

**Meeting Date:** January 27, 2022

**Agenda Item No.** 5F

**Agenda Item:** Draft Bighorn Sheep Management Plan **Bureau Chief Approval:** JR  
(ACTION)

**Prepared by:** Hollie Miyasaki, Wildlife Staff Biologist

**Background:**

Staff will present an overview of the Draft Bighorn Sheep Management Plan and seek Commission approval to release the draft for public comment.

The intent of this revision to the 2010 Bighorn Sheep Management Plan is to use current information to provide guidance for the Department and their partners to implement management actions that will aid in protection and management of bighorn sheep populations in Idaho and guide harvest season recommendations. This plan will function as the action plan for bighorn sheep management in Idaho. Major issues that affect bighorn sheep are identified and the plan will set overall direction for bighorn sheep management during the next 6 years (2022-2027). This plan will guide the Department in annual work plan development and program prioritization, and provide guidance on development of regulatory recommendations.

Staff will provide an overview of the draft plan at the meeting.

**Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:**

The Idaho Fish and Game Commission administers state wildlife policy through supervision and management of the Department (Idaho Code 36-104). Species management plans are the guiding documents to manage wildlife and are a direct reflection of the Department Strategic Plan. The Bighorn Sheep Management Plan will function as the action plan for bighorn sheep management in Idaho.

**Public Involvement Process:**

After the draft Bighorn Sheep Management Plan is approved for release, the Department will seek further input on the draft from the public, interested groups, and affected agencies. Public input will be sought during February 2022 and a final plan will be developed with consideration of that input.

**Justification:**

This agenda item is for Commission information on the current status of the update of the Bighorn Sheep Management Plan. The Commission sets policy and provides direction, considers input from the public, and has the authority to adopt, amend, or reject Department-recommended plans.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Staff seeks Commission concurrence to release the Draft Bighorn Sheep Management Plan to the public, agency partners, and interested organizations for further comments. Staff will revise the draft based on input received with intent to complete a final plan to present to the Commission for approval and adoption in March 2022.

Suggested Motion: That the Commission approve the draft bighorn sheep management plan for release to the public for review and input.