

Meeting Date: March 20, 2020

Agenda Item No. 5E

Agenda Item: Adopt Moose Management Plan
(ACTION)

Bureau Chief Approval: TB

Prepared by: Josh Rydalch, Regional Wildlife Biologist, and Hollie Miyasaki, Wildlife Staff Biologist

Background:

Staff presented an overview of the status and content of Moose Management Plan revision at the Commission's November meeting and updated the Commission on the draft again at the January 2020 meeting.

The intent of a revision to the Moose Management Plan is to provide guidance for the Department and their partners to implement management actions that will aid in protection and management of moose populations in Idaho and guide harvest season recommendations. This plan will function as the action plan for moose management in Idaho. Major issues that could affect moose are identified, as well as overall direction for moose management during the next 6 years (2020-2025). This plan will guide the Department in annual work plan development and program prioritization, and will provide guidance on development of regulatory recommendations.

Staff will provide a review of public comments on the draft plan and improvements made in preparing the final draft in response in the input received.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:

The Idaho Fish and Game Commission administers state wildlife policy through 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 Moose Management Plan will function as the action plan for moose management in Idaho.

Public Involvement Process:

The Department sought input on the draft Moose Management Plan from the public, interested groups, tribes, and other state and federal agencies. The draft Moose Management Plan was posted on the Department's website on December 12, 2019 and the Department accepted comments on the website through January 12, 2020 (31 days). The planning team reviewed comments and will provide the Commission a more in-depth summary of public input and how this input was used to revise the draft to create the proposed final plan.

Public input summary:

- 179 unique submissions with 142 people providing additional written comments.
- 92% of the respondents identified themselves as Idaho residents.
- When asked to indicate their level of support for the plan:
 - 41% (n=74) of respondents generally supported the plan
 - 35% (n=62) of respondents supported the plan with some concerns
 - 9% (n=16) of respondents were neutral
 - 15% (n=27) of respondents did not support the plan

Justification:

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 recommends the Commission adopt the Idaho Moose Management Plan (2020-2025) as presented.

Suggested Motion: That Commission adopt the Idaho Moose Management Plan (2020-2025).