in additional youth hunting opportunities. For Mountain Valley mule deer, either-sex controlled hunts and youth-only antlerless seasons were the top preferences among the approximately 80% of respondents who supported reinstating antlerless opportunity.

Staff will present results from the scoping process, including response summaries for each proposal and key themes from written comments. Staff will incorporate input received through this process alongside current harvest data and recent abundance surveys to develop season proposals for public scoping in February 2027.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
Idaho Statute 36-104 authorizes the Commission to establish rules for the taking of wildlife consistent with state policy.

Public Involvement Process:
Staff have conducted a pre-season scoping process on select deer and elk hunting opportunities and will present results to the Commission. The public may provide input on this informational topic at the public hearing prior to the Commission meeting. Proposals and additional information will be developed and circulated statewide for public review during the January-March 2027 season-setting process. Public input will be summarized

and considered to guide development of IDFG's recommendations to the Commission in March 2027.

Justification:
Information will aid Commissioners as they respond to requests, recommendations, or other input from the public.

Staff Recommendation:
N/A – Informational only.

Suggested Motion:
N/A – Informational only.

IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

November 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *13*
Agenda Item: *Big Willow Elk Depredation Project Summary* ***Supervisor Approval:*** *SR*
Presented by: *Josh Royse*
Position/Title: *Southwest Regional Supervisor*

Background:
Idaho Statute 36-1108 and the Idaho Elk Management Plan 2024-2030 provide management direction to implement measures to minimize, eliminate or compensate for elk depredations. For several years, agricultural producers in the Big Willow drainage in GMU 32 have experienced crop damage from elk that has been unmanageable by typical methods. Over the past several months, staff have been implementing a two-phase project designed to reduce the resident elk herd in the Big Willow drainage. In May, staff captured 37 resident elk from Big Willow and translocated them to the Upper St. Joe River drainage of GMU 7. In July, staff collaborated with USDA Wildlife Services to complete the second phase of the project, which was the lethal removal of 75 additional elk. Meat from the lethally removed elk was processed and distributed to 19 different food banks spanning 6 Idaho counties. Overall, food banks received nearly 9,500 lbs of elk meat. This presentation will provide the Commission with a summary of all 2026 efforts, including costs and lessons learned.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
The Commission is charged with administering wildlife policy, and through IDFG, is responsible for preserving, protecting, perpetuation and managing the state's wildlife (Idaho Code 36-103). Idaho Code 36-1108 provides direction for control of and compensation for damage caused by elk.

Public Involvement Process:
The Big Willow project was first presented to the Commission during the January 2026 Commission meeting and was shared widely via a press release shortly after that meeting. The Commission was updated on the translocation phase of the project at the July 2026 commission meeting. A press release was issued in August 2026 summarizing the lethal removal part of the project. The Commission and IDFG have received input from the public on this project via social media, email, and phone calls. Public also have the opportunity to comment on this topic at the November Commission Public Meeting.

Justification:
The information presented will inform Commissioners of ongoing elk management actions in the Big Willow drainage in GMU 32 and provide a summary of elk removed and costs associated with the project to date.

Staff Recommendation:
N/A – Informational only.

IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

November 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *14*
Agenda Item: *Craig Mountain Wildlife Management Area (WMA) Overview, Opportunities, and Challenges* ***Supervisor Approval:*** *SR*
Presented by: *Jessica Barker*
Position/Title: *Regional Wildlife Biologist*

Background:
The Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) owns and manages 31 Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) across the state. These WMAs vary in size, purpose, and habitat type but all have the purpose of preserving, protecting, and perpetuating the fish and game of Idaho. While managing for various species in different habitats, all WMAs manage the land for public opportunity, coordinate with various agencies and landowners, manage habitat for wildlife, and deal with invasive weeds. The largest Wildlife Management Area in the state is the Craig Mountain WMA.

Craig Mountain WMA consists of 88,000 acres of land owned by IDFG but coordinates with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Idaho Department of Lands (IDL), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the Nez Perce Tribe (NPT) who all own land adjacent to IDFG. Like many other WMAs who coordinate with partners, IDFG cooperatively manages Craig Mountain WMA with partners for wildlife and habitat management, hunting, fishing, trapping, and compatible outdoor recreation activities. In addition to working with partners, we work to keep or restore habitat for wildlife by implementing habitat projects, invasive weed management, and maintaining facilities for efficient locations for conducting work and storing equipment.

The goal of this presentation is to provide the Commission with an overview of general management operational challenges of WMAs across the state, focusing on specific examples from the Craig Mountain WMA. In addition, the goal is to highlight some of the more unique opportunities and challenges associated with managing land for wildlife, habitat, and compatible public uses.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
The Department is charged with preserving, protecting, perpetuating and managing the stat's wildlife (Idaho Code 36-103). Idaho Code 36-10(9b) grants authority to the Commission to adopt rules for the use of lands owned or controlled by the Department. IDAPA 13.01.03 establishes rules on public use of lands owned or controlled by the Department.

Public Involvement Process:
N/A.

Justification:
Information presented will aid Commissioners as they respond to requests, recommendations, or other input from the public regarding Wildlife Management Areas.

Staff Recommendation:
N/A – Informational only.

IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

November 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *15*
Agenda Item: *Mule Deer Buck Vulnerability Project Update* ***Supervisor Approval:*** *SR*
Presented by: *Paul Atwood*
Position/Title: *Senior Wildlife Research Biologist*

Background:
In 2019, IDFG began a multi-phase project to study the vulnerability of mule deer bucks to various types of harvest regulations. The first phase of the project (2019 – 2024) was focused on two-point restricted general seasons utilized in game management units (GMUs) 22, 40, 41, and 42. We are still collecting data for the second phase of the project, which focused on survival differences between controlled, unlimited controlled, and general hunting seasons in GMUs 70, 73, 73A, and 56.

During 2019 to 2023, we caught and radio-collared 121 adult and 290 yearling male mule deer to evaluate how different hunting regulations affected buck survival in five GMUs in Region 3. Three of these GMUs (22, 40, and 41) have a two-point restriction during their general deer seasons where only antlered deer with ≤2 points on at least one side may be harvested. The other two GMUs (32 and 39) do not have any antler point restrictions. The two-point restrictions were implemented to maintain annual hunting opportunities while also reducing hunting pressure on older age classes of bucks. In addition to general season opportunity, there are also six controlled hunts in these 5 GMUs.

This presentation will provide the Commission with an update on the results for phase 1 of the project.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
Idaho Statute 36-104 authorizes the Commission to establish rules for the taking of wildlife consistent with state policy. Species management plans provide Commission direction for population and harvest management.

Public Involvement Process:
N/A.

Justification:
This presentation is for Commission and public information on ongoing IDFG wildlife research activities to inform management.

Staff Recommendation:
N/A – Informational only.

IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

November 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *16*
Agenda Item: *Strategic Habitat Conservation Planning in the Magic Valley Region* ***Supervisor Approval:*** *FE*
Presented by: *Bradley Dawson and John Guthrie*
Position/Title: *Regional Technical Assistance Manager; Regional Habitat Manager*

Background:
Land uses that cause landscape-level habitat changes continue to increase on the lands and waters that support Idaho's fish and wildlife resources. These changes can cause habitat loss and degradation, resulting in reduced carrying capacities for these resources. Given the increasing land use pressures, it is necessary for the Department to expand the scale and accelerate the pace of strategic habitat conservation. Although IDFG has Commission-approved plans that prioritize habitat conservation (2026 Department Strategic Plan, Idaho State Wildlife Action Plan, and various species management plans), there remains a need at the regional level to identify key areas for strategic and proactive conservation actions consistent with priorities in these plans.

The Magic Valley Region's staff recently conducted a planning effort to identify and prioritize key areas for strategic and proactive habitat conservation actions, namely protecting habitat, improving habitat, and influencing land use decisions. Staff utilized a suite of data sources (e.g., wildlife telemetry data, survey data, habitat suitability data, and biologist expert knowledge) to create information products that identify key conservation areas and actions. These products will guide allocation of the Department's limited resources toward durable habitat conservation actions in areas most important for sustaining fish and wildlife for future generations of Idahoans.

The presentation will showcase the Magic Valley Region's recent progress on this strategic habitat conservation planning effort.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
Per Idaho Code § 36-103, the Commission administers the State's policy to preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage fish and wildlife resources to be available to the citizens of Idaho for continued supplies for hunting, fishing, and trapping. The Technical Assistance Procedure DIR-3.0 within the Department's Procedures Manual guides Technical Assistance Program implementation and operations.

Public Involvement Process:
Conservation actions guided by this planning effort are anticipated to influence positive and productive Department interactions with the public and external decision-makers, including achieving support for voluntary conservation actions in key areas on private and public lands. Moreover, this planning effort is intended to contribute to the Department's

overarching goals for conserving intact, well connected, and healthy landscapes to sustain robust fish and wildlife populations and abundant public hunting, fishing, and trapping opportunities into the future for Idaho's citizens.

Justification:
It is important that the Commission be informed about regional planning efforts that leverage Department data and staff knowledge to inform external stakeholders and decision-makers about strategic and proactive opportunities to conserve fish and wildlife resources.

Staff Recommendation:
N/A – Informational only.

Suggested Motion:
N/A – Informational only.



1. Action HC-1

Prepare a Strategic Habitat Conservation Plan

i. Deliverable

Strategic Habitat Conservation Plan

ii. Goal

Optimal strategic investments of limited resources to incentivize collaborative voluntary conservation of intact, connected, and healthy landscapes/watersheds for robust fish, wildlife, and botanical resources into the future.

iii. Objective

Strategic and proactive plan that identifies key habitat areas and guides long-term collaborative habitat protection, improvement, and/or management consistent with the SWAP.

iv. Background & Justification

Multiple-use demands continue to increase for the lands and waters that support Idaho's fish, wildlife, and botanical resources. These demands often cause habitat loss and degradation resulting in reduced carrying capacities for these resources. Accelerating the pace and expanding the scale of strategic investments in optimal conservation actions are needed to offset carrying capacity losses. However, IDFG currently has no landscape/watershed-scale strategic plan that identifies priority areas for habitat conservation or processes for first collaboratively leveraging and then optimally investing limited resources to implement proactive conservation. The phased Strategic Habitat Conservation Plan will apply IDFG's SWAP and Conservation Data Lifecycle to identify and guide habitat conservation investments per the Four-legged Stool of Conservation.

v. Action Implementation

1. Lead – TSB Bureau Chief

2. Key Partners
   a. IDFG regional fish and wildlife programs
   b. IDFG Bureau of Fisheries (BoF)
   c. IDFG Bureau of Wildlife (BoW)
   d. IDFG Lands Committee

3. Tasks
   a. Prepare project charter including scope-of-work, schedule, and resources.
   b. Assemble voluntary project team.
   c. Define the plan's primary purpose and audiences.
   d. Prioritize landscape/watershed-scale "signature" species for conservation.
   e. Identify key conservation areas for signature species.
   f. Define desired habitat outcomes and needs for key areas.
   g. Assess challenges to key conservation areas.
   h. Prioritize investments (e.g., habitat improvements, habitat protections, technical assistance, etc.) in key areas to address challenges and achieve desired outcomes.
   i. Identify strategic partners and stakeholders for collaborativelyimplementing the plan and contributing to investments.
   j. Prepare plan in phases across IDFG regions.
   k. Request DO approval to finalize and implement the plan.

4. Timeline

   a. Phase 1: IDFG Region 4 – 2026
   b. Phase 2: IDFG Regions 3 and 5 – 2027
   c. Phase 3: IDFG Regions 6 and 7 – 2028
   d. Phase 4: IDFG Regions 1 and 2 – 202



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IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

November 2026 Commission Meeting ***Agenda Item No.:*** *17*
Agenda Item: *Application of IDAPA 13.01.16.450.03.i—Director or Regional Supervisor Authorization to Place Ground Sets on Snow-Covered Routes* ***Supervisor Approval:*** *JR*
Presented by: *Carson Watkins*
Position/Title: Regional Supervisor

Background:
This item will provide the IDFG Commission with historical perspective on the development and purpose of IDAPA Chapter 16 rules allowing Director or Regional Supervisor authorization to place ground sets on snow-covered routes. Administrative rule 13.01.16.450 defines trap setback requirements and prohibits the placement of ground set traps on, across, or within any public right of way (defined by 36-202), except on snow-covered routes or "public highways" as authorized by the Director or Regional Supervisor. Negotiated rulemaking was conducted in 2025–2026 to allow agency discretion in the designation of public highways exempt from rules requiring ground set traps to be placed outside of the right-of-way. The rule change was ratified during the Idaho legislature's 2026 session and stemmed from a practical desire by wolf trappers to place in-route and route adjacent ground sets closer to wolf travel pathways or where route delineation is obfuscated by snow. The agency has developed a formal procedure to guide application of the new rule that maintains calibrated implementation among regions. This presentation will inform Commissioners about elements of the procedure and provide information related to where a trap setback variance may be applied under agency procedure.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:
IDAPA 13.01.16.450.03.i
Idaho Gray Wolf Management Plan 2023–2028

Public Involvement Process:
Administrative rule 13.01.16.450.03.i was developed following Idaho Code Section 67-5220 of the Idaho Administrative Procedure Act. Interested public provided input and helped shape draft rule development.

Justification:
The Commission has traditionally reviewed and approved many wildlife management actions where agency authority is granted by statute or rule. Therefore, the Department seeks Commission concurrence and input on this procedure and the spatial application of trap setback variance to promote wolf harvest.

Staff Recommendation:
None—informational only

Suggested Motion:
None—informational only

Idaho Fish and Game Commission
2027 Calendar

Meeting Dates	Routine Agenda Items
January – Annual Meeting (Public Hearing January) Location: Boise, Idaho	JFAC budget preview; Committee Members. Legislative & Rulemaking Update. Season Setting: Upland Game, Turkey & Furbearers. Fee Discounts for Resident and Nonresident wild turkey tags.
March – Special Meeting (Public Hearing March) Location: Boise, Idaho	Administrative rulemaking update (Zero-based Rulemaking). Season Setting: Spring Chinook salmon.
April – Conference Call	Season Setting: Migratory Game Birds (waterfowl, sandhill cranes and doves) Update on salmon.
May – Quarterly Meeting (Public Hearing May) Location:	Season setting: Chinook salmon; FY28 budget direction. IDFG Range Grant Approval. Commission direction on the expenditure of Wolf Depredation Control Board funds. Commission direction on the expenditure of Animal Damage Control Board Funds. Election of Commission chair, vice-chair. 2026 Legislative & Rulemaking update
July – Quarterly Meeting (Public Hearing July) Location:	Adoption of proposed rules. Consider release of bighorn sheep tags for auction and lottery and application fee discount order; 2027 legislative proposals; FY28 Budget approval to Commission. Season Setting: Sage-grouse. Sage Grouse Discount order Falconers Commission Community Challenge Grants Appointment of Winter Feeding Advisory Committee
November – Quarterly Meeting (Public Hearing November) Location:	Legislative update; Adoption of pending rules (may require earlier teleconference) Appoint Commission representative to WAFWA. Appoint Commission Liaison to IFWF. Review renewal of expiring orders (Price Lock). Nonresident tag fee discounts for mountain lion, black bear, and gray wolf Set Commission Calendar for coming year

Idaho Department of Fish and Game

Draft 2027 Calendar Suggested Dates

January 2027						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 2027						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	Fr	Sa
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28						

March 2027						
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28	29	30	31			

April 2027						
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25	26	27	28	29	30	

May 2027						
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

June 2027						
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27	28	29	30			

July 2027						
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August 2027						
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29	30	31				

September 2027						
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26	27	28	29	30		

October 2027						
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31						

November 2027						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	Fr	Sa
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28	29	30				

December 2027						
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26	27	28	29	30	31	

- Holiday
- Legislative Session
- Potential Dates for Commission Meetings
- 2027 Conferences of Interest Dates
- Suggested Internal Staff Meetings (Ops Team Meetings)

2027 Conferences of Interest:

December 8th - 11th, 2026	Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) Winter Leadership Meeting in Denver, Colorado.
January 4th or 11th	Legislative Session begins.
January 19th - 22nd, 2027	Shooting, Hunting, and Outdoor Trade (SHOT) Show in Las Vegas, Nevada.
February 3rd - 6th, 2027	Wild Sheep Foundation Sheep Show in Reno, Nevada.
March 21st - 26th, 2027	North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in Omaha, Nebraska.
May 25th - 28th, 2027	In-State Training School (ISTS) in Boise, Idaho.
June 14th - 18th, 2027	Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) Summer & Conservation Business Managers Conference (CBMA) Meeting in State Line, Nevada.
August 25th - 27th, 2027	Tri-State Meeting (ID, WY & MT) in TBD, Idaho.
August 29th - September 1st,	Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) Annual Meeting
September 26th - 27th, 2027	Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) Annual Meeting in Boise, Idaho.

Director's Reports
November 2026

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: BUREAU OF ADMINISTRATION

November 2026 Commission Meeting

License Operations

Effective August 17, the licensing operations of the Department moved from the Administration Bureau to the Communications Bureau. The decision to make this structural change came from leadership's recognition of the frequent overlap and integration of the work of Communications and Licensing staff. This includes receiving feedback on season setting proposals, monitoring commission decisions on important action items, making marketing campaigns successful, and providing education and customer service across the state. As a matter of practice, these teams have often been working in tandem for years, and it made sense to allow form to follow function. Unifying these teams allows the agency to communicate more efficiently and effectively, both internally and externally

We don't anticipate the reporting structure change will create any broader changes throughout the agency outside of the benefits of bringing these groups together.

Fiscal Operations

As a self-funded agency, the Department continues to monitor its revenue against its expenditures and has maintained a fiscally responsible buffer in its cash balance. Careful management of these funds has allowed the Department to pursue some larger projects, such as the Nampa Hatchery reconstruction, Pocatello office remodel, Salmon office remodel, Winchester Dam, and (subject to Commission approval) the new Valley County office.

Sales tend to follow a cyclical pattern year over year, and this fiscal year (which started July 1) is no exception. Through the first three and half months of the new fiscal year, we are up a modest 1.6% in license sales deposits.

The procurement team has been diligently working with Communications and the statewide Division of Purchasing on procuring a vendor to overhaul the agency's website. We are pleased to announce that, as of October 7, we have a signed contract with the winning bidder.

IT Operations

The Department is continuing to work with ITS on a wide variety of projects and issues. Examples include installing security cameras at the MK Nature Center, meeting with ITS to discuss the agency's data backup and recovery strategy, troubleshooting authentication issues for remote field staff, helping staff understand how they can leverage AI for enormous datasets, and advocating for a new website server. Our ITS Liaison has no shortage of work to coordinate.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: BUREAU OF COMMUNICATIONS

November 2026 Commission Meeting

MK Nature Center

Summer was once again a busy time at the MKNC. In addition to our many self-guided groups, we hosted 43 educational programs, serving over 1,000 members of the public. We also offered 56 on-site educational booths and attended two outreach events; Public Lands Day, and Teachers Night Out!

Over 300 volunteer hours were donated to MKNC between July and October. This included 49 volunteers from the public throughout the summer, and 8 IDFG staff members who participated in an employee workday.

IDFG Brand Refresh

The IDFG Brand Book, developed in partnership with branding consultant Noble West, was rolled out across the regions this spring for staff review and feedback. Final comments and edits were compiled and incorporated into the book this summer. The Brand Book has now been finalized and sent to print, with printed copies expected to be available soon. IDFG staff are working to develop a final roll-out plan, with a grand finale presentation at the 2027 In-Service Training School event.

IDFG Website Redesign Project

While the IDFG website redesign project has experienced various delays in the procurement process, we are officially under contract with a third-party vendor to help us build our new website! This project will now move into discovery, including delivery timelines, validating website requirements, understanding customer and staff needs, reviewing content and technical considerations, and establishing priorities for the new site. This work will lay the foundation for the design and development phases that will follow.

Mandatory Hunter Reporting Outreach

In collaboration with the Wildlife Bureau, Communications staff have implemented new outreach strategies to increase submissions of Mandatory Hunter Reports. Reporting compliance has steadily increased since 2022 alongside expanded and improved communication efforts, with 2025 overall compliance reaching 77.6% and resident compliance reaching 75.7%. These results will inform a 2026 approach focused on maintaining strong reporting while improving customer experience through more coordinated, relevant and efficient outreach.

Social Media

Social media platforms continued to grow in the third quarter of 2026. Facebook increased 4.4% (3,413 followers), Instagram increased 8.4% (4,270), Threads increased 2.7% (150), and LinkedIn increased 6.8% (366). Twitter decreased 0.3% (41 followers).

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: BUREAU OF COMMUNICATIONS

License Operations

In September, the License section of IDFG was transitioned into the Communications Bureau. Given Communications is the bureau that is helping manage how we engage the public, it felt only right to bring all of the customer service arms of the agency together from licensing, to education, to media, to public engagement and beyond.

July to September are some of the busiest months of the year for Licensing. Controlled Hunt draws were conducted quickly and efficiently, posting results for deer, elk, pronghorn, fall turkey, fall bear, and swan tags on June 17th. July capped and sawtooth elk zone tag sales went off without a hitch, and most tags sold out in record time.

Early August also was full of tag sales, including sage grouse and sandhill crane tags, early season controlled hunt tags, and 2nd resident and nonresident deer and elk tags. As of mid-September, our final tag sale was completed.

Efforts are now focused on getting the 2027 Nonresident Tag Draw up and running, including updating communications and outreach, configuring the licensing system, and providing customer service staff with resources.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: BUREAU OF ENFORCEMENT

November 2026 Commission Meeting

Special Investigations Unit (SIU):
The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) has entered a busy fall season as hunting activity increases. All three investigators have now returned to full-time work following a staff member's parental leave earlier in the year.

In June, the SIU hosted the 2026 Western Wildlife Investigators Conference in McCall, Idaho. The event was highly successful, drawing participants from 13 states and two Canadian provinces. It generated several multi-state investigations and potential new cases, fulfilling the conference's intended purpose. The Idaho SIU team also secured commitments from two states to host the conference in 2027 and 2028—neither of which has hosted in the event's 20-year history.

This fall, SIU is continuing work on multiple long-term investigations and expects to conclude at least one. A major multi-year case involving significant wildlife violations across numerous western and some eastern states is nearing completion, pending developments in the coming months.

The SIU has also been selected to host the national Wildlife Covert Investigator's Academy (WICA) in 2028. According to SIU Supervisor Brandon Chamberlin, this selection reflects the strong national reputation and demonstrated expertise of the SIU and Regional Investigator staff. Planning for the academy will begin this year.

In August, SIU staff and Regional Investigators held their biannual meeting in Region 6 to share intelligence and coordinate case strategies for upcoming seasons. These meetings continue to prove highly valuable as the investigative team maintains exceptional productivity across multiple cases. Supervisor Chamberlin notes that the team is among the most effective he has seen in his 22-year career. SIU appreciates the ongoing support from bureau and regional leadership and looks forward to providing additional updates as casework progresses later this season.

Vacancies (8):
Clearwater Region (2): Orofino and Lewiston
Southwest Region (2): Yellow Pine and Mountain Home
Magic Falls Region (1): Burley
Upper Snake Region (1): Regional Conservation Officer
Salmon Region (2): Salmon and Lemhi

Enforcement Highlights:
<u>Panhandle Case Highlight:</u>
One of the lengthiest and most complicated trials in which Panhandle officers have been involved with concluded on Friday, June 12th. Eddy, Angela, and Daniel Dills were each

charged with three felony counts of conspiracy. After 12 hours of deliberation the jury found each of the three defendants guilty of one felony count of conspiracy to conceal evidence. Each defendant was found not guilty of one felony count of conspiracy to take wildlife unlawfully, and one felony count of conspiracy to sell unlawfully taken wildlife.

Eddy Dills was previously convicted of wildlife crimes in Washington and Oregon and received a lifetime hunting revocation in 2019. Daniel Dills was convicted of wildlife crimes in Idaho in 2024 and received a 3-year hunting revocation. This case centered around the Dills' hound hunting activities during the 2024-2025 lion and bobcat season, where Angela Dills claimed to have harvested 4 mountain lions and 8 bobcats. While the jury found the State of Idaho could not prove beyond a reasonable doubt that all those animals were unlawfully taken by Eddy or Daniel, they did find proof they concealed evidence that was about to be discovered by IDFG in an investigation. Those events occurred in January of 2025 when Eddy and Daniel were contacted by other hunters after having just killed a mountain lion. After being confronted by the hunters, who indicated they were going to call Idaho Fish and Game, all three defendants hauled the lion many miles downstream and threw it over an embankment to conceal their unlawful harvest.

On September 1, 2026, First District Judge John Cafferty sentenced each of the three Dills family members. Angela Dills was given a withheld judgement and placed on supervised probation for 5 years. During that time, she cannot hunt or fish, nor can she accompany or assist anyone engaged in those activities. She was also ordered 30 days of discretionary jail time and ordered to pay fine and court costs of $7,433.

Judge Cafferty sentenced Daniel Dills to 5 years in prison with parole eligibility after 18 months and was ordered to pay fine and court costs of $7,245.

Additionally, Judge Cafferty sentenced Eddy Dills to 4 years in prison with no time fixed, meaning he is eligible for parole right away. Prison time will depend on his conduct while in prison. Eddy was also ordered to pay fines and court costs of $7,245.



Photo of the Dills mountain lion thrown down an embankment.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: BUREAU OF ENGINEERING

November 2026 Commission Meeting

PANHANDLE REGION

Shadowy St. Joe Fish Passage

Engineering is assisting with plan review, but the design is being done by RivHab.

Robinson Lake Outlet Improvements

The beaver-resistant outlet structure has been installed but will likely need to be adjusted in order to manage the lake water level at the original elevation. Timeline for adjustment will be dependent upon staff time, weather, and equipment availability.



Farragut Shotgun Range Expansion

Engineering will be working with Sarah VanAcker to review a consultant's preliminary layout of the proposed improvements at the Farragut range.

Cabinet Gorge Hatchery Office Remodel

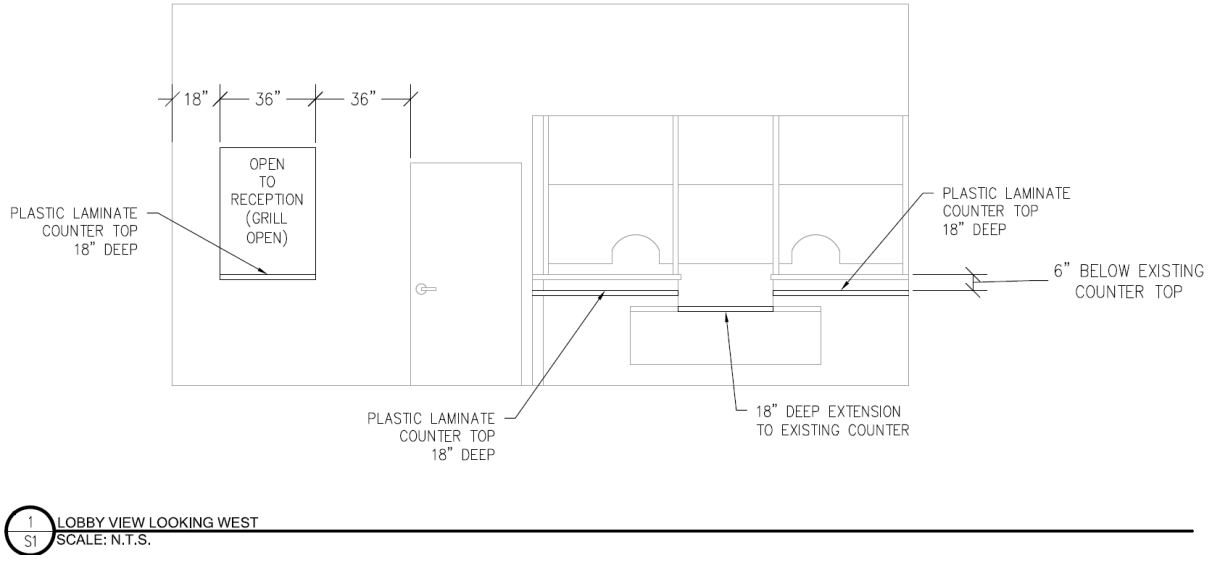
A project to expand and improve the existing layout of the shop to provide workspaces for all 3 FTEs as well as dorm space for seasonal employees. IDFG is currently working to secure an Architect for the design phase.



CLEARWATER REGION

New Service Window and Redesign of Front Office Space in Regional Office

A project to improve layout and efficiency of front office for customer service at Regional Office. Project is under construction with an anticipated completion in November 2026.



Winchester Dam

Winchester Dam is the highest risk dam throughout the State and is classified as a high hazard structure. The dam has frequently displayed water seepage at areas of the downstream slope and toe of the concrete spillway. IDFG received the Final Issued for Construction (IFC) stamped design drawings and specifications. We are currently pursuing funding options while working on packaging the documents and reaching out to contractors.



Gaiser Barn Replacement

The existing barn had experienced significant foundation failure and the configuration on the site made the structure difficult to use for storing equipment and materials. The structure was demolished (sheet metal salvaged by the contractor), the site was re-graded with balanced earthwork quantities (cut and fill made equal), and a new building was constructed in an orientation that makes it more accomodating. It was designed to match another existing building onsite. Construction was completed within the stipulated timeframe and net change orders totalled only $922.

BEFORE:





AFTER:

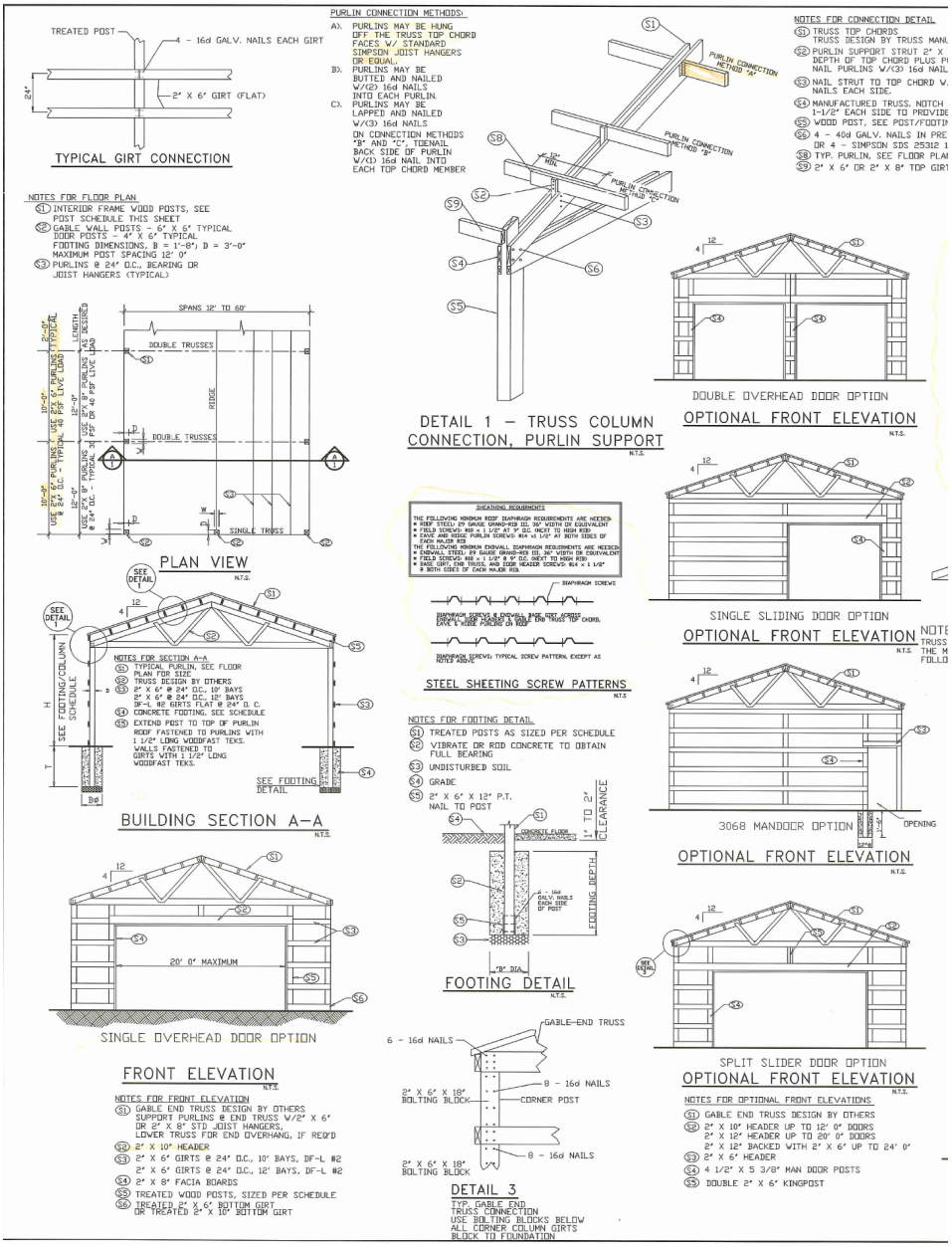




DIRECTOR'S REPORT: BUREAU OF ENGINEERING

Myrtle Storage Building Replacement

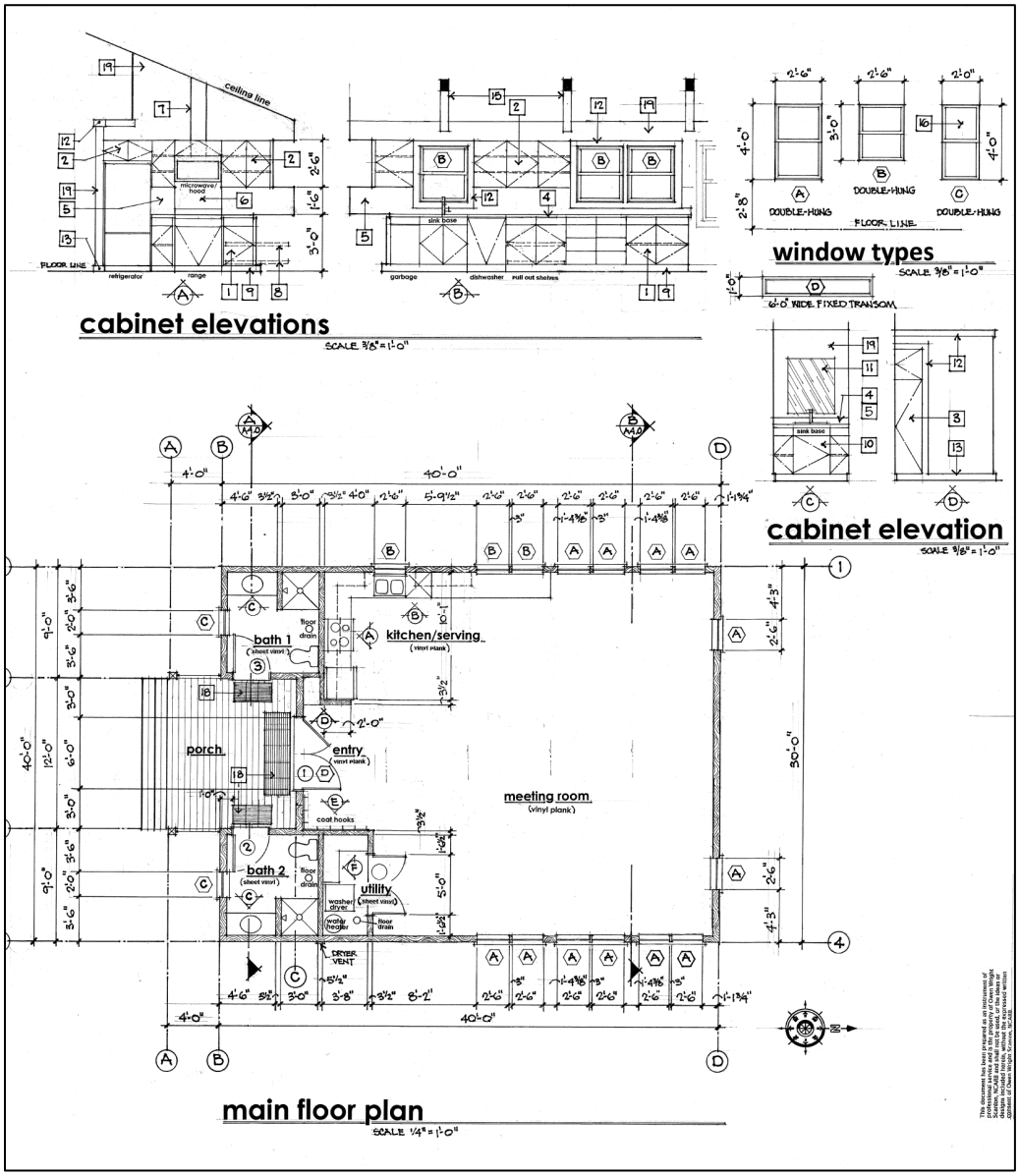
A storage building that was destroyed by fire will be replaced by a 28'x30' pole framed structure. Plans have been approved and a contractor has been selected, but construction has been delayed by permitting and the contractor's schedule. Construction is expected to begin in late October or early November.

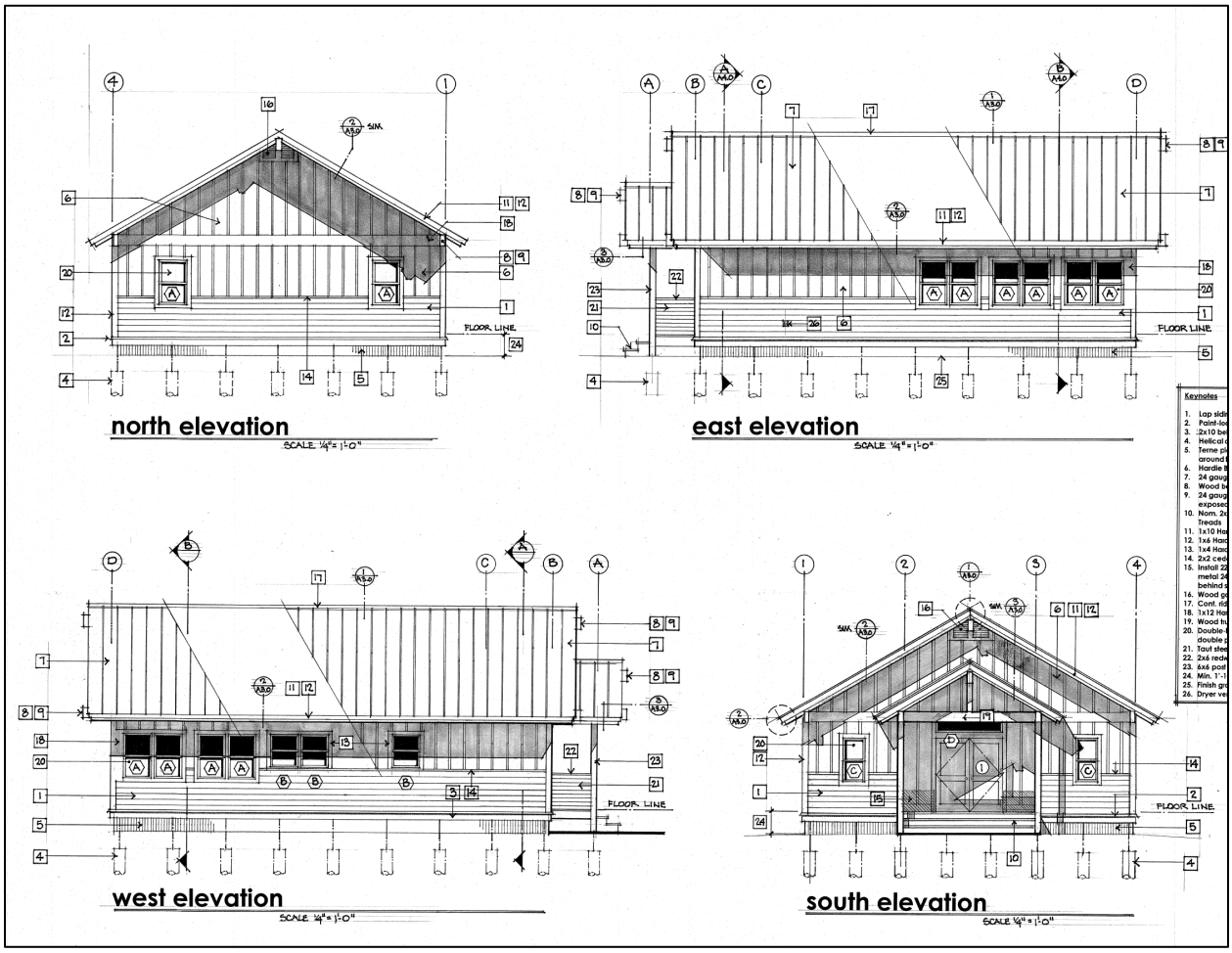


DIRECTOR'S REPORT: BUREAU OF ENGINEERING

Billy Creek Meeting Facility

This project includes replacing the "chicken coop" meeting space that was lost to a wildfire. Engineering collaborated with regional staff and an architect on the design which is 99% complete. Spending authority for construction was denied by the Legislature, so the project will be delayed until the $500K that was requested is approved.





SOUTHWEST REGION

Horsethief Reservoir Capital Improvements

Design-Build project to make improvements to amenities at Horsethief Reservoir. Improvements include providing power, water, and sewer throughout various campgrounds as well as paving and expanding roads and parking. Project is currently under construction with a completion date of December 2026.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: BUREAU OF ENGINEERING



Boise River WMA Fencing Replacement

Replacement of approximately 10.5 miles of fencing on the Bosie River WMA near the Highland Valley Trailhead in Boise. A contractor has been hired, and they started construction in Fall 2025. The contractor is currently working to complete project in Fall 2026.

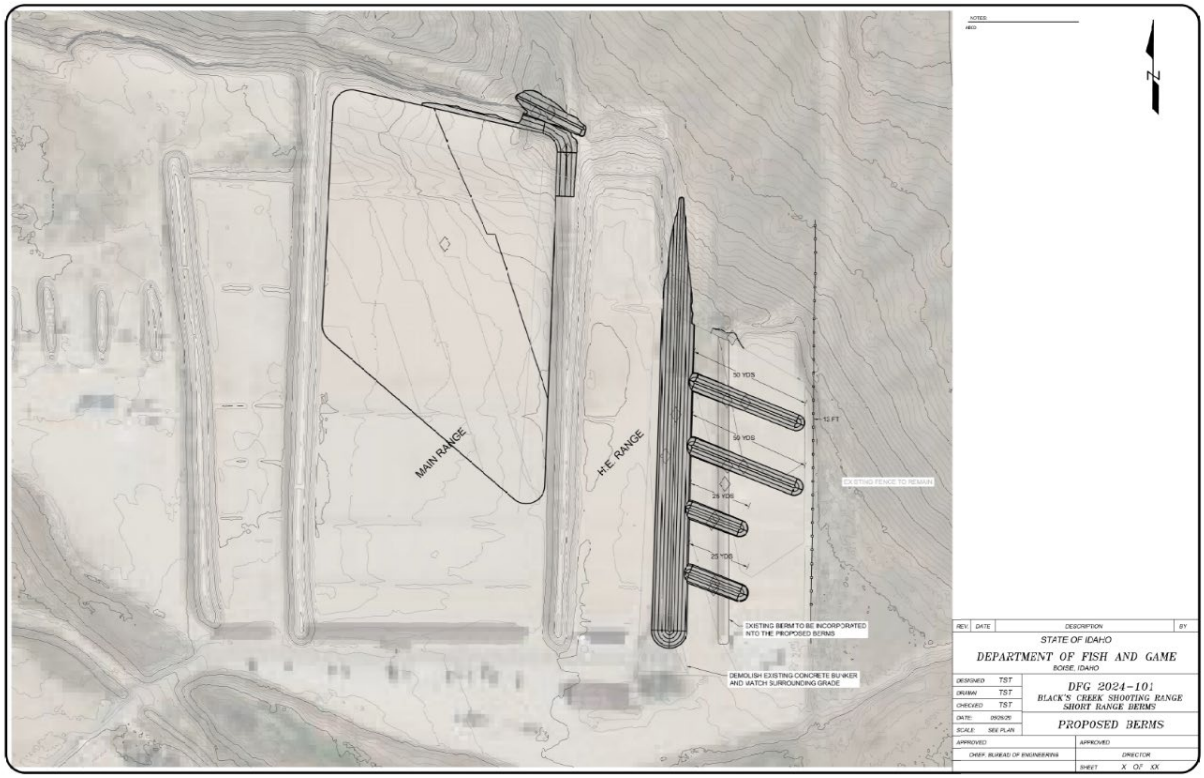
Black's Creek Shooting Range Improvements

The scope of this project generally includes site grading to create opportunities for pistol marksmanship on the east side of the facility and improving the backstop of the main range. A preliminary design was performed for cost estimating purposes, but construction timeline is dependent on federal approval.

Existing site photo:



Proposed site improvements plan:



Nampa Hatchery Reconstruction – Phase II

The goal of this project is to replace the existing deteriorating raceways, improve hydraulic elevations through the hatchery and maximize operational efficiency and fish health. Construction of the south half (Phase 1) is nearing completion. The main hatchery water supply structure (headtank) has also been installed. Fish are scheduled to be transferred to the new infrastructure in February.



Eagle Hatchery Generator Replacement

This project is to replace the aging backup generator at the Eagle Hatchery. The old generator will be removed, and a new generator will be installed on a new concrete pad. A contract has been executed, and the generator is on order. The construction is scheduled to occur in Spring 2027 when the new generator is received.

Caldwell Ponds Access Development

The goal of this project is to enhance the existing Caldwell Ponds access site. Design is to include a parking lot expansion, boat ramp with floating dock, general clearing and grading, along with a pedestrian walking path. Due to gravel pit operations, there is very little water in the ponds currently and design will occur during Winter 2026 with construction tentatively scheduled for Spring 2027.

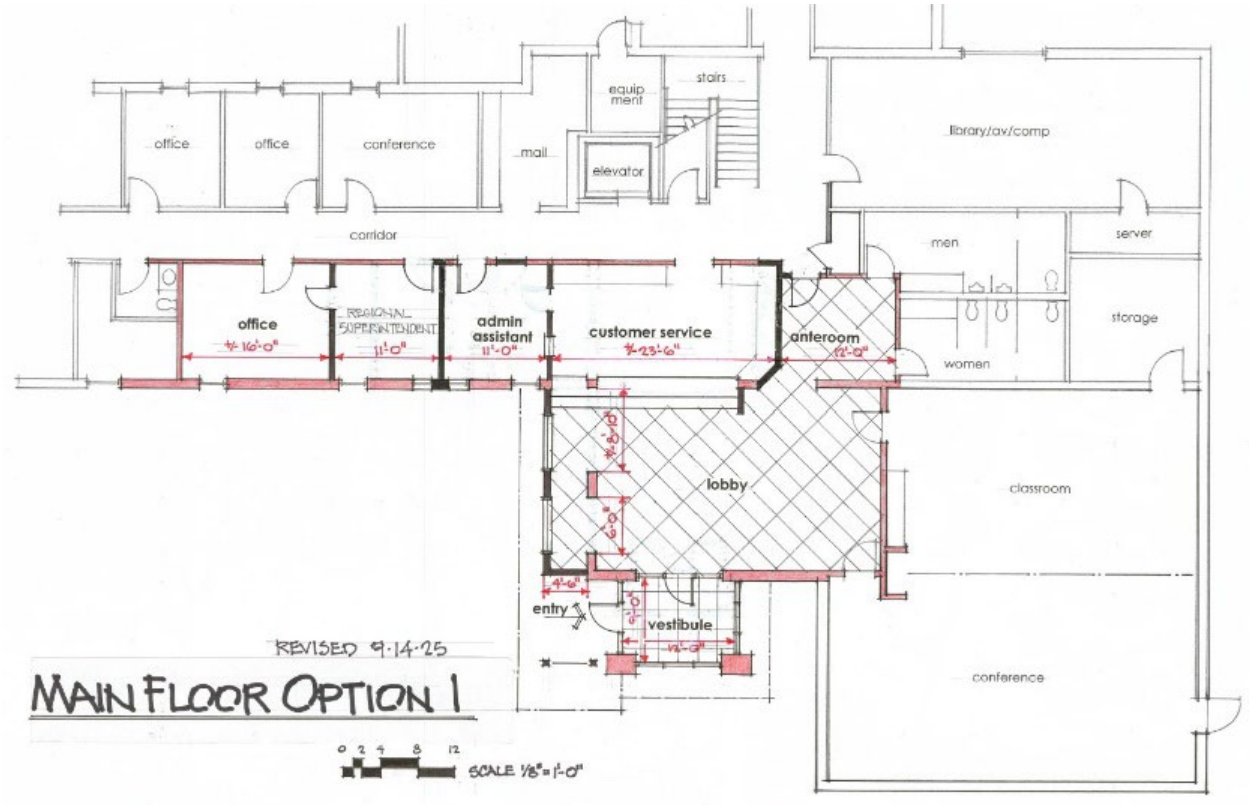
MAGIC VALLEY REGION

Billingsley Creek North Access Site

This project includes a new access road, grading work for new parking area, new vault toilet, kayak launch (2 slips) with new aluminum gangway and boardwalk leading from new parking area to the new gangway. Grant funding is being applied for, and, funding dependent, construction is anticipated in Fall 2026.

Magic Valley Regional Office – Customer Service Desk/Lobby Expansion

The Magic Valley Regional Office customer service desk/lobby area will undergo a remodel to provide more space for front office staff and customers. Construction is underway and is scheduled to be complete in February.



SOUTHEAST REGION

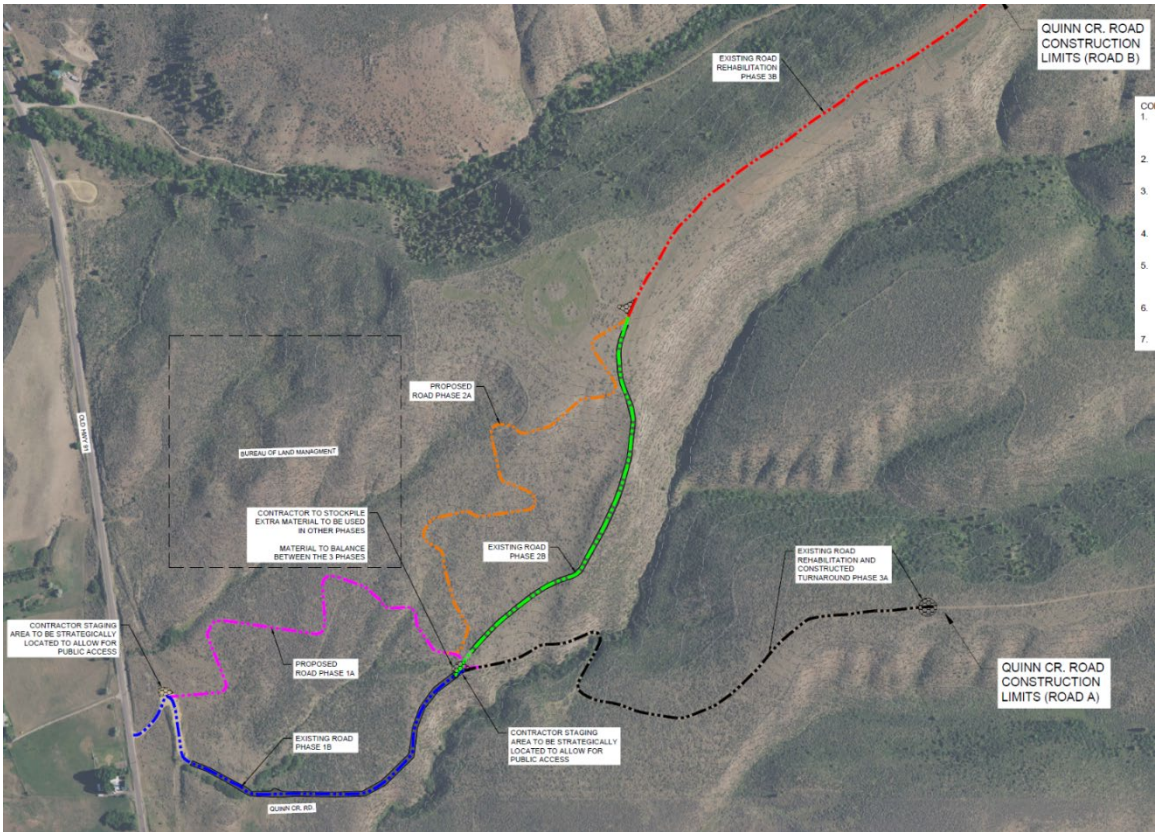
Cherry Plant Access Site

This project includes creating a new access road, boat ramp, approach onto roadway and parking area. The project has been surveyed and is currently being designed while funding is being applied for. The Region has met with the county, and the county approves of the project. We are working on permitting and obtaining a Floodplain Development Permit with a local consultant.



Portneuf WMA Road Improvements

This project includes regrading, cutting new roads, and adding length and culverts to existing access roads and parking areas. The project is broken into multiple phases to reduce the impact to the public area. Construction started in June 2026 and has been completed.



<u>Pocatello Regional Office – Addition/Remodel</u>

The Pocatello Regional Office will undergo a remodel and expansion to include an expanded lobby and reception area, additional office space and a new conference/meeting room. The project design is complete, contractor selected, and construction is scheduled to begin in the spring.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: BUREAU OF ENGINEERING



Improvements to Existing Pole Barn at Regional Office

This project includes extending and enclosing an existing pole barn structure. Bays will be extended in length and new overhead doors will be installed to enhance security and provide a space to store expensive equipment. Project is in early design phase.

Georgetown Summit WMA Bridge Replacement

This project will include replacing an existing vehicular bridge across the Bear River. Construction will include new abutments and installation of a premanufactured vehicular bridge. Project is currently on hold.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: BUREAU OF ENGINEERING

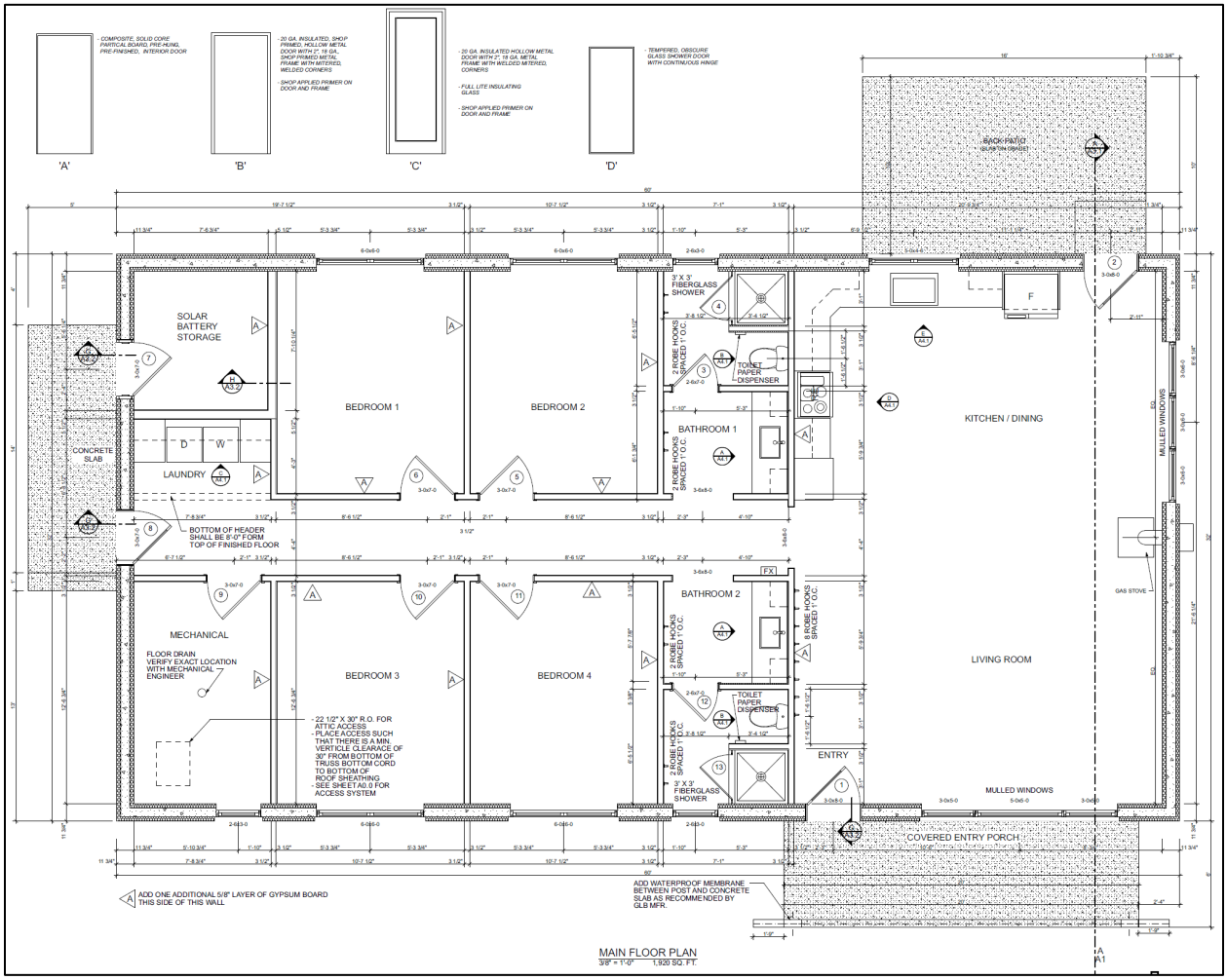


UPPER SNAKE REGION

Henry's Lake Cabin Asbestos Abatement, Demolition and Proposed Bunkhouse

The asbestos material was removed from the cabin, and it has been demolished. IFWF has approved a $500K donation towards construction of the new facility that will likely resemble the bunkhouse at the Tex Creek WMA but with additional bedrooms and bathroom(s). A site survey was recently completed with the design process to follow.

Floor plan at Tex Creek WMA:



DIRECTOR'S REPORT: BUREAU OF ENGINEERING

Rainey Bridge (AKA Big Eddy) Access Site Improvements:

Engineering recently met onsite with R6 staff to assess the current conditions. A site survey is being contracted with a preliminary design to follow. The overall concept is to improve the layout for recreational floaters, anglers, tent campers, and RV campers who currently utilize the site. Construction timeline is unknown.





SALMON REGION

Salmon Regional Office Remodel

This project is for the demolition, remodel, and expansion of the Regional Office in Region 7 (Salmon). IDFG is actively working with Department of Public Works, ITS, and an architect on the design of the new expansion and remodel. The project is currently in its design phase, and the architect is finalizing the design and specifications. Construction is anticipated to start in Spring 2027.



DIRECTOR'S REPORT: BUREAU OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

November 2026 Commission Meeting

The following sections summarize key Technical Services Bureau (TSB) activities and accomplishments during the reporting period in collaboration with internal and external partners:

TSB

- Published the "Technical Services Strategic Action Plan 2026-2030" (see image).
- Held the TSB summer all-staff meeting and field tours, which were hosted by the Panhandle Region (see photo).

Idaho Fish and Wildlife Information System Program (IFWIS) – Geographic Information System (GIS), Development, Data, and Web Tech Teams

- Received funding from the Idaho Transportation Department to update the Conservation Planner application and improve user experience for Department staff and staff at the Idaho Transportation Department; Idaho Governor's Office of Species, Minerals, and Energy Coordination (OSMEC); and Idaho Department of Lands (see image).
- Delivered the Department's new Private Landowner Consent form and mobile application in coordination with the Enforcement, Fisheries, and Wildlife bureaus.
- Continued coordinating closely with the Department's Information Technology Liaison within the Administration Bureau to overcome support barriers that are impacting mission-critical data and server environments within the state's Information Technology Services.
- Supported the continually increasing demand by Department staff for mobile digital data collection applications (e.g., anadromous creel and spawning ground surveys), which substantially improve data entry, quality control, and reporting efficiencies.
- Continued to provide technical support for Department staff using database systems and GIS technologies with focus on maintaining operational efficiency, improving data accessibility, and supporting mission-critical spatial/digital functions.
- Actively recruited for two GIS Analyst III vacancies.
- Continued to maintain the Department's current Drupal website platform while also preparing to support the new vendor-managed website development and deployment.

Technical Assistance Program (TAP)

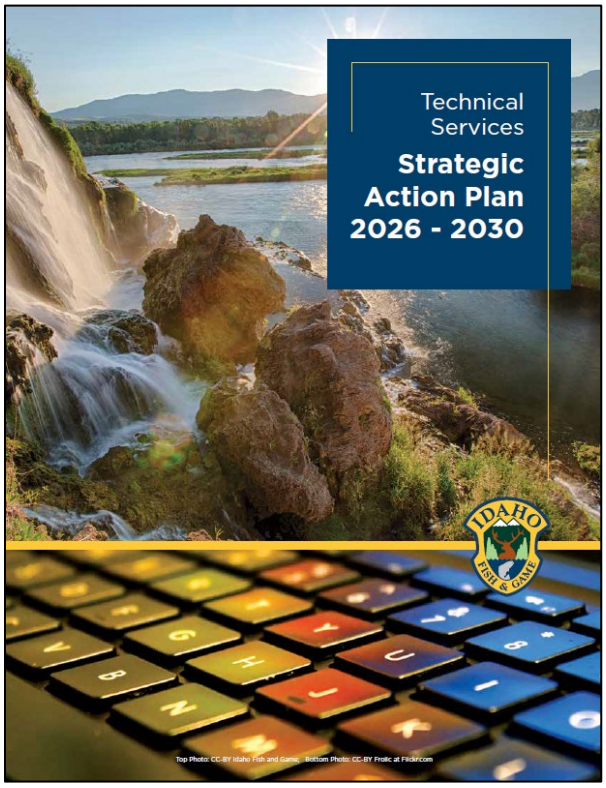
- Assisted the Wildlife Bureau with updating and combining two Department procedures: "Handling Beaver Complaints Involving Water Rights" and "Management of Beavers in Depredation Area."

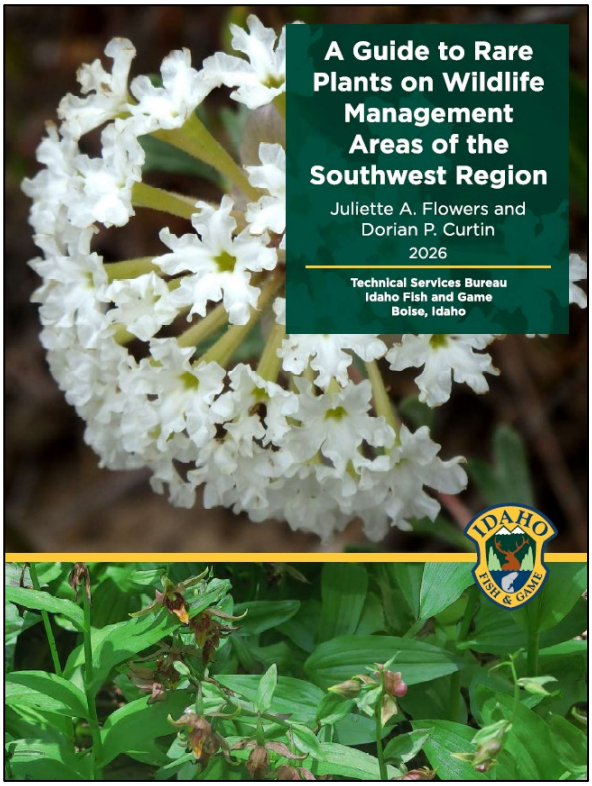
DIRECTOR'S REPORT: BUREAU OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

- Discussed Priest Lake dam operations and minimum stream flow water rights with the Idaho Department of Water Resources.
- Coordinated Panhandle Region and Wildlife Buruea input to the Idaho Department of Lands for revising the State of Idaho's Salvage Logging Rule under the Idaho Forest Practices Act.
- Completed two staff professional growth assignments for the vacant Regional Technical Assistance Manager position in the Clearwater Region.
- Completed the "Guide to Rare Plants on Wildlife Management Areas of the Southwest Region" in coordination with the Wildlife Bureau (see image).
- Completed the "Guide to Conserving Big Game Habitat in Southern Idaho" in coordination with the Southwest, Magic Valley, and Southeast regions, and Wildlife and Enforcement bureaus.
- Provided study recommendations in coordination with OSMEC to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for licensing the proposed new Molitor Hydroelectric Project in the Magic Valley Region.
- Provided comments to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and PacifiCorp for environmental analyses to relicense the Ashton Hydroelectric Project in the Upper Snake Region.

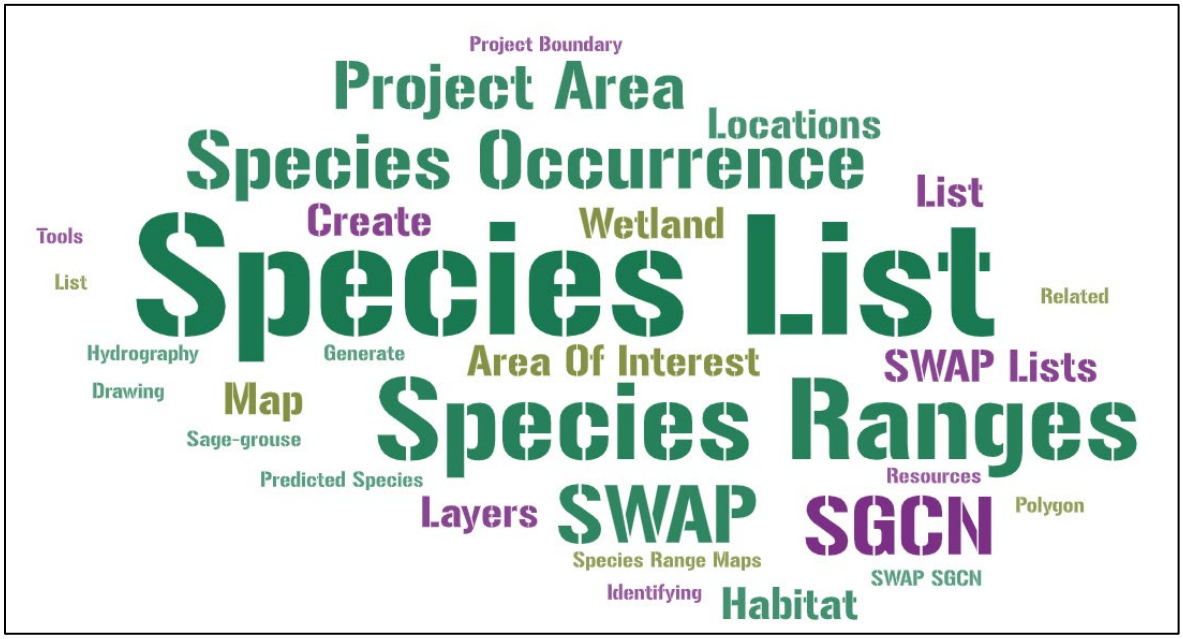


TSB summer all-staff coordination meeting in the Panhandle Region.





"Technical Services Strategic Action Plan 2026-2030" and "Guide to Rare Plants on Wildlife Management Areas of the Southwest Region."



Terms representing Conservation Planner features and functions that are most valuable to Department and partner staff.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: BUREAU OF WILDLIFE

November 2026 Commission Meeting

Pinyon Jay Conservation Agreement and Strategy

In 2022, the Pinyon Jay (*Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*) was petitioned to be listed under the Endangered Species Act. The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) found that they may be warranted for protection in 2023. In late summer 2025, the USFWS reached out to federal land management agencies, state wildlife agencies, tribes, and others across the west to inquire about developing a rangewide Conservation Agreement and Strategy (CAS) for the Pinyon Jay to avoid the need for listing. IDFG and the Idaho Governor's Office of Species, Minerals and Energy Coordination are working with USFWS on this unprecedented endeavor and recently completed the agreement portion of the CAS to be signed by agency directors in the coming months. The team is currently working on the strategy portion of the CAS, which will be completed by September 30, 2027 and submitted alongside the Species Status Assessment that is due in 2028.



Spencer Poling – Intermountain Bird Observatory

Implementation of the 2026 Avian Predation Management Plan

The new Predation Management Plan to Reduce Impacts to Fisheries Resources by American White Pelicans and other Piscivorous Birds in Idaho, which replaced the previous Pelican Management Plan, was implemented in 2026. Southwest Region staff placed remote cameras at community fishing waters to assess cormorant use and are identifying ways to monitor cormorant colonies on the Snake River near the Idaho/Oregon border. The Magic Valley Region continued to haze pelicans at Silver Creek and noted less pelicans compared to previous years. The Southeast Region was very successful at hazing pelicans from nesting islands on Blackfoot and Chesterfield reservoirs and only destroyed or oiled 336 nests (their USFWS depredation permit allows 500 nests to be taken) and lethally removed 13 adult birds from the Blackfoot River system. The Upper Snake Region was also successful at dissuading pelicans from nesting on Island Park Reservoir using non-lethal hazing techniques—pelicans have not nested on Island Park Reservoir since 2023. Staff are currently updating the Predation Management Plan highlighting accomplishments from 2026 and developing actions plans for 2027.

Wildlife Research Update: Black bear abundance modeling

Idaho has been able to maintain liberal harvest seasons for black bears (Figure 1). Historically, IDFG has used harvest metrics, such as the proportion of females and the proportion of adult males in the harvest, to monitor black bear populations. However, establishing more effective means of monitoring black bears can ensure sustainable harvest, evaluate the potential for increased opportunity, and provide information to better understand predator-ungulate interactions.

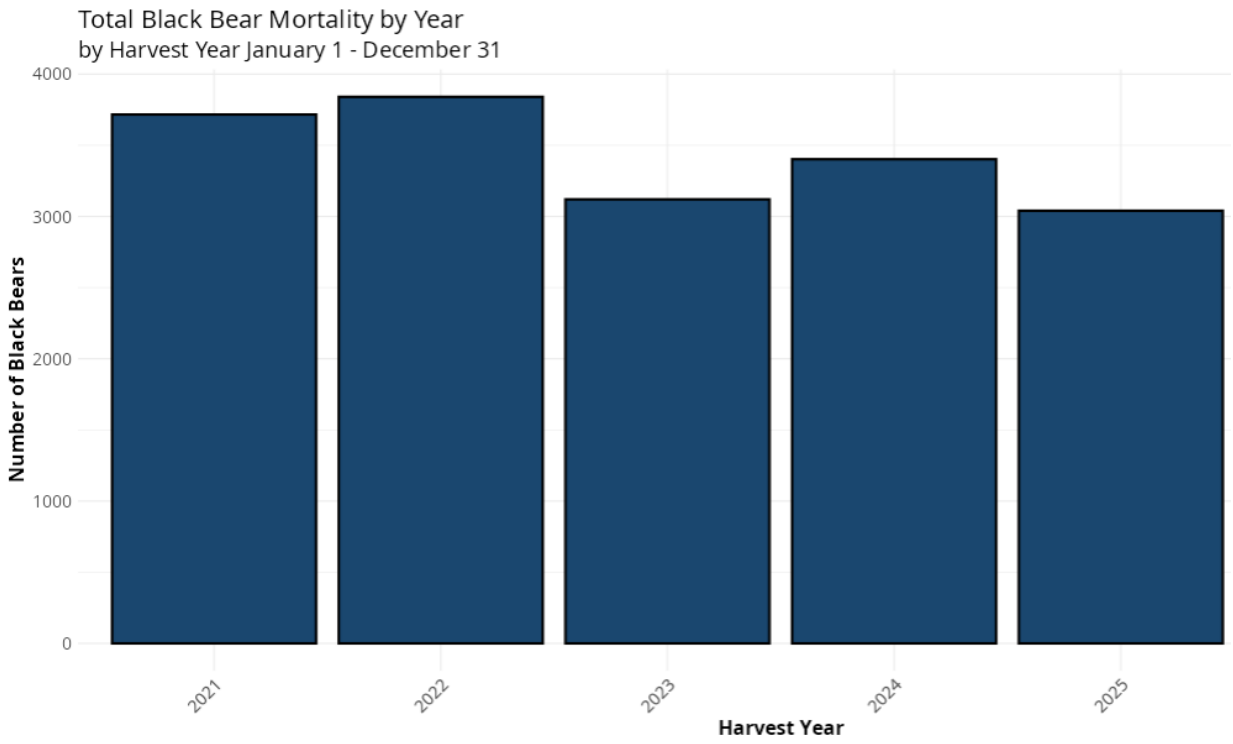


Figure 1. Total black bear harvest in Idaho from 2021–2025.

Similar to wolves, the skull and a portion of the hide containing evidence of sex from all harvested black bears must be checked at an IDFG regional office, official checkpoint, or by a Conservation Officer. During the mandatory check, a premolar tooth is removed from each bear, which provides an estimate of age and a source of DNA that enables us to identify relatedness between bears.

We are working to develop statistical approaches using both the age-at-harvest and the parent-offspring relationships in the harvest to estimate the abundance and population trends of the Idaho black bear population. Although we also use age and DNA to estimate wolf abundance, the models for black bears are quite different, because of differences in social structure and average litter size. Wolves generally reside in packs and have larger litters, whereas black bears are more solitary, with the exception of females with cubs, and have smaller litters.

Preliminary testing indicated that our models can reliably reconstruct increasing, stable, and declining population trends, although accuracy declined when year-to-year changes in abundances were large. Applying our model to Idaho data indicated that the statewide abundance of bears has declined, which is consistent with observed decreases in annual harvest (Figure 1). However, traditional harvest metrics, including female harvest and adult male harvest, have generally indicated a stable population. We are continuing to work on developing our models and also using the models to examine the reliability of our harvest metrics as indicators of population trends.

Providing Long-term, Stable Roosts for Idaho Bats

Some bat species use human structures for maternity roosts but when these are no longer available, bats need to find alternative roosts. To address this need, identified in the Idaho State Wildlife Action Plan, IDFG partnered with multiple landowners to install modular bat condos to provide bats with long-term, stable roosts. In some cases, condos were placed at sites where the bats were going to be evicted from an existing structure, in others we sited condos in areas that provided suitable bat habitat. To date, we have installed 8 modular bat condos, with 7 more to go—ultimately spanning 6 IDFG administrative regions. This project was funded through grants from the USFWS's White-nose Syndrome Grants to States and State Wildlife Grants (matched by funds from our Nongame Trust Fund) programs. Cooperating landowners include IDFG, The Nature Conservancy in Idaho, USFWS, Tamarack Resort, Boise State University Intermountain Bird Observatory, Idaho Falls Zoo, Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, and private landowners. Targeted species include the Little Brown Myotis (*Myotis lucifugus*) and Yuma Myotis (*Myotis yumanensis*), both Idaho species of greatest *conservation* need, and Big Brown Bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*), an Idaho species of greatest *information* need—the 3 Idaho bat species most likely to occupy artificial structures. Once occupied, these structures will also provide a means for bat population monitoring and disease surveillance.



3 x 3 bat condo installation at Henry's Lake

Commissioner's Report
November 2026

COMMISSION REPORT: PANHANDLE REGION

November 2026 Commission Meeting

Enforcement



Before the fall big game hunting season opened, Fish and Game conservation officers completed their annual firearms training, including practice shooting in low light and at night. Each fall, retired officers are also invited to join in. They complete a pistol qualification and then stay for a potluck and presentation.

COMMISSION REPORT: PANHANDLE REGION

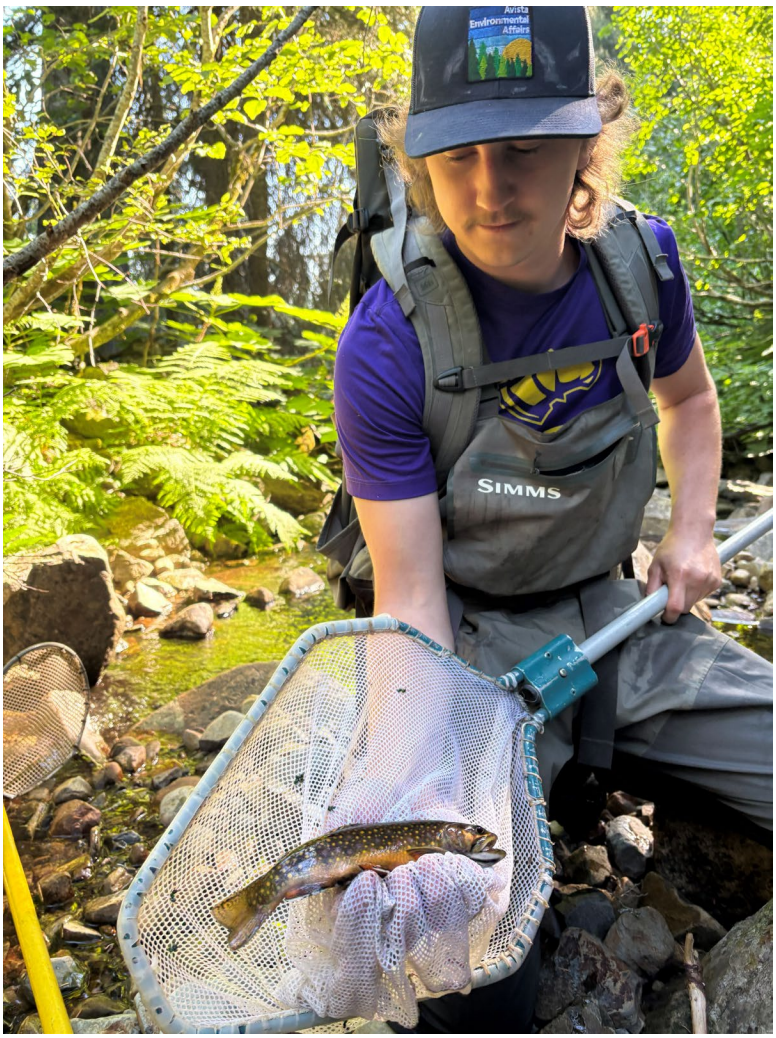
Habitat



Fish and Game habitat staff worked with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to place 44 wetland mats on three islands in the Pack River Delta. The mats help hold soil in place so the islands don't wash away, provide food and shelter for ducks and geese, and give native plants a head start so they can crowd out reed canary grass, an invasive plant that takes over wetlands. This work builds on earlier habitat projects in the Clark Fork and Pack River deltas.

COMMISSION REPORT: PANHANDLE REGION

Fisheries



Through the Clark Fork Settlement Agreement, Avista funds projects that make up for the impacts of its dams on fish and fish habitat. This year, one of the program's highlights was the start of a new effort to reduce non-native fish in streams that flow into Lake Pend Oreille and the Pend Oreille River. The goal is to give native fish, such as Bull Trout, more room to live and to keep them from interbreeding with non-native species. Crews began by removing Brook Trout from Porcupine Creek and Grouse Creek. Brook Trout are not native to these streams. They take up limited space that native fish need, and they interbreed with Bull Trout, which weakens the native population.

COMMISSION REPORT: PANHANDLE REGION

Communications



Communications staff recently organized the Region's operation of the 3D Youth Archery Range at the North Idaho State Fair. Nearly 3,000 youth shot archery at the range. The effort continues to be a highly effective outreach event for the department and the region.

COMMISSION REPORT: CLEARWATER REGION

November 2026 Commission Meeting

Wildlife Populations

- Currently deploying cameras at selected sites to document fisher and wolverine presence and distribution Across the NPCNF. Will be conducting another season to Fisher Trap and Transplant operations with he Panhandle Region this Winter

- Completed bighorn sheep lamb surveys in Hells Canyon to monitor recruitment and population status.

- Conducted a pilot season of drone surveys in areas that experienced significant EHD related deer mortality to evaluate the potential for monitoring deer recovery.

- With hunting seasons underway, staff are conducting CWD sampling and providing information and outreach to hunters regarding CWD regulations, sampling, and sampling locations.

Wildlife Habitat

Good Neighbor Authority Highlights, Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest

- **Wendover-Whitehouse Campground Infrastructure Project** – Following completion of the vegetation and salvage logging contract, IDFG implemented full restoration of 37 campsites. Work included 20-foot vegetation clearance and re-sloping from road edges around all sites, facilities, and roadway; installation of tent pads, picnic tables, fire rings, pedestal grills, site posts and markers, informational boards, and highway signs; removal and haul of all broken infrastructure; CXT restroom repairs; ditch excavation; culvert cleaning; and road maintenance. Final inspection and campground re-opening expected October 9.



- **Selway Elk Habitat Project** – Completed 200 additional acres of deciduous tree and shrub hand-thinning to improve elk habitat, forest health, and hazardous fuel conditions within the lower Selway roadless area. This multi-year effort now totals 1,184 acres completed across four units and five drainages, advancing long-term habitat restoration objectives.





- Executed two 10-Year GNA agreements with the USFS and BLM to implement vegetation management activities for wildlife habitat, fuels, forestry, watershed restoration, and invasive species treatments. The BLM agreement enables work on BLM-managed and adjacent-IDFG lands throughout the Clearwater Region and Craig Mountain WMA.

Private Lands

- **CRP**- Completed 48 CRP contracts for Latah and Nez Perce County. Conducted about 25 status reviews for Latah, Nez Perce, Benewah and Kootenai County.

- **Pheasant stocking**: Pheasant stocking will begin October 8th. The Clearwater region will be releasing 1,125 pheasants from October 8-December 17th between our 4 release areas in the region.

Craig Mountain WMA

- Michael Schultz was hired as the permanent Sr. Tech on CMWMA. Mike will be an excellent addition to our Habitat Team.

- The old barn at the Gaiser segment was replaced with a new machine shed for equipment and supply storage.

- Contractors built 1 mile of drift fence along Deer Creek Road and added walk through areas for hunter access.

Enforcement

- The crew has been very busy lately with a myriad of things going on in addition to the normal patrol, injured wildlife, moose concerns, problem bears, and fishing calls. Officers have not slowed down this summer and keep their foot on the gas staying on top of things.

- We are currently in a hiring process for 3 new officers within the Clearwater Region. Vacant patrol districts are or will be the Elk City, Orofino, and Lewiston West districts.

- Grangeville District officers have put together some stellar cases recently, all are ongoing. Some outfitter investigations that are seeing some movement. These include closed season trophy bull elk, a wasted bull elk, a shot and wasted/left mule deer, a handful of drive by shootings, multiple bait investigations, an overlimit of cow elk case, a deer shot at night with a .22 thinking it was a coyote, and an unlawful bear on a reduced bear tag.

- Lewiston district has closed out several cases and is patrolling heavily to find more. These include closed season lion shot with thermals at night and several closed season deer cases from this summer, a tagging violation/unlawful bear from an out of state social influencer type, and a couple of wrong class license cases

Fisheries Management

- Resident fisheries staff returned to Five Lakes Butte project area to evaluate the effectiveness of the 2025 rotenone treatment. The goal of this project is to remove sources populations of nonnative Brook Trout from the headwaters of the North Fork Clearwater basin. Staff are awaiting the results of eDNA sampling to determine the outcome of treatment and future steps of this project.

- The Habitat Program is actively constructing an improved culvert and beaver dam analogs at the Sharrock-Becker Project on Big Meadow Creek. This project faced challenges and had to be adapted from original plans, but staff found solutions to complete work that will benefit steelhead in the Potlatch basin.

- Staff began Floy tagging White Sturgeon in Hells Canyon in 2024 to evaluate angler use. From these efforts, use is estimated to be 73% (95% CI = 48-98%). Catch occurred almost exclusively during summer months (June-September). In 2024-2025 a greater proportion of fish caught in late summer were adult-sized fish. Staff are awaiting complete return data from 2026 to determine final estimates for the 2026 angling season.

Wild Steelhead and Salmon

- With the growing concerns of walleye in the lower Snake River, we are proposing to start an investigative project that will be looking at trying to estimate abundance of walleye in the Lower Granite Dam Reservoir and potentially up in the Clearwater and Snake rivers beyond the reservoir. If we receive the grant, there will be three years of funding that will aid in better understanding the increasing abundance of walleye and identifying the best management actions to reduce predation risks to juvenile salmon, steelhead, and other key native species.

- The Salmon River fish trap that operates at Twin Bridges near the boat ramp was pulled out of the river for some much-needed maintenance work. With the work completed, the trap will be launched back into the river this week and will be ready for trapping come the end of February.

Communications- Hunter Education

- Participated in Latah County Fair mid Sept.- Approximately 20k attendees. Answered questions from public, provided regulation booklets, handouts and other resources/information.

- Other items include:
  - Preparing for UI career fair- Oct 7.
  - Offered several HE & trapper Ed courses prior to fall hunting season.
  - Wildlife education courses at Camp Grizzly by Laird Park.
  - Published fall trout stocking updates, hunting safety, CWD and pheasant stocking reminders on website/social media pages.

COMMISSION REPORT: SOUTHWEST REGION

November 2026 Commission Meeting



In July of 2026 the department lethally removed 75 elk over five nights from the Big Willow drainage in GMU32. Lethal removal was conducted under a contract wtih sharpshooters from USDA Wildlife Services. All the elk carcasses were recovered by IDFG personnel and edible meat from those carcasses was salvaged. Meat was donated to local Idaho foods pantries for distribution to needy Idaho families in cooperation with Idaho Hunters Feeding the Hungry and the Idaho Food bank association. In total 9,484 pounds of meat was distributed to 19 food pantries in Adams, Boise, Canyon, Gem, Payette and Washington Counties.

Biologists from R3-McCall and R2 collaborated with researchers from the Fish and Wildlife Service and Xerces Society to sample native freshwater mussels on the Salmon River. Samples were collected from mussel beds on the Salmon River in July, August, and September to track the progress of an apparent mortality event affecting Western Ridged and Western Pearlshell Mussels within the watershed. These samples will be analyzed by freshwater mussel disease experts in an attempt to disentangle the causes of the apparent mortality event.





COMMISSION REPORT: SOUTHWEST REGION

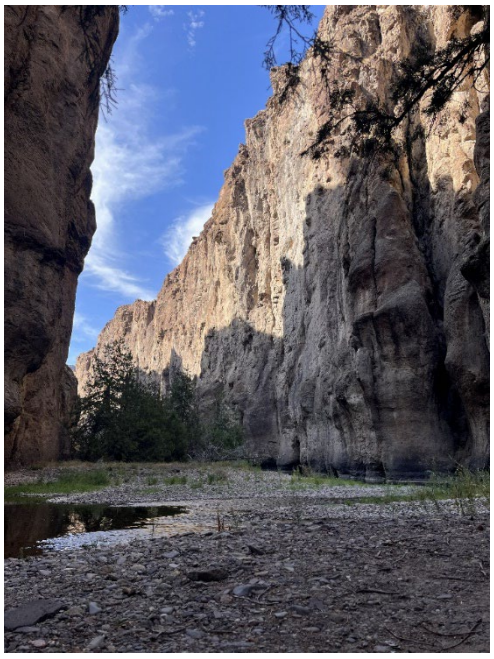
R3 staff have been busy pulling trail cameras deployed during the second season of the black bear population estimation project in GMU 32A. To date, 101 of 150 cameras have been retrieved from the field. Data and image processing will begin later this fall with a population estimate generated by late spring of 2027

McCall staff operated the Midvale Rest Area check station on Sunday, October 11. We chatted with 507 hunters and checked 86 big game animals, which was a little busier than last year. Overall, hunters reported seeing game, but also seeing lots of other hunters afield, which is not surprising for a weekend opening day. Midvale will also operate on October 17 and 24 this fall, and McCall will run a voluntary-stop CWD sampling site at New Meadows on all other weekend days through late November.

Biologists from regions 2, 3, 5 and 7 teamed up to launch the pilot year of the Idaho Butterfly Atlas, a citizen-science effort to survey butterflies throughout the summer season. This project will greatly expand our knowledge of butterflies in Idaho through the collection of critical data on species assembly, response to seasonality, and associated habitat requirements. This data may also be used to inform several butterfly species ESA listing petitions.

Several freshwater mussel surveys were conducted this summer and fall in the Owyhee Canyonland river system of IDFG Southwest Region 3. Basic data on native species distribution and abundance are lacking in this region, and an ongoing review of an ESA petition for the western-ridged mussel makes this work all the more timely and important. Native freshwater mussel species are long-lived indicators of water quality and are also important diet components of fur-bearing species like river otter. Larger mussel beds found in the Owyhees will serve as monument sites through time for future surveys.





COMMISSION REPORT: SOUTHWEST REGION

Fall Fisheries Projects – R3 Nampa Fisheries field season is winding down but several projects are schedule through November. The triennial South Fork Boise River trout population surveys will occur in October. Fall gillnetting index for regional kokanee fisheries will be conducted at Deadwood, Arrowrock, and Lucky Peak reservoirs.

Fishing & Boating Access Projects – Construction on much needed repairs on the Homedale Boat Ramp was completed on December 8th. Several issues arose during construction extending the finish date but the ramp will be open to anglers and waterfowl hunters starting on December 8th. Access crew has been

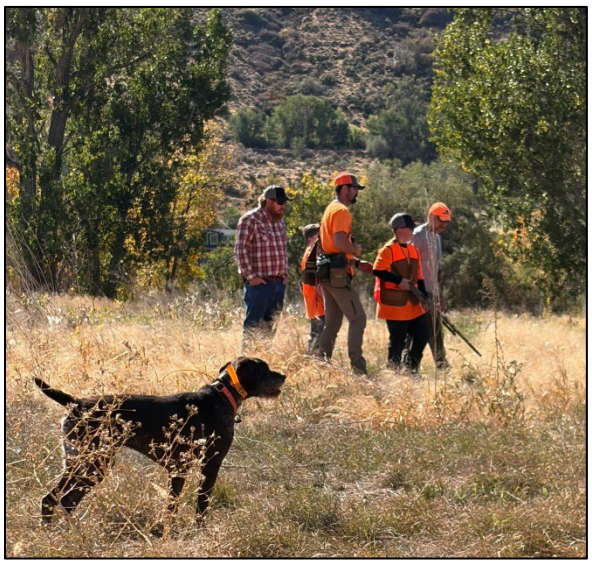
Fire Rehabilitation –The region was impacted by numerous fires. Nearly every habitat district was impacted by a fire this year with multiple fires occurring on IDFG property. Boise River WMA had two fires: MM19 Fire (256 acres) near Cervidae Peak and the Beck Fire (2,856 acres) near Mayfield, C.J. Strike WMA had the Cove Fire (22 acres) near Cove Arm, Cecil D. Andrus WMA was not directly impacted, but the 158,000 acre Tartar Fire burned the Rocking M Conservation Easement managed by their staff, Fort Boise WMA had two fires this summer: Scott Pit Fire (55 acres) near Martins Landing and the Goldy Fire (323 acres) that burned the entirety of Gold Island, and the Nampa Habitat District was impacted by the 575,150 acre Big Grass Fire. Consequently, the entire Southwest Region Habitat staff are actively working on rehabilitation of those fires. Thankfully the Tartar and Big Grass fires burned with a very low burn severity which did not appear to burn the roots of perennial grasses. In fact, the southern portions of the Big Grass Fire burned in a very patchy mosaic pattern. Nonetheless, there is now an absent shrub component and a high likelihood of invasion by annual grasses. Anticipate lots of volunteer opportunities for seed collection, seedling plantings, and seed broadcasting this fall, winter, and spring.

Wetland Improvements – Habitat staff working on Fort Boise WMA and Ted Trueblood WHA have been conducting work to improve wetland conditions on Pintail Pond and Pond 3, respectively. As a cost saving measure, Pintail Pond was left off the large wetland project conducted at Fort Boise WMA several years ago. However, sediment and vegetation removal (bullrush, phragmites, and cattails) were conducted over the past few months to make similar improvements. Following the successful treatment of Ponds 1 and 2 at Ted Trueblood WHA, work to clear sediment and vegetation on Pond 3 began this past spring in preparation for an anticipated controlled burn in spring 2027.

COMMISSION REPORT: MAGIC VALLEY REGION

November 2026 Commission Meeting

Putting Smiles on Kid's Faces with the help of Dogs and Birds





The Magic Valley Region partnered with the High Desert Pointing Dog Club to host the 2026 youth pheasant clinic at the Niagara Springs Wildlife Management Area.

This year, 20 recent graduates from our hunter education program participated in the hunt.

Interagency Coordination



Technical Assistance Manager, Bradley Dawson, attended the national SIKES Act Workshop outside of Washington D.C with the Department of War (DOW) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The purpose was to plan how to better address interagency coordination on wildlife action within and in the vicinity of DOW installations, such as the Mountain Home Air Force Base.

COMMISSION REPORT: MAGIC VALLEY REGION

Landscape Prioritization



Regional and statewide staff collaborated to produce a regional strategy for Habitat Prioritization. This maps out a regional approach to spending limited budget and personnel resources on habitat in the region that will be most meaningful for multiple species and populations, as well as for intact landscapes.

Protecting the Core, Fighting the Spread





During the first two weeks of September in the Magic Valley Region, operations commenced to combat the spread of invasive annual grasses, particularly cheatgrass, across multiple jurisdictional boundaries. This effort was made possible through a large-scale collaboration among IDFG and its partners, allowing crews to aerially treat approximately 11,000 acres with herbicide. The most treated in the region to date! This coordinated approach helped maximize treatment efforts across the region and support ongoing efforts to help promote landscape resiliency against fire and improve wildlife habitat in southern Idaho.

COMMISSION REPORT: MAGIC VALLEY REGION

Opening Weekend of the General Deer Hunt

From October 10–11, staff operated the annual Magic Valley check stations near Fairfield, Timmerman Junction, and Carey. With opening day falling on Saturday, traffic was relatively light initially, but hunter activity and the number of harvested animals increased substantially on Sunday, despite a change in weather and wet conditions. Staff had the opportunity to connect with hunters, collect harvest information, and see some happy faces coming through the check stations.

Congratulations to all the hunters who took to the field and continued the tradition of spending time outdoors with family and friends.



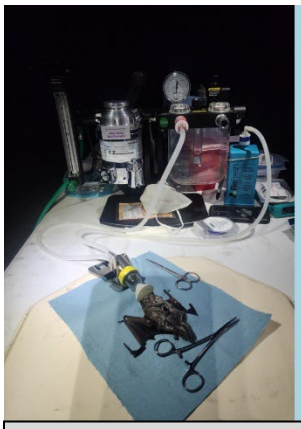


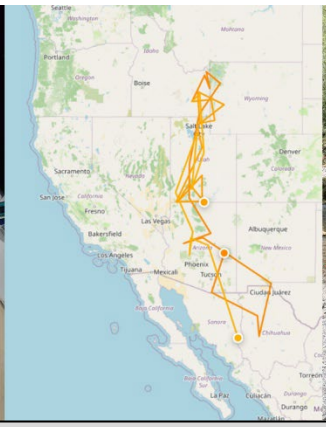


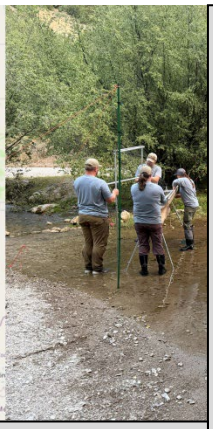


COMMISSION REPORT: SOUTHEAST REGION

November 2026 Commission Meeting







This past month wildlife staff deployed motus and Bluetooth solar transmitters on hoary and silver-haired bats. A longstanding gap in bat conservation has been movement patterns, timing, and space use. These novel technologies provide important and new information that will help decision makers in the future.

The Nature Talk series at Edson Fichter Nature Area finished its 6th successful year! IDFG and the Friends of EFNA brought five guests to speak on a variety of topics from beavers to falconry to paleontological history of Portneuf Valley Wildlife.





The R5 Habitat Team, Access Crew and Engineering Bureau worked with a contractor to complete a major road project on Portneuf WMA. This project has been a long time coming and the new road will provide 2.3 miles of reliable vehicle access for recreational and habitat management activities.

IDFG staff collaborated with University of Idaho to sample Bear Lake Sculpin for graduate research on this species. Sampling requires deep water trawling overnight. The research will help Idaho and Utah improve their evaluations of this important species. This small, non-game species is not found anywhere else in the world and is an important forage species for larger fish like Bonneville Cutthroat Trout and Lake Trout.



COMMISSION REPORT: UPPER SNAKE REGION

November 2026 Commission Meeting

Highlights



RCO Barry Cummings retired after a long career working as an IDFG Conservation Officer. Barry's leadership, integrity, and commitment to wildlife resource protection over the years is a legacy that won't be forgotten.

Habitat staff worked with 25 volunteers over two days to build 21 beaver dam analogs (BDA's) in the Antelope Creek drainage. This habitat restoration project will improve stream channel health and prolong water availability for wildlife in the area.





Staff have been addressing black bear conflicts on a daily basis for the past two months. Staff have worked with local NGOs, citizen groups, county sheriffs, and county commissions to improve bear awareness in communities. The Upper Snake Region has sent several cubs-of-the-year to rehab facilities, and translocated or euthanized a dozen other bears.

Fisheries staff completed their annual monitoring efforts of fish populations in the South Fork Snake River. Initial analysis shows that the fish numbers are looking good as we head into next year.





With help from staff across the Upper Snake Region, the annual stocking of high mountain lakes has been completed, providing a unique angling opportunity for those venturing into Idaho's high country.

IDFG Hunter Education instructors teamed up with Delta Waterfowl to offer a youth duck hunting opportunity at Mud Lake WMA. Twelve kids were paired with mentors and dogs to experience waterfowl hunting in Idaho.



COMMISSION REPORT: UPPER SNAKE REGION

Habitat

- Staff collaborated with ten willing agricultural producers to establish 2,500 acres of cover crops to enhance big game forage in priority landscapes with chronic depredation issues and in areas impacted by wildfire. These crops were placed in high-priority areas including Teton Canyon, Tex Creek Wildlife Management Area, Game Management Unit (GMU) 64 mule deer winter range, and GMU 64 elk winter range.

Enforcement

- Officers were called on to assist with several grizzly bear Defense of Life/Property (DLP) investigations and other calls for service regarding aggressive nuisance black bears.
- Officers in the Fremont County area took a Citizens Against Poaching (CAP) call during archery-only season. The caller reported an individual illegally shooting a 6-point bull elk with a rifle. Officers responded to the area and, after their investigation, were able to cite an individual for the violations and seize the unlawfully taken elk.

Fisheries

- A fish barrier has been installed in Moody Creek in preparation for a rotenone treatment that will take place in 2027 to benefit native cutthroat trout.
- The access crew made emergency repairs to the North Mud Lake boat ramp prior to the start of the waterfowl opener. They filled a cavity in the boat ramp that will allow continued access to the lake until a more permanent fix can be implemented.

Wildlife

- Staff facilitated the capture and collaring of pronghorn in GMU 63. This deployment supplements collaring efforts during the previous two summers and targeted desert pronghorn, in an effort to learn more about their movement and survival.
- Staff worked to remove wild deer that gained access to a captive cervid facility on the Rexburg Bench. To date, 65 deer have been lethally removed from the facility, which has had captive elk test positive for CWD. All of the removed deer tested negative for CWD, and the meat will be donated to local food banks.

COMMISSION REPORT: SALMON REGION

November 2026 Commission Meeting

Enforcement:

- Fall hunts are upon us. Officers are busy with patrols, investigations and calls for service.
- Officers conducted several backcountry patrols, and patrols by horseback, raft, motorcycle, and ATV.



(East Fork Officer Aaron Andruska Patrolling the White Clouds)



(Stanley Officer Raliegh Scott Patrolling the Main Salmon)

- Officers stocked fish at high mountain lakes by horse and mule.



(Challis Officer Matt Cahoon stocking fish with mules)

- Several impromptu check stations have been conducted and enforcement assistance provided at wildlife's highway check stations.
- October started with a black bear WHART incident involving an individual being mauled by a juvenile bear that had been feeding on a substantial amount of unsecured household garbage at the residence.
- Officers assisted with the FTO process mentoring a new Officer.
- A case involving an individual claiming wolf harvest in the wrong unit to obtain higher reimbursement came to conclusion resulting in $1157.50 fines and fees, $6500 restitution to F4WM, a 6-month hunting license suspension, 24 months of probation and 180 days jail (suspended).

Screen Program:

- The Anadromous Fish Screen Program staff attended the bi-annual Northwest Fish Screen and Passage Workshop sponsored by Fish Screen Oversight Committee (FSOC) in Enterprise Oregon in September. During this meeting, Screen Program staff from Idaho, Washington, Oregon, and Montana discussed challenges and resolutions to fish screening, toured fish screen sites, and learned about various types of engineered screen designs. Our staff presented on a variety of topics including, an overview of our Anadromous Fish Screen Program, upcoming projects, and challenges associated with the fabrication and maintenance of fish screens.
- Five fish screens are being replaced in the fall of 2026 throughout the Upper Salmon River Basin due to ageing infrastructure. Screens that were replaced included sites

in the Lemhi River, North Fork of the Salmon River, Pahsimeroi River, and the East Fork Salmon River basins.

Wildlife:

- Completed ground composition surveys for pronghorn across the region. All populations met or exceeded objective for buck ratios. Fawn ratios appeared to vary greatly with low ratios in the Lemhi and Pahsimeroi and strong ratios in the Sawtooth population.
- Installed camera traps on pronghorn migrations the sawtooth and Lemhi populations to collect composition data.
- Conducting ground-based Mark-Resight bighorn sheep survey in the Lower Panther-Main Salmon study population.
- Assisted the Salmon-Challis National Forest with aerial herbicide treatments over 8,000 acres in GMU 28 and 29 for annual invasive grasses to improve big game winter range as part of wildfire rehabilitation.
- Completed fall lamb at heel surveys for Lower Panther-Main Salmon and North Beaverhead bighorn sheep populations. Unfortunately the surveys indicated that some subpopulations experience good moderate lamb survival while others experienced poor summer lamb survival.
- Conducted big game check stations at Challis and Carmen.
- Worked closely with 3 landowners in Leadore area to address chronic large-scale elk and pronghorn depredations.
- Addressed multiple nuisance bear incidents. Majority of issues are likely the result of a poor berry year and failure of humans to limit access to nontraditional food sources such as garbage cans, pet and livestock food, etc.
- Performed maintenance on backcountry airstrips at Lower Loon, Mitchel, and Cougar Ranch.
- Hired a new wildlife technician to assist with the demanding workload of the LPMS bighorn sheep research project.
- Conducted interviews to backfill the biologist position vacated by Tom Schrempps promotion to Regional Communications Manager.

Habitat Program:

- Work continues on a very large-scale habitat restoration project on the Lower Lemhi River on Bohannon Creek Cattle Company Ranch (previously Eagle Valley Ranch). The project has four phases, plus three adaptive management phase that resulted from an icing event in 2023 and 2024. We are currently working on an adaptive management phase. The last planned restoration phase (Phase 4) will receive bids on October 14th and construction will start at some point after that date. Revegetation efforts are also underway and will continue for several years.
- Work also continues on the area of the Lemhi River near the confluence of Hayden Creek. Multiple habitat restoration projects are currently being implemented and

designed to benefit habitat for the rearing of juvenile fish. One project wrapped up in August of 2025, and the other will likely finish in 2028.

- A habitat restoration project on the Pahsimeroi River on Hanging-T ranch is under development. This project will aim to restore several miles of the Pahsimeroi River and create better juvenile rearing habitat for Chinook Salmon and steelhead. Implementation of Phase 1 construction is completed and we are currently designing and planning for phase 2 to occur during summer of 2027.
- A culvert replacement project on East Fork Tower Road is currently being implemented. Designs for two additional culverts upstream of the project in Tower Creek are being developed by the Lemhi County Soil and Water Conservation District. Following replacement of all culverts, over 10 miles of spawning and rearing habitat in Tower Creek will be reconnected for anadromous fishes.
- A project to relocate the Hayden Creek rotary screw trap has been completed as of August 2026. IDFG will move the trap onto property recently acquired by IDFG near the mouth of Hayden Creek. Moving the trap will increase trapping efficiency and prevent conflict with a habitat restoration project proposed at the trap's current location.
- We have also been working on a variety of habitat improvement projects aimed to remove multiple fish passage barriers on Kinnikinnick, Poison, and Sq. (Bia Po'i Naokwaide) creeks which are all tributaries to the Salmon River. Poison Creek is currently being implemented while Bia Po'i Naokwaide recently awarded a contract and will begin shortly. Kinnikinnick is still in design stage.

Administration/Communications:

<u>Communications/Hunter Ed</u>

- Assisted in the response of recent bear attack, including press releases and media inquiries.
- Drafted 16 regional press releases for web, social media, and radio.
- Assisted with annual youth pheasant hunt.
- Oversaw implementation of hunter and bow hunter education courses in August and September.
    - Trapper and wolf trapper education courses upcoming in November.
- Oversaw IDFG booth implementation at Lemhi County Fair.

<u>Front Desk</u>

- Busy Licenses season with Salmon B tags selling out in record time and a good number of disappointed local folks unable to get their tags, either due to putting in for Controlled Hunts or being too late. R7 served about 170 line-standers.
- Checking bears and processing Big Game Outfitter orders.
- Taking lots of phone calls re: leftover tag sales for nonresidents, residents looking for when they can purchase their big game tags, and if the Salmon region will have a Chinook season this year. Selling a few Steelhead tags for early season opportunity.
- Printing LOTS of duplicate tags.

- Starting to take calls from Nonresidents about this December's drawing for deer and elk tags.
- Welcomed Katarina Whitson as the newest CSR2.

Fisheries:

- Fisheries staff worked with the Bureau to reduce bag limits statewide for the fall steelhead season, based on the low return documented to date. Regional staff have worked to
- At the time of this writing (10/14/26), steelhead fishing effort in the upper Salmon River is starting to slowly increase. Although not entirely unexpected, early to mid-October steelhead fishing in the upper Salmon River was slow. We anticipate a reduction in angler effort compared to other seasons given the low return of adult steelhead.
- Field crews are wrapping up the last of the season's field work. Chinook Salmon redd counts were wrapped up in late-September, lowland lake surveys were finalized in October, and rotary screw traps are still in operation in the Lemhi, Pahsimeroi, and North Fork Salmon rivers, to estimate juvenile Chinook and steelhead production.