

Meeting Date: March 24, 2022

Agenda Item No. 5B

Agenda Item: Season setting for Take of Peregrine Falcons (ACTION)

Bureau Chief Approval: JR

Prepared by: Jeff Knetter, Upland Game and Migratory Bird Program Coordinator

Background:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) delisted the American peregrine falcon in 1999 and subsequently authorized take of nestling peregrines from the wild for use in falconry in 2004. In 2008 the USFWS allowed capture of recently-fledged juvenile peregrines (known as hatch year or “passage” birds). Federal regulation governing falconry authorizes states to manage take of peregrines from the wild for falconry not to exceed 5% of annual production. In 2013 the Idaho Fish and Game Commission adopted regulations allowing the take of peregrine falcons for falconry for the first time in more than 40 years.

Seasons have been set for 3-year intervals since 2013, during which time Idaho falconers have taken 9 peregrines (capture limit of 2 birds per season). Only resident Idaho falconers that possess a Master Falconry Permit may apply for a peregrine capture permit. The Department annually receives fewer than 20 applications. Permittees are selected by random drawing. Other western states that currently allow peregrine take for falconry include Arizona, Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

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 take of wildlife. IDAPA 13.01.14 established rules governing falconry.

Public Involvement Process:

The proposal for peregrine take for falconry was posted online for public comment from February 14 – March 4. Input was also solicited directly from the Idaho Falconers Association.

Justification:

Peregrine falcon surveys are conducted once every 3 years to inform take seasons. In 2021, 59 peregrine territories were surveyed; 38 were occupied and 39 chicks were produced. This level of production would again allow for take of 2 peregrine falcons per year from 2022-2024-- no change from the previous three seasons.

Staff Recommendation:

The Department’s recommendation is to allow regulated take seasons for 2022-2024 for wild-caught peregrine falcons to include two Peregrine Capture permits. One Permit will be a statewide permit (a nestling or recently-fledged juvenile peregrine), and one permit will be limited to nestling take only in Custer and Lemhi counties OR a recently fledged juvenile peregrine, statewide.

Action Requested:

Approve 2022-2024 seasons for the take of peregrine falcons from the wild for falconry purposes.

Suggested Motion: The Commission adopt staff recommendations for the 2022-2024 seasons for the take of peregrine falcons from the wild for falconry purposes.