

**Idaho Fish and Game Commission  
Idaho Department of Fish and Game  
Headquarters  
March 25-26, 2025  
Boise, Idaho**

**March 25**

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**Public Meeting**

Chairman Ron Davies called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. MST and reviewed the rules of conduct for the hearing and reported that all public comments would be reviewed by the Commission at the Wednesday business meeting. Commissioners Dave Bobbitt, Don Ebert, Tim Murphy, Mike Roach, Jordan Cheirrett, Brody Harshbarger, and Ron Davies were present.

The following individuals provided in person testimony: Bill London, Brayden Landon, Brian Shannahan, Burk Mantel, Carston Borg, Check Gee, Colton Hayes, George Quisten, Hunter Haper, Jamie Newman, Jayden Borg, Jeff Abrams, Jennifer Jesse, Jesse Hunt, John Hall, Justin Webb, Karen Klayer, Krista Lyons, Luke Kidd, Matt Borg, Meghan Smith, Nick F., Oakley Bristol, Rachael Kidd, Rob Thornberry, Roseann Noble, Rusty Kramer, Steve Nadeau, Susanne Stone, and Trenton Barnes.

**March 26**

**MISCELLANEOUS**

Chairman Davies called the meeting to order at 8:00 am MST. Commissioners Bobbitt, Ebert, Murphy, Roach, Cheirrett, Harshbarger, and Davies was present.

**Review of Public Comment**

Director Fredericks provided a summary of the public comments. Approximately 60-70 members of the public attended, with 30 individuals providing oral testimony. Representatives from multiple organizations, including the Idaho Houndsman Association (IHA), Eastern Idaho Houndsman Association (EIHA), Idaho Trappers Association (ITA), Foundation for Wildlife Management (F4WM), Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP), Idaho Wildlife Services Foundation (IWSF), Idaho Wildlife Federation (IWF), Idaho Wildlife Conservation Network (IWCN), and Living with Wolves (LWW), participated in the discussion.

- A significant majority of commenters opposed the proposal for a year-round mountain lion season, citing concerns that it is not science-based and could lead to overharvesting.
- Many expressed concerns about the potential for increased female mountain lion harvests, including those with kittens.

- Some opposed the proposal on the basis that it could provide anti-hunting groups with ammunition for advocacy against hunting practices.
- Several commenters argued that mountain lion populations should not be managed with broad statewide regulations and instead require regional approaches.
- One commenter supported a year-round season in Units 41 and 42 specifically to reduce predation on bighorn sheep.
- Some requested changes to Motorized Hunting Rule (MHR) regulations to provide better access for mountain lion hunters.
- Multiple commenters expressed concerns that current Access Yes agreements do not allow for effective mountain lion harvest.
- Twelve commenters opposed proposed changes to bear seasons in Units 22, 31, 32, and 32A.
- Commenters in Unit 32A requested spring bear hunting opportunities, emphasizing that if harvest is not allowed in spring with hounds, then at minimum, a pursuit season should be permitted.
- Some commenters suggested that general bear hunts in Units 32 and 32A should be restricted to private property only.
- Several requested that if Unit 32 moves to a general hunt structure, the use of dogs and bait should be allowed from August 30 – October 31, rather than the proposed October 1 – 9 window.
- Two commenters supported expanding wolf trapping opportunities on public land in Units 48 and 49 and allowing expanded methods of take.
- Four commenters opposed wolf trapping in these units, expressing concerns about tourism impacts and advocating for non-lethal control methods.
- Two commenters noted that wolves play a role in controlling the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD).
- One commenter opposed over-the-counter elk hunts in certain units.
- Another expressed opposition to proposed changes in Unit 36B.
- A commenter provided historical context on white-tail deer season in the Clearwater Region (Region 2), recommending the elimination of the white-tail tag to alleviate pressure on mule deer populations.
- Two commenters praised the Department's efforts in facilitating the Hunting and Trapping (HAT) Working Group process.
- One commenter encouraged the Commission to consider topics where consensus was not reached.
- Another emphasized the need to stay informed about technological advancements in hunting and trapping.
- One commenter appreciated the use of working groups and recommended looking at policies from other states facing similar wildlife management challenges.
- Another noted that Idahoans interact with wildlife in diverse ways and stressed the importance of increasing conservation funding beyond game species.
- A commenter expressed concerns about legislative interference in wildlife management and highlighted the history of the 1938 initiative that established the Fish and Game Commission.
- The Blaine County Commission submitted a letter supporting the recommendation to maintain current wolf trapping seasons in Units 48 and 49.

- Two letters expressed concerns over predator management, opposing wolf trapping, mountain lion hunting, expanded methods of take, and grizzly bear delisting.
- Two archery hunters submitted comments stating they had not experienced conflicts with hound hunters in Weiser, Idaho bear units during September.
- Three emails from one individual contained links to online resources on CWD but did not include direct comments.
- One email supported the year-round mountain lion season, opposed increasing Muzzleloader controlled hunt tags in Unit 36A, and recommended limiting hunting technology only if clear data supported such restrictions.

### **Consent Calendar**

Minutes - January 28-29, 2025, February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025.  
Financial Report

**25-20** Chairman Davies asked if there were any objections to adoption of the Consent Calendar (Minutes & Financial Report). Commissioner Bobbitt made a motion to amend February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Meeting Minutes to reflect that Commissioner Roach was in attendance, rather than former Commissioner Cameron. Commissioner Harshbarger seconded the motion. Motion carries.

### **SEASON SETTING AND RULES**

#### **2025-2026 Big Game Season Setting**

Rick Ward, State Wildlife Manager, presented (Appendix 58, Exhibit 18).

**25-21** Commissioner Cheirrett moved that the Commission adopt staff recommendations for big game hunting seasons, tag numbers, and hunt boundaries for the 2025 and 2026 hunting seasons. Commissioner Bobbitt seconded the motion. Motion carries.

**25-22** Commissioner Murphy moves that the Commission revise the black bear season to remove the prohibition on dogs in Unit 32 for September 15 - September 30. Commissioner Ebert seconded the motion. Motion carries.

**25-23** Commissioner Harshbarger moves that the Commission revise the expansion of year-long mountain lion season to units 41 and 42 only rather than statewide. Commissioner Roach seconded the motion. Motion fails.

**25-23A** Commissioner Bobbitt proposed an amendment to the failed motion, to include all units in the Panhandle Region, along with units 41 and 42. This amendment was seconded by Commissioner Harshbarger. Motion fails.

**25-23S** Commissioner Cheirrett proposed a substitute motion, to include all units in the Southeast Region, Panhandle Region, and in units 41 and 42. This substitute motion was not seconded. Nor was it voted on.

**25-24** Commissioner Ebert moved that the Commission revise the 2025 and 2026 elk seasons by adopting all the Dworshak Elk Working Group proposals as presented. Commissioner Harshbarger seconded the motion. Motion carries.

**25-25** Commissioner Cheirrett moved that the Commission revise the 2025 and 2026 deer seasons by adopting the Southeast Idaho Mule Deer Working Group proposals with the following exceptions: No changes to the GMU 76 general deer season; alter the new controlled, muzzleloader-only mule deer hunt in GMU 70 to 50 tags; and alter the any-weapon controlled mule deer hunt in GMU 70 from 170 tags to 145 tags. Commissioner Harshbarger seconded the motion. Motion carries.

**25-27** Commissioner X moved that the Commission adopt staff recommendations for the Landowner Appreciation Program seasons and tag numbers for 2025 and 2026 that are reflective of the 2025 and 2026 regular controlled hunt timing, boundaries, and tag levels. Commissioner X seconded the motion. Motion carries.

**25-28** Commissioner Ebert moved that the Commission direct staff to adjust 2025 and 2026 Landowner Appreciation Program tag numbers proportionate to any change in their respective controlled hunts. Commissioner Bobbitt seconded the motion. Motion carries.

**Refund Order for NR General Deer Tags for Any-Weapon Hunts Converted to Muzzleloader/Archery**

Rick Ward, State Wildlife Manager, presented (Appendix 58, Exhibit 19).

**25-26** Commissioner Cheirrett moved that the Commission adopt a refund order, which allows 2025 nonresident general deer tag holders in GMU 73A to be eligible for a 100% refund of the tag purchase price if the request is received or postmarked on or before April 30, 2025. Commissioner Ebert seconded the motion. Motion carries.

**Season Setting: Spring Chinook Salmon Fisheries**

John Cassinelli, Anadromous Fisheries Manager, presented (Appendix 58, Exhibit 20).

**25-29** Commissioner Ebert moved that the Commission adopt the 2025 Spring Chinook Salmon seasons as proposed. Commissioner Cheirrett seconded the motion. Motion carries.

**HAT Working Group Recommendations**

Ellary TuckerWilliams, Legislative and Community Engagement Coordinator, presented (Appendix 58, Exhibit 21).

**25-30** Commissioner Bobbitt moved that the Commission direct the Department to incorporate the consensus recommendations of the Hunting and Advanced Technology (HAT) Working

Group in developing negotiated rule making proposals, public outreach, and policy recommendations.

- Principles for Evaluating Technology Advancements in the Future
- Drones
- Smart Optics
- Muzzleloader Technology
- Short Range Weapons
- Education
- Transportation
- Artificial Intelligence
- Modern Archery Optics

Commissioner Murphy seconded the motion. Motion carries.

**25-31** Commissioner Bobbitt moved that the Commission direct the Department to adopt the three additional motions presented for Night Vision, Thermal Imaging Technology, and Transmitting Trail Cameras.

1. Night Vision

“It be unlawful to use night vision technology, mounted as well as handheld equipment, for scouting, hunting, or retrieving big game ungulates from July 1 through December 31 or dates as deemed most appropriate by the Commission”

2. Thermal Imaging Technology

“It be unlawful to use thermal imaging technology for scouting, hunting, and retrieving big game ungulates from July 1 through December 31 or dates as determined most appropriate by the Commission.”

3. Transmitting Trail Cameras

“For the purposes of hunting and scouting for big game ungulates, it be unlawful to use transmitting trail cameras from July 1 through December 31 or dates as determined most appropriate by the Commission, on public or public access property.

Commissioner Cheirrett seconded the motion. Motion carries.

## LEGISLATION

### Legislative Update

Ellary TuckerWilliams, Legislative and Community Engagement Coordinator, presented a legislative update (Appendix 58, Exhibit 22).

### Rulemaking and Budget Update

Amber Worthington, Deputy Director, presented (Appendix 58, Exhibit 23)

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Angus Creek Property Acquisition

Sal Palazzolo, State Habitat Manager, presented (Appendix 58, Exhibit 24).

**25-32** Commissioner Cheirrett moved that the Commission accept the donation of the 167-acre Angus Creek property. Commissioner Bobbitt seconded the motion. Motion carries.

### Mores Creek Property Exchange

Sal Palazzolo, State Habitat Manager, presented (Appendix 58, Exhibit 25).

**25-33** Commissioner Murphy moved that the Commission complete the land exchange, as presented by staff, to acquire the 109-acre Mores Creek Property. Commissioner Bobbitt seconded the motion. Motion carries.

## SEASON SETTING AND RULES

### Season Setting – Peregrine Falcon Take

Jeff Knetter, Upland and Migratory Game Bird Program Coordinator, presented (Appendix 58, Exhibit 26).

After reviewing public comments and input from the falconry community, a review of permit holder success, and discussion among staff, the Department provided a modified recommendation to allow regulated take seasons for 2025-2027 for wild-caught peregrine falcons to include four Peregrine Capture permits per year. Two permits would be statewide permits (a nestling or recently-fledged juvenile peregrine) and two permits would be limited to nestling take only in Custer and Lemhi counties or a recently fledged juvenile peregrine, statewide.

**25-34** Commissioner Ebert moved that the Commission adopt staff recommendations for the 2025-2027 seasons for take of peregrine falcons from the wild for falconry purposes. Commissioner Cheirrett seconded the motion. Motion carries.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### State Hunter Education Instructor of the Year

TanaRae Alberti, Volunteer Services Coordinator, presented (Appendix 58, Exhibit 27).

### Non-Resident Tag Draw Framework

Tara Reichert, Automated System Manager, presented (Appendix 58, Exhibit 28).

**25-35** Commissioner Bobbitt moved to direct the Department to develop rule making proposals that establish a draw framework to issue nonresident general season deer and elk tags, to be implemented for the 2026 license year. Commissioner Roach seconded the motion. Motion carries.

**Adult Salmon and Steelhead Sampling at Lower Granite Dam, How and Why**

John Cassinelli, Anadromous Fisheries Manager, presented (Appendix 58, Exhibit 29).

**Spearfishing Seasons and Rules Update**

Lance Hebdon, Chief, Fisheries, presented (Appendix 58, Exhibit 30).

**Migratory Game Bird Seasons Preview**

Jeff Knetter, Upland and Migratory Game Bird Program Coordinator, presented (Appendix 58, Exhibit 31).

**Bruneau-Owyhee Sage-Grouse Habitat (BOSH) Project Overview**

Connor White, Pheasant Forever, BOSH Coordinator, presented (Appendix 58, Exhibit 32).

**REPORTS**

**Director's Report**

Director Fredericks highlighted items from each Bureau in the Director's Report.

**Commissioner Reports**

Commissioner reports stand as written (Appendix 58, Exhibit 33).

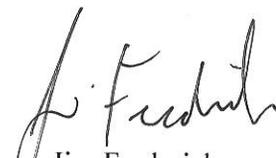
**MISCELLANEOUS**

**Planning for Next Meeting**

The next meeting is April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. virtually. The next in-person meeting is May 21–22, 2025, in Idaho Falls, Idaho.

**Adjourn 3:15 p.m. MST**

  
Dave Bobbitt  
Chairman

  
Jim Fredericks  
Secretary