

Meeting Date: November 15, 2022

Agenda Item No. 11

Agenda Item: Wolf Management Update

Bureau Chief Approval: JR

Prepared by: Katie Oelrich, Wildlife Staff Biologist, for Jon Rachael, Wildlife Bureau Chief

Background:

Consistent with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's 2009 delisting decision, the Department is committed to maintaining a viable, self-sustaining wolf population that is well-distributed in suitable habitat. IDFG is also committed to managing the population at a level that minimizes conflicts with both livestock and ungulate populations, while remaining connected with wolf populations in Montana, Wyoming, Oregon, Washington, and Canada. The gray wolf is classified and managed as a big game animal. Over the last decade, the Fish and Game Commission has expanded wolf harvest seasons incrementally in response to continued depredations on livestock and impacts to other big game species. The Department continues to focus wolf management actions to deliberately address resolution of wolf conflicts with livestock and negative impacts on big game populations, while ensuring a self-sustaining wolf population.

Staff will present a statewide update on wolf management, including harvest trend and livestock depredation information, as well as wolf monitoring efforts.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:

Idaho Code 36-201 provides methods of take for wolves and establishes year-round trapping seasons on private land. Idaho Code 36-1107 provides for control of depredating wolves and Idaho Code 22-5301 established the Idaho Wolf Depredation Control Board to direct and manage funds provided for wolf depredation control. The Idaho Fish and Game Commission administers state wildlife policy through the Department (Idaho Code 36-104). Wolves are classified and managed as big game animals (IDAPA 13.01.06.100).

Public Involvement Process:

The Commission and Department receive comments from the public related to wolves and wolf management year-round, including at open houses, public meetings and hearings, and online. The Department also receives comments via email and phone calls and solicits input from the public on season-setting proposals.

Justification:

This information will aid Commissioners as they respond to requests, recommendations, or other input from the public regarding the status of wolves and wolf management in Idaho.

Staff Recommendation:

None. This agenda item is for Commission information.

Action Requested:

N/A.