

Meeting Date: March 19-20, 2020

Agenda Item No. 5C

Agenda Item: Region 6 – Market Lake Acquisition

Approved by: TB

Prepared by: Don Kemner and Steve Elam

Background:

This 649-acre property is located in Jefferson County, 2 miles Northwest of Roberts, Idaho, and is adjacent to Market Lake WMA.

This acquisition will improve our ability to use water levels on Market Lake WMA to manage habitat for waterfowl and water birds. The property comes with 30 shares of the Butte/Market Lake Canal. In Region 6, ready access to waterfowl hunting is limited primarily to WMA's and this property, under the right vegetation and water management, will add significantly to publicly accessible waterfowl hunting. The addition of these acres and changes in management will also promote upland game such as pheasant and gray partridge. To hunt the majority of Market Lake WMA, boats and/or dogs are necessary with the topography of the marsh cells. Hunters will be able to access this entire property with just waders. Significant wildlife and hunter benefits are expected after implementing restoration and management. Ducks, shore and wading birds, upland birds and songbirds will all benefit.

A survey conducted in 2012 on Market Lake WMA found over 16,000 visitors and 78% of visitors are non-consumptive users. Wildlife viewing was the number one activity on the WMA and this could be expected to spillover to this property.

The property is currently in pasture and farm ground and has no building or improvements.

This property was previously presented to the Commission during Executive Session in May 2019.

The acquisition cost is \$1,250,000 (appraised value) and is being funded by North American Wetland Conservation Act Grant (NAWCA) \$500,000 and Bonneville Power Administration mitigation funds \$750,000.

FILT is estimated at \$1,900 per year and operating and maintenance costs are estimated to be \$27,250/year.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy issues:

Land acquisition in accordance with Commission land acquisition policy.

Public Involvement Process:

Jefferson County commissioners have been notified.

Staff Recommendation:

The Lands Committee recommends acquiring the 649-acre property.

Suggested Motion: Commission adopts staff recommendation and approves acquisition of the 649-acre Market Lake property.