

Meeting Date: November 17, 2017

Agenda Item No. 5A

Agenda Item: Region 5 – Croney Conservation Easement (**Action**)

Bureau Chief Approval:

Prepared by: Gregg Servheen and Steve Elam

Background:

The Croney Conservation Easement includes two parcels of land. The 474-acre upland portion supports seasonal use by Sage- and Sharp-tailed Grouse as well as summer and winter range for Elk and Mule Deer. The second, an 80-acre parcel, is located on the valley floor and includes 0.6 miles of the Portneuf River. The easement will protect wildlife habitat, limit development, and will benefit the public by providing a permanent Public Fishing Access location. The Croney uplands stand out from surrounding lands because the sagebrush and bitterbrush stands are intact. The King Creek Grazing Association owns thousands of acres to the north and south of the Croney Property. Those acres are protected from development under an existing conservation easement. The Croney easement would complement the existing protected lands. The Croney conservation easement is currently in pasture. The Property is owned by Cohen Ellis Croney and Faye Ann Berdon.

This Conservation easement is a joint project with the Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust. IDFG will provide \$100,000 for the purchase price of the easement and \$37,000 of stewardship funds; the land trust will hold and monitor the easement.

This property was previously presented to the Commission during Executive Session in January 2017.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:

Land acquisition in accordance with Commission land acquisition policy.

Public Involvement Process:

Caribou County commissioners have been notified.

Staff Recommendation:

The Lands Committee recommends funding the 554-acre conservation easement.

Action Requested:

Approval of Commission to proceed with funding the conservation easement.

Suggested Motion: Commission adopt staff recommendation and approve funding of the conservation easement on the 554-acre Croney property for benefit of fishing access and habitat protection.