

Meeting Date: July 25, 2019

Agenda Item No. 12

Agenda Item: Pelican Management Update

Bureau Chief Approval: TAB

Prepared by: Rex Sallabanks and Jeff Dillon

Background:

The Commission approved the current Management Plan for the Conservation of American White Pelicans in Idaho (2016–2025) in May 2016. The Plan addresses the need to conserve pelicans in Idaho and reduce pelican predation impacts on important native fish and recreational fisheries. Pelican distribution and abundance in southern Idaho has increased since the 1990s, and predation on native cutthroat trout and hatchery trout has led to conflicts with fisheries management goals in some locations. The Plan includes actions to identify and address predation conflicts using a variety of approaches such as hazing and nesting colony management.

This Commission update will briefly review pelican population objectives in the Plan, management actions taken in 2019 to achieve those objectives, and proposed activities for 2020. Based on the most recent available data, the numerical response of Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout to pelican management in the Blackfoot Reservoir/River system also will be summarized.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy issues:

The Idaho Fish and Game Commission is charged with administering state wildlife policy through supervision and management of IDFG (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 Management Plan for the Conservation of American White Pelicans in Idaho (2016–2025) will function as the action plan for pelican management in Idaho.

Public Involvement Process:

The Department released the current Management Plan for the Conservation of American White Pelicans in Idaho for a 30-day public comment period prior to Commission approval in 2016. The comment period was advertised through statewide and regional press releases; avenues for input included the IDFG website, direct mail, and an open house at the Southeast Region office. A total of 85 comments were received, including 11 from other agencies and non-governmental organizations. Staff reviewed and compiled all input, and incorporated comments into the Plan where appropriate. During the three years since Plan approval in 2016, subsequent public involvement has not occurred.

Staff Recommendation:

Information only.

Justification:

Information only.

Action Requested:

None—Information only.