

Meeting Date: May 19, 2022

Agenda Item No. 11

Agenda Item: Ungulate Monitoring in North Idaho

Bureau Chief Approval: JR

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Background:

For over 30 years Idaho Department of Fish and Game has primarily used helicopter-based aerial sightability surveys to estimate and monitor mule deer and elk populations across much of the state. Unpredictable and unsuitable winter weather patterns and heavily forested landscapes make aerial sightability surveys difficult and inefficient, and in some years impossible, in much of northern Idaho. Additionally, prior research and monitoring efforts in north Idaho have primarily focused on elk population abundance and dynamics, with less effort dedicated to the estimation and population dynamics of white-tailed deer and moose. New research and monitoring efforts are underway to: 1) continue development of new methods to estimate abundance of multiple species with remote camera arrays instead of helicopters; 2) better understand survival, cause-specific mortality, and movements of white-tailed deer and moose in north Idaho; and, 3) predict and map seasonal movement patterns and habitat use of deer and elk in north Idaho. These projects are part of a larger overall effort to provide wildlife managers with information to predict outcomes of management actions in very complex systems with multiple predators and multiple prey species. This presentation will focus on current Department efforts to increase our understanding of deer, elk, and moose populations in northern Idaho.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy issues:

N/A

Public Involvement Process:

N/A

Staff Recommendation:

None. This agenda item is for Commission information.

Justification:

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