

**Idaho Fish and Game Commission
Special Meeting – February 13, 2025
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Legislative Conference Call
Boise, Idaho**

A meeting of the Idaho Fish and Game Commission was held by telephone conference, attended by Commissioners Dave Bobbitt, Don Ebert, Tim Murphy, Mike Roach, Jordan Cheirrett, Brody Harshbarger, and Ron Davies.

IDFG staff present: Director Jim Fredericks, Deputy Director Amber Worthington, Deputy Director, Jon Rachael, Ellary TuckerWilliams, Kathleen Trever, Deputy Attorney General, Jon Oswald, Adam Park, Greg Wooten, Frank Edelman, Shane Roberts, Rick Ward, Tricia Hebbon, Sal Palazzolo, Tara Reichert, and Elizabeth Page.

IDFG staff participating via phone: Carson Watkins, JJ Teare, Josh Royce, Craig White, Anna Chacon, Matt Pieron, Ryan Hilton, and Veronica Gutierrez.

Members of the public in attendance: Virgil Moore, and Garrett Visser, Idaho Wildlife Federation.

Chairman Davies called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. MST.

LEGISLATION

Legislative Update (Commissioner Confirmations, IDFG Presentations, Bills, budget, Rulemaking, etc.)

Ellary Tucker Williams provided updates on rulemaking, noting that the Chapter 7 review is scheduled for February 24, 2025, in Senate Resources after being held at the last hearing, with expectations for it to move forward. Previously, the Senate Resources Committee placed a hold on Chapter 7 due to concerns about federal language regarding the authorization of activities affecting federally protected species.

Commissioner Mike Roach's confirmation remains on the Senate's calendar for a final floor vote.

New Bill Analysis for Discussion/Update on Pending Legislation / Action for Policy Position

Ellary Tucker Williams provided the following updates on legislation.

HB 192 would significantly alter Idaho's outfitter tag allocation system. Currently, this system is complex, with the Commission setting overall limits (currently approaching 25% of non-resident tags for elk) and the Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board distributing them. For recently limited deer and elk units, a "base allocation" model with biennial recalculation and a 50% growth allowance exists. The outfitting industry wants this model applied to capped elk zones, where proportional allocation among residents, DIY non-residents, and outfitters is fixed. A recent advisory group recommended the Commission determine recalculation frequency and outfitter percentage limits for these zones, with additional tags coming from the non-resident

share. HB 192 would mandate 25% of non-resident tags be allocated to outfitters in all capped/limited/controlled hunts, require biennial recalculation with a 50% growth allowance, and remove Commission rulemaking authority, potentially harming DIY non-resident opportunities and causing revenue loss from unsold tags.

25-13 Commissioner Ebert made a motion that the Commission does not support and testify on HB 192. Commissioner Bobbitt seconded the motion. Motion carries.

HB 195 would introduce new requirements for wildlife relocation and transplant projects in Idaho. Currently, Idaho Fish and Game (IDFG) manages wildlife conflicts under its “Idaho Wildlife Public Safety” policy, considering factors like animal condition, disease, and public safety. Relocations are mostly reactionary, addressing immediate conflicts (e.g., bears in backyards). HB 195 would require IDFG to notify county commissioners and affected landowners/permittees of any transplant or relocation project. Written objections could trigger a county commission hearing with the power to approve, modify, or reject the project. IDFG is concerned HB 195 would hinder ESA recovery, impact fish stocking and game bird programs, and strain resources due to a lack of holding facilities for animals awaiting decisions. The bill could force more animals to be dispatched, limit stocking efforts, and negatively impact state management of delisted species, while also increasing staff time and resources.

25-14 Commissioner Cheirrett made a motion that the Commission does not support and testify on HB 195. Commissioner Ebert seconded the motion. Motion carries.

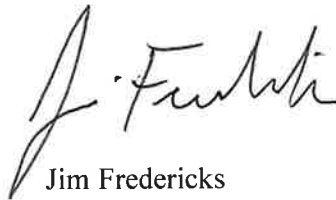
HB 196 would impose a 5-year moratorium on mule deer doe hunting in 26 specific units, impacting the Fish and Game Commission's authority to set seasons and bag limits based on scientific data. IDFG analysis shows that doe hunting in these units is justified due to healthy populations, depredation issues, limited winter range, buck management goals, or minimal biological impact. The bill includes a CWD-related exception. IDFG argues H196 would hinder adaptive management, likely increase buck harvest pressure, and result in revenue loss from unsold doe tags and potentially increased depredation claims. The bill has been introduced and referred to the House Resources and Conservation committee.

25-15 Commissioner Bobbitt made a motion that the Commission does not support and testify on HB 196. Commissioner Ebert seconded the motion. Motion carries

Adjourn



Ron Davies
Chairman



Jim Fredericks
Secretary