

**Meeting Date:** March 20, 2020

**Agenda Item No. 13**

**Agenda Item:** Update on Hunter congestion/  
hunter survey

**Bureau Chief Approval:** TB

**Prepared by:** Dr. Kenneth E. Wallen, University of Idaho

**Background:**

To continue the process of addressing hunter congestion, the Department began a statewide, regionally stratified elk, mule deer, and white-tailed deer hunter survey on March 16, 2020 with the objective of assessing resident hunters' hunting experiences and perceptions of crowding, both overall and specific to 2019, to further address congestion issues.

Based on stakeholder assessments in 2007, 2014, and 2017-18, Idaho elk, mule deer, and white-tailed deer hunters have concerns about crowding. The extent to which these concerns are subjective and value-laden versus objective and density-dependent is unknown. This project will assess perceptions of crowding among 2019 Idaho resident elk, regular deer, and white-tailed deer tag purchasers. To provide data on elk, mule deer, and white-tailed deer hunters, three separate species-specific questionnaires were developed to investigate perceptions of crowding, quality, and satisfaction. The three questionnaires will be administered and distributed on a regional basis to provide both statewide and region-specific information. That is, each region will be provided standalone information on their elk, mule deer, and white-tailed hunters.

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

N/A

**Public Involvement Process:**

IDFG staff and the University of Idaho Human Dimensions staff will engage sportsmen to assess their perspectives on crowding and potential solutions in a phased approach.

- Pre-survey interviews with target population
- Targeted pre-test of draft survey
- Statewide pilot study of finalized elk, mule deer, and white-tailed deer hunter
- Regionally stratified elk, mule deer, and white-tailed deer hunter

**Justification:**

This agenda item is for Commission information on the status of the hunter congestion project being conducted in collaboration with the University of Idaho. Information from this agenda item will aid Commissioners as they respond to requests, recommendations, or other input from the public related to hunter congestion.

**Staff Recommendation:**

N/A. This agenda item is for Commission information.

**Action Requested:**

N/A.