

**Meeting Date:** March 22, 2018

**Agenda Item No. 6F**

**Agenda Item:** Proposal to add additional wolf trapping opportunity (**Action**)

**Bureau Chief Approval:**

**Prepared by:** Jon Rachael, State Wildlife Game Manager

**Background:**

The Idaho Fish and Game Commission has unique authority to establish harvest seasons (including season dates, bag limits, size, sex, and harvestable species) via proclamation, rather than through IDAPA rulemaking. The Commission considers proposed changes for season setting and publishes proclamations biennially in March of odd-numbered years for big game species, including wolves.

The Commission set the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 seasons for wolves at their March 2017 meeting.

Although the Department focusses efforts on the season-setting process on a biennial cycle, the Commission has the authority to consider proposals and make adjustments annually if necessary due to fire, bad winter weather, a disease event, or other factors.

The Department and Commission are considering the following proposals submitted jointly by the Idaho Trapper's Association, Upper Snake River Trappers of Idaho, Intermountain Fur Harvesters, Foundation For Wildlife Management, East Idaho Houndsmen Association, Idaho Houndsmen Association, and Idaho Farm Bureau for potential modifications to the 2018-2019 trapping season:

- Open wolf trapping seasons (including snares) in Units 2 (open entire unit), 32A, 33, 66, and 69, preferably Oct 1 – Mar 31.
- Expand trapping season dates in Units 4, 4A, 39, 43, and 44 to open Oct 1 and run through Mar 31.

**Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:**

Idaho Code 36-104 grants authority to the Commission to promulgate rules for the taking of wildlife consistent with state policy.

**Public Involvement Process:**

Recommendations for the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 wolf trapping seasons that were set in March 2017 resulted from year-round public involvement, and population and harvest monitoring. Proposals being considered for regulation modifications for the 2018-2019 wolf trapping seasons were generated by the public and submitted jointly by the Idaho Trapper's Association, Upper Snake River Trappers of Idaho, Intermountain Fur Harvesters, Foundation For Wildlife Management, East Idaho Houndsmen Association, Idaho Houndsmen Association, and Idaho Farm Bureau for potential modifications to the 2018-2019 trapping season.

The proposals for changes to the 2018-2019 wolf trapping seasons were posted on the Department's website in early March to inform the public and provide an opportunity to provide input.

**Justification:**

Commission action is required to adopt changes to the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 wolf trapping seasons that were set by proclamation by the Commission in March 2017.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Staff will evaluate public input and present a summary to the Commission at the meeting along with any recommendations for adjustments to the 2018-2019 wolf trapping seasons.

**Action Requested:**

Approve adjustments to the 2018-2019 wolf trapping seasons.