

Meeting Date: 20 November, 2020

Agenda Item No. 5. B.

Agenda Item: Modification of Spring 2021 Steelhead
Seasons

Bureau Chief Approval: JF

Prepared by: Lance Hebdon, Anadromous Fish Manager

Background:

This agenda item concerns modification to fisheries targeting hatchery-origin Steelhead on the Snake, Clearwater, Salmon, and Little Salmon rivers.

The 2020-21 steelhead return to the Idaho is one of the lowest in the last 2 decades. Counts of steelhead at Bonneville Dam during the summer and fall of 2020 were lower than the 10-year average and tracked similar to the forecast. Due to the low returns of hatchery steelhead to the Snake, Salmon, and Little Salmon rivers, bag limit reductions were implemented for the fall 2020 fisheries to ensure broodstock needs were met at hatcheries.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy issues:

Idaho Statute 36-104(b)2 gives the Commission the authority to set fishing seasons. Rules governing fish are provided in IDAPA 13.01.11

Public Involvement Process:

Public input has been received as part of the three-year season setting process that established the 2019-2021 steelhead seasons and rules.

Staff Recommendation:

Approve staff recommendation.

Justification:

Steelhead mitigation hatcheries were built to mitigate or compensate for fishing opportunity lost as a result of hydropower development. The proposed seasons would provide anglers the opportunity to harvest steelhead returning to the hatcheries.