

Meeting Date: July 13-14, 2021

Agenda Item No. 5L3

Agenda Item: Region 6 – Deep Creek-Rack Brown acquisition

Approved by: TB

Prepared by: Bill Bosworth and Steve Elam

Background:

This 1,160-acre property is located approximately 20 miles east of Idaho Falls, ID. The property abuts the Tex Creek WMA.

The property contains important wildlife habitat in the Tex Creek landscape. Habitat is important for mule deer, moose, and upland bird populations. Mule deer from portions of 6 GMUs use the area as terminal winter range, and the property also provides transitional summer habitat and some fawning habitat. Columbian sharp-tailed grouse use of the property includes a recently documented lek. Intermittent and perennial reaches of Deep Creek run through the property and support high-quality riparian habitat within the Meadow Creek drainage.

Acquisition improves landscape contiguity within the WMA complex. The property connects an isolated parcel of the WMA with other public lands to create a large contiguous block of public land, which will enhance habitat management and support a high-quality hunting experience.

The acquisition cost is \$1,770,000 (appraised value), which will be provided by Bonneville Power Administration mitigation funds under the Southern Idaho Wildlife Mitigation Memorandum of Agreement.

Annual maintenance costs are estimated to be \$48,720 annually.

Fee in lieu of taxes (FILT) payments are estimated to be \$1,135 per year.

This property was previously presented to the Commission during Executive Session in July 2020.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy issues:

Land acquisition in accordance with Commission land acquisition policy.

Public Involvement Process:

Bonneville County commissioners have been notified.

Staff Recommendation:

The Lands Committee recommends acquiring the 1,160-acre parcel.

Suggested Motion: Approve acquiring the 1,160-acre Rack Brown property.