

Meeting Date: November 14, 2018

Agenda Item No. 5G

Agenda Item: 2019 – 2024 Statewide Fisheries Management Plan.

Bureau Chief Approval:



Prepared by: Jeff Dillon, State Fishery Manager

Background:

The Fisheries Bureau has updated the six-year Fisheries Management Plan. The plan describes the programmatic structure and function of the fisheries bureau, defines management objectives and strategies for all fisheries programs, and serves as the guiding document for fisheries for the 2019-2024 period. The plan establishes policy direction for Department personnel and resources that maintains the focus on priorities identified by our angling constituency and other stakeholders.

Since the July 2018 Commission meeting, the draft Plan was opened for public comment in September-October. Staff will give an overview of the public comments related to the plan and the significant changes from the previous plan.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy issues:

Authority vested in the Fish and Game Commission under Title 36-104b and 36-901.

Public Involvement Process:

The Department solicited comments from the public through scoping meetings at locations across the state beginning in February 2018. Results of the 2017 Angler Opinion Survey were also used to inform management priorities and direction. The draft plan was made available for public and agency review for 30 days from early September to early October. Individual state and federal agencies and Tribes were specifically contacted to solicit comments. Input opportunities were advertised through press releases to local and statewide media outlets. For public scoping and review of the draft plan, regional staff hosted over 10 public meetings statewide. The draft plan was posted on the Department website, and we provided the opportunity for online comments. Additionally, we sent an email invitation to over 60,000 fishing license holders, which resulted in the vast majority of comments via the web survey. Comments were also received via email and traditional mail directly to Department staff. A summary of significant plan changes and associated public and agency comments is included in Attachment A.

Staff Recommendation:

Approve the 2019-2024 Statewide Fisheries Management plan as presented by staff.

Justification:

Long-term management strategies, vetted by the public, are necessary for effective conservation and management of fisheries resources for the citizens of Idaho.