

**Idaho Fish and Game Commission
Special Meeting – April 9, 2026
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, and Jordan Cheirrett.

IDFG staff present: Director Jim Fredericks, Deputy Director Amber Worthington, Deputy Director, Jon Rachael, Ellary TuckerWilliams, Elizabeth Page, Kathleen Trever, Deputy Attorney General, Shane Roberts, Tricia Hebdon, Rick Ward, Tara Reichert, and Justin Williams.

IDFG staff participating via phone: Josh Royse, Craig White, Dan Garren, Lori Thomson, Clay Hickey, Veronica Gutierrez, Taylor Ruhle, James Brower, and Jeff Knetter.

Members of the public in attendance: Keith Haven, Nez Perce County Commissioner

Chairman Bobbitt called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. MDT.

MISCELLANEOUS

Upper Snake Region Commissioner Absence

Commissioner Bobbitt explained the absence of Region 6 Commissioner Brody Harshbarger. Commissioner Bobbitt explained a call from a private citizen led to an investigation followed by the recent filing of misdemeanor charges by the Fremont County Prosecutor against Brody Harshbarger for alleged hunting and related trespass violations in December 2025. Mr. Harshbarger has stepped back from his Commissioner duties while he responds to these charges.

The Commission has heard from constituents asking us to take action related to Mr. Harshbarger's role as Commissioner and asking about the personal hunting activities of Commissioners.

Legal counsel has given the Commission advice on this matter. To ensure the integrity of the legal proceedings in Fremont County, the Commission will not be commenting on the pending case and the specific allegations involving Mr. Harshbarger. Information about the investigation conducted by conservation officers was not shared with the Commission until after the Fremont County Prosecutor's office independently determined the charges. Fremont County is handling the prosecution and is the proper contact for inquiries about the case.

Idaho Fish and Game Commissioners are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Governor. It is the Governor's Office, and not the Commission, that decides matters concerning individual commissioners.

While the Commission won't be commenting on the specifics concerning Mr. Harshbarger's ongoing case, Commissioner Bobbitt made a few general comments because accountability is important to him as Chairman of the Commission.

Commissioner Bobbitt confirmed that Idaho Fish and Game laws, seasons, and rules are standards that apply to everyone. These requirements apply to Commissioners, as well as to department employees, when engaged in our personal hunting, angling, and trapping activities, just the same as they apply to the public in general.

The State constitutional right to hunt, fish, and trap relies on regulation and management of fish and wildlife populations, so they continue into the future. The Commission looks at a range of different factors to set seasons. The Commission has reasons for setting big game seasons for antlered versus antlerless, private or public land, requirements for tags, and so forth.

Commissioner Bobbitt explained that if we want people to take the requirements we adopt for hunting, fishing, and trapping seriously, Commissioners need to take them seriously when we engage in those activities. Commissioner Bobbitt confirmed that he takes these requirements seriously.

2026 Swan Controlled Hunt Tags

Staff presented a request for Commission approval of the 2026 swan controlled hunt tag allocation in advance of finalized federal migratory bird frameworks, which have been delayed due to changes in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service rulemaking process and staffing interruptions. To ensure the application period (May 1–June 5) proceeds as scheduled, the Department recommends approving 50 tags for controlled hunt number 9301 with a daily and season bag limit of one swan per tag, while deferring final season dates for approval at a later meeting once federal guidance is clarified. The proposal aligns with statutory authority under Idaho Code and IDAPA rules, and reflects public input gathered through comments and regional open houses, which highlighted interest in expanded hunt areas, later season timing, and general support for the program.

26-28 Commissioner Cheirrett made a motion that the Commission approve 50 controlled hunt swan tags for hunt number 9301, with a daily and season bag limit 1 swan per tag, for the 2026 season. Commissioner Ebert seconded the motion. Motion carries.

Winchester Dam Funding

Staff requested Commission authorization to apply for grant funding to support critical repairs to Winchester Dam, a high-hazard structure at Winchester Lake requiring rehabilitation to withstand 100-year flood conditions and address seepage issues. Due to its condition, water levels have been reduced by 40 inches, impacting recreation and the local community. Estimated repair costs range from \$2.8 million to \$3.6 million, excluding construction oversight. To offset expenses, the Department proposes pursuing funding through the Idaho Water Resources Board Aging Infrastructure Grant program and the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Commission approval is needed to proceed with grant applications, with spending authority to be addressed at a future meeting.

26-29 Commissioner Ebert made a motion that the Commission adopt the staff recommendation to apply for grant funding from the Idaho Water Resources Board Aging Infrastructure Grant program and the Land and Water Conservation Fund to fund the Winchester Dam repairs. Commissioner Murphy seconded the motion. Motion carries.

LEGISLATION

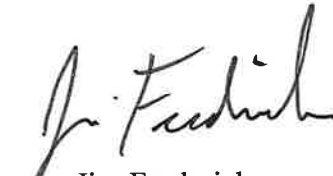
Legislative Update (Commissioner Confirmations, IDFG Presentations, Bills, budget, Rulemaking, etc.)

Ellary Tucker Williams provided a legislative update, noting that no new bill analyses were presented as the 2025 legislative session adjourned sine die on April 2nd, 2026. Staff reported that House Bill 939 has been signed by the Governor. No additional legislative, budget, or rulemaking updates were provided.

Adjourn 9:20 a.m. MST



Dave Bobbitt
Chairman



Jim Fredericks
Secretary