Idaho Fish and Game Commission
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Idaho Falls, Idaho
July 22-23, 2020

July 22

MISCELLANEOUS

Commission Field Tour Upper Snake Region- Sand Creek WMA
Commissioners Meyers, Corkill, Cameron, Clezie, Attebury and Ebert participated on the field tour.

Public Hearing
Chairman Corkill called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Commissioners Meyers, Ebert, Cameron, Clezie and Attebury were present. Commissioner Murphy participated via-video conference. Chairman Corkill reviewed the rules of conduct for the hearing and reported that all public comments would be reviewed by the Commission at the Thursday meeting. Due to maintaining COVID19 safety, Department staff is not available after the meeting to answer questions.

Thirteen members of the public attended, 5 of which provided comments. The following individuals provided public comment: Garth Wilde, Matt Borg, Rusty Kramer, Rob Thornberry, and Jim Warner.

July 23

MISCELLANEOUS

Opening Comments
Chairman Corkill called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. with Commissioners Meyers, Ebert, Cameron, Clezie and Attebury present. Commissioner Murphy attended via teleconference.

Chairman Corkill introduced the new R2 Commissioner Don Ebert who gave a short bio.

Agenda Changes
Commissioner Corkill requested that a duck season setting discussion be added to the goose hunting agenda item. (Deputy Attorney General Kathleen Trever noted for the record that because this topic is relevant to the agenda item and will not expand its scope, no vote is needed to include it on the agenda.)
Reverse order of agenda items 9 and 10.

Review of Public Comment
Director Schriever and Commissioners discussed and reviewed the public comments.

- Grizzly Bear raincheck extension.
- Concerns regarding Eastern Idaho and the Weiser Bear Working Group.
- Thanks to the Commission for their consideration regarding proposals brought by the Idaho Trapping Association, as well as for their consideration for this year's Commission Challenge Grant.
- Support of Idaho Trapping Association proposals and appreciation regarding back country airstrip maintenance and access.
- Support for the recommendation to continue awarding the BHS Lottery Tag process to the Wild Sheep Foundation.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Consent Calendar items:
- Minutes: January 30, February 6, 13, 20, 27, March 5, 12, and 30, 2020.
- Financial Report

The consent calendar was adopted without objection.

FISCAL

Direction for Animal Damage Control Board
Presented by Martha Wackenhut, Assistant Chief, Wildlife.

Idaho statute annually appropriates $100,000 of Department funds to the State Animal Damage Control Board for control of predatory animals and birds. Idaho statute authorizes the Commission to direct how these funds are to be used.

Typically, $50,000 has been directed by the Commission to support Wildlife Services activities identified in the MOU between the Department and the Animal Damage Control Board for general control of predatory animals.

The additional $50,000 has been directed for specific wildlife management activities such as intensive coyote removal in conjunction with the Mule Deer Initiative, wolf control in elk management zones at or below management objectives, feral pig control in the Bruneau Valley, and raven control conducted in SW and SE Idaho.

Idaho code 36-112 provides that the State Controller shall annually, by August 1 of each year, transfer the sum of one hundred thousand dollars ($100,000) from the Fish and Game fund to the Animal Damage Control fund. The state Animal Damage Control Board in using these moneys must follow Fish and Game Commission direction on actions regarding predatory animals or birds forwarded by the Department by the same date.

Staff recommends directing the expenditure of $50,000 for general predatory wildlife control consistent with the Animal Damage Control Board MOU. Staff further recommends the remaining $50,000 be divided, with $25,000 going to control wolves, black bears and mountain lions and $25,000 going to assist in the implementation of the State American White Pelican Plan.

20-49 Commissioner Meyers moved and Commissioner Clezie seconded a motion that the Commission adopt the staff recommendation. Motion carries.

SEASON SETTING AND RULES

Release of 2021 Bighorn Sheep Auction and Lottery Tags
Presented by Jon Rachael, Southwest Regional Supervisor.

Idaho Code 36-408(5)(a) dictates that one special bighorn sheep tag shall be auctioned off by an incorporated nonprofit wildlife conservation organization selected by the Commission each year. The Commission is also authorized to issue one special bighorn sheep tag to be issued by lottery by the Department or a nonprofit wildlife conservation organization selected by the Commission [Idaho Code 36-408(5)(b)].

At Commission direction, the Bureau of Wildlife staff developed guidelines for selection of organizations competing for opportunity to offer wildlife auction and lottery tags. When there are multiple bidders, Wildlife Bureau staff review and score all applications for the auction and lottery tags to assist in selecting which conservation groups receive these special wildlife tags to market through lottery or auction. Only two organizations have applied to offer the bighorn sheep auction tag and bighorn sheep lottery tags in recent years. *Wild Sheep Foundation* has been selected to receive the auction tag, and the opportunity to market the lottery tag has been granted to *Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation.*

The auction tag sells for the highest price during odd-numbered years when the tag may be used in Hunt Area 11 in Hells Canyon. The auction tag sold for high values of $180,000 in 2005 and $175,000 in 2019. The winning bid for the tag was $105,000 in 2018 and $165,000 in 2020 when the tag could not be used in Hunt Area 11. Since 1988, the auction tag has generated $2,604,500 for bighorn sheep research and management.

The lottery tag has generated as much as $114,531 in 2018 and $86,246 in 2006 when the tag was valid in Hunt Area 11. During odd-numbered years when the tag is not valid in Hunt Area 11 lottery proceeds were $65,825 in 2017 and $109,593 in 2019. The lottery drawing is held on the last Wednesday in July each year and is scheduled for July 29, 2020. Since 1992, the sale of tickets for the lottery tag drawing has generated $1,455,913.

20-50 Commissioner Clezie moved and Commissioner Attebury seconded a motion that the Commission award the 2021 bighorn sheep auction tag to the Wild Sheep Foundation and the 2021 bighorn sheep lottery tag to the Idaho Wild Sheep Foundation. Motion carries.

SEASON SETTING AND RULES

Temporary/Proposed Rulemaking

Proposed Rulemaking 5.C.1-4, 13.01.04

Presented by Toby Boudreau, Chief of Wildlife.

Proposed Rulemaking 5.C.1, 13.01.04 – RULES GOVERNING LICENSING

1. Establish earlier date for LAP Tag applications (Department initiated proposal, based on recurring feedback).

   This rulemaking would move the application period for Landowner Appreciation Program (LAP) tags to earlier in the year to provide landowners with adequate notification of draw results for hunts beginning in August. Landowner applications for LAP controlled hunt tags are currently accepted from June 15 through July 15. Moving the application period to May 15 through June 15 provides additional processing time to ensure timely draw results.

2. Establish limits on Nonresident Disabled Veteran Tag numbers for deer and elk. The Department made this proposal to align with the Commission's directive to manage nonresident participation in deer and elk hunts.

   General season deer and elk tags available to Nonresident DAVs at a reduced price are not included under the statewide limits for the total number of nonresident general season deer and elk tags (14,000 regular and white-tailed deer tags, 1,500 white-tailed deer tags, and 12,815 elk tags). Nonresident DAV deer tags cost $22.00 (compared to $300.00 for a regular adult nonresident deer tag) and nonresident DAV elk tags cost $38.00 (compared to $415.00 for an adult nonresident elk tag).

   Since 2016, the number of nonresident DAV deer tags sold annually has increased by 60% (from 1,149 tags in 2016 to 1,839 tags in 2019) and the number of nonresident DAV elk tags sold annually has increased by 85% (from 910 tags in 2016 to 1,682 tags in 2019). It is reasonable to expect continued growth in sales of nonresident DAV tags if tags are not limited. In fact, as of June 1, 2020, the Department had already sold 1,353 nonresident DAV deer tags and 1,341 nonresident DAV elk tags. This represents a 62% increase in the sale of nonresident DAV deer tags and a 60% increase in the sale of nonresident DAV elk tags in 2020 compared to sales on the same date in 2019. Unless limited, the increasing popularity of nonresident DAV deer and elk tags may potentially impact the ability to manage nonresident hunter numbers to address hunter congestion.

20-51 Commissioner Attebury moved and Commissioner Cameron seconded a motion to accept staff recommendations (Appendix 53, Exhibit 49). Motion carries.

Proposed Rulemaking 5.C.2- 13.01.08 – Rules Governing the Taking of Big Game
Establish one-year wait period for successful antelope controlled hunt applicants (Department-initiated proposal), based on recurring constituent input and consistency with one-year wait period for antlered deer and elk; proposed language consolidated into single section for simplicity consistent with Executive Order 20-01.

20-52 Commissioner Cameron moved and Commissioner Clezie seconded a motion to accept staff recommendations (Appendix 53, Exhibit 49). Motion carries.

Proposed Rulemaking 5.C.3- 13.01.09 – Rules Governing the Taking of Game Birds

1. Establish consistent requirements for use of game bird tags authorized by Idaho Code 36-409(c) and establish mandatory check requirements for swan (prompted by legislation adopted to support federal approval of swan seasons, combined with Department-initiated changes to meet executive order requirements for simplification; game tags currently authorized for turkey, crane, swan, could encompass grouse or other species if game tags authorized in future)

2. Designate two special waterfowl hunting days for veterans and active military (prompted by 2019 federal legislation allowing states to make such designations)

3. Delay opening date for pheasant season for all nonresident license holders (citizen-petitioned change by residents of Franklin/Oneida Counties; would expand by rule the statutory (Idaho Code 36-407(e)) 5-day delayed opener for nonresident small game license holders)

4. Simplify turkey tags (Department-initiated proposed for simplification, consistent with Executive Order 2020-01)

20-53 Commissioner Attebury moved and Commissioner Meyers seconded a motion that the Commission adopt the staff recommendation (Appendix 53, Exhibit 49). Motion carries.

Proposed Rulemaking, 5.C.4- 13.01.16- Rules Governing the Trapping of Predatory and Unprotected Wildlife and the Taking of Furbearing Animals
Staff Recommended Proposed Rule language address the following rulemaking topics:

1. Establish additional restrictions on use of body-gripping traps (citizen petition by Idaho Trappers Association and others).

2. Simplify rules associated with use of bait for trapping furbearing, predatory and unprotected animals (citizen petition by Idaho Trappers Association and others, based on consistency with allowances for wolf trapping; proposed language acknowledges statutory restrictions related to use of game parts for trapping furbearing animals.

20-54 Commissioner Meyers moved and Commissioner Cameron seconded a motion that the Commission adopt the staff recommendation. (Appendix 53, Exhibit 49). Motion carries.

Temporary Rulemaking 5.C.5 & 6.- 13.01.04-Rules Governing Licensing
Presented by Toby Boudreau, Chief of Wildlife.

Proposed changes to Commission administrative rules have arisen through several avenues this year, with staff recommend proposed rulemaking as described for the preceding agenda item for proposed rulemaking.

The Department recommends certain of these proposed changes take effect sooner than 2021, which requires temporary rulemaking:

1. Establish limits for nonresident Disabled Veteran deer and elk tags (to align with nonresident tag sales for 2021, with sales beginning on December 1, 2020).
2. Establish tagging and harvest report requirements to support a fall 2020 swan season, needed for consistency with federal approval.
3. Designate two special waterfowl hunting days for veterans and active military (prompted by 2019 federal legislation allowing states to make such designations).

20-55 Commissioner Meyers moved and Commissioner Cameron seconded a motion that the Commission adopt the staff recommendation (Appendix 53, Exhibit 49). Motion carries.

Status of Fee Rulemaking 5.C.7.
Presented by Paul Kline, Deputy Director.

Adoption of fee rules requires approval by both legislative houses. Because the 2020 Legislature did not take action to approve pending omnibus fee rules adopted in 2019, the Governor's Office directed state agencies to proceed with temporary and proposed fee rulemaking to continue previously existing fee rules as appropriate. Staff recommends the Commission adopt Proposed Omnibus Fee Rules (previously reviewed as Temporary fee Rules and unchanged from that review).

20-56 Commissioner Murphy moved and Commissioner Clezie seconded a motion that the Commission adopt the staff recommendation. Motion carries.

LEGISLATION

Agency Sponsored Legislation
Presented by Paul Kline, Deputy Director

Staff briefed the Commission in May regarding their request to consider two ideas for legislation for the 2021 Legislative Session that would be specifically sponsored by the

Department. The Commission approved staff to submit both ideas for legislation through the Executive Agencies Legislation System (EALS); this action was completed prior to the July 10, 2020 filing deadline. After additional review, only one legislative idea is moving forward. Subsequent Governor's Office approval of language is required to move legislation ideas forward. Once approved, the proposal must then be drafted in bill format and submitted to EALS by August 14, 2020. The idea is as follows:

Legislative Idea:

Define sage-grouse tags in 36-409; define the cost of sage- grouse tags in 36-416; define that a sport permit is no longer required to hunt sage-grouse in 36-1401. The purpose of this legislation is to provide better opportunity to the public to hunt sage-grouse by changing the hunt structure from one where a sport permit is required to one where a game tag is required. A limited tag framework for hunting sage-grouse will take into account sage-grouse population information so the number of tags made available each hunt year can be set based on biological information. This is a more responsible way to manage harvest and will maximize the number of tags made available to the public. The proposed cost for sage-grouse tags will remain the same or similar to the current cost for sage-grouse sport permits. Sharp-tailed grouse hunting will remain permit-based and not change over to the tag-framework.

20-57 Commissioner Clezie moved and Commissioner Attebury seconded to provide policy approval to submit Legislative idea #1 through the Executive Agency Legislative System. Motion carries.

LANDS

Region 1-Lambros Acquisition
Presented by Don Kemner, Wildlife Habitat Manager.

This fee title acquisition is to protect a 36 acre property located on the North Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River, located in Shoshone County approximately three miles north of Interstate 90. Acquisition of the Lambros property will provide protection of an integral portion of the North Fork Coeur d'Alene River that provides cold water refuge for Westslope cutthroat trout. The property currently consist of a mixture of large canopy riparian vegetation (e.g., cottonwood, cedar and aspen) and riparian shrub-scrub (e.g., willow, dogwood, and alder) and grass fields. The purchase will also provide benefits to wildlife species that are dependent upon riparian forest and associated riparian shrub land. This property is adjacent to a 17-acre parcel where IDFG holds a conservation easement (Katie James property) to protect important fish habitat. The property is also bordered to the north by the US Forest Service and combined with the above James easement will offer additional fish habitat protection in a highly critical area.

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

Acquisition cost of $450,000 are provided by Avista mitigation for Post Falls dam. Annual maintenance costs are estimated $1,500. FILT is estimated at $373 per year.

20-58 Commissioner Attebury moved and Commissioner Clezie seconded to approve acquiring the 36 acre Lambros property. Motion carries.

SEASON SETTING AND RULES

Fall Chinook Salmon Fisheries

Presented by Jim Fredericks, Fisheries Chief.

This agenda item concerns the setting of a fishing season for fall Chinook Salmon on portions of the Clearwater and Salmon rivers in August, September and October and the Snake River in August, September, October and November of 2020. Sport fisheries for fall Chinook Salmon have been conducted each year since 2008. Also, beginning in 2013 and continuing since then, a short section of the Snake River immediately downstream of Hells Canyon Dam has remained open to fall Chinook Salmon fishing into November. Hatchery and natural origin Snake River fall Chinook Salmon are a component of the Upriver Bright group. Fall Chinook Salmon broodstock needed for Snake River hatchery programs are collected at or downstream of Lower Granite Dam so there are no broodstock management concerns associated with sport fisheries. Fall Chinook Salmon that return to the fishing area are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act and encounter rates on these listed fish are described in the Fishery Management and Evaluation Plan for the State of Idaho, Washington, and Oregon Anadromous Fish Species Sport Fishing Programs for Directed Adipose-Intact Fall Chinook Salmon Fisheries submitted July 2018. Specific boundaries will be described in a separate season proposal.

Salmon and steelhead mitigation hatcheries were built to mitigate or compensate for fishing opportunity lost as a result of hydropower development. The proposed seasons would provide anglers the opportunity to fish for returning adult hatchery Chinook salmon produced at Idaho mitigation hatcheries.

20-59 Commissioner Meyers moved and Commissioner Clezie seconded a motion that the Commission adopt the staff recommendation (Appendix 53, Exhibit 50). Motion carries.

Waterfowl Season Setting, Goose Zone Selection

Presented by Jeffrey Knetter, Upland Game and Migratory Game Bird Program Coordinator.

Zones and split seasons are special regulations designed to distribute hunting opportunities and harvest according to temporal, geographic, and demographic variability in waterfowl populations. There are established guidelines to provide a framework for zones and splits.

For geese:

- A zone is a geographic area or portion of a state, with a contiguous boundary, for which independent dates may be selected for the goose season.
- Zone and split options selected by a state may be changed annually.

Any state may continue the configuration used in the previous year. If changes are made, the zone and split-season configuration must conform to the following:

- No restriction on number of zones,
- Seasons may be split into 3 segments, and
- Three-segment seasons for Canada geese and white-fronted geese require Pacific Flyway Council and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service approval and a 3-year evaluation by each participating state.

The deadline for states to announce changes to goose zones occurs at the annual fall Pacific Flyway Study Committee meeting August 24-28, 2020.

Goose zone configurations would be in effect and apply to the Commission's season-setting action for the 2021-2022 waterfowl seasons (action scheduled spring 2021). Although goose zone configurations may be changed annually by notifying the Pacific Flyway, configurations would remain in place until changed.

20-60 Commissioner Meyers moved and Commissioner Clezie seconded that the Commission adopt staff recommendations (Appendix 53, Exhibit 51). for goose zone configurations to take effect for the 2021-22 hunting seasons.

LANDS

Commission Approval/Designation of Garden City Administrative site as Surplus
Michael Pearson, Chief, Bureau of Administration presented.

The Department's Garden City administrative site has been used as the Department's shipping center (printed materials), uniform warehouse, fabrication shop, fleet maintenance and hunter education classroom. The Garden City property was originally purchased in 1955 from two individuals, and the parcels combined. The total acreage is 1.69 acres, and was originally purchased with license funds.

Part of the planning for the brand new Region 3 regional office in Nampa (15950 N. Gate Blvd) included transfer of functions performed at the Garden City site. The 8-acre N. Gate site includes storage space, a lockable gated yard, and space for performing shipping, Fabrication shop, uniform warehousing, hunter education, and fleet maintenance functions. The Garden City location is no longer needed by the Department, as operations previously located there have been successfully relocated to the new Nampa Regional office for efficiency. Selling this location is aligned with the Department's goal of consolidating its Treasure Valley administrative facilities for more efficient use of sportsman's dollars.

20-61 Commissioner Murphy moved and Commissioner Attebury seconded that the Garden City Administrative Site be declared surplus, and be disposed of consistent with Idaho Code [67-5709A], with sale proceeds returned to the Department less any costs of sale.

SEASON SETTING AND RULES

Renew Discount Order for Super Hunt/Super Hunt Combo Application Fees
Presented by Michael Pearson, Chief, Bureau of Administration.

Many western state fish and wildlife agencies offer special big game auction and "lottery" tag (controlled hunt) programs to generate revenue for license-funded conservation programs. Idaho has a Special Controlled Hunt (referred to as "Super Hunt" or "Lottery Tags") (IDAPA 13.01.08.261), which offers forty (40) big game tags through a random draw process. These tags allow hunting in any open controlled or general hunt for the species. Commission rule designates income from Super Hunt application fees for use for the sportsman access program.

In July, 2015, the Commission approved a Discount Order that provided a consistent fee of $6.00 per each Super Hunt application and $20.00 per each Super Hunt Combo application that incorporated the vendor fee. This approach has demonstrated benefits for both revenue and customer simplicity, and the Commission has previously renewed the discount so it is effective through August 10, 2020.

Staff recommends that the Commission take action to extend the discount for Super Hunt application fees. If the Commission chooses not to renew the discount, the application fees default to the controlled hunt application fees in I.C. 36-416. The Super Hunt application fee discounted by Commission Order will expire with the second draw in 2020 (August 10).

For example, application fees without a discount order would be:

Super Hunt elk = $6.25 resident/$14.75 nonresident (including vendor fees) Super Hunt Moose = $16.75 resident/$41.75 nonresident (including vendor fees) Super Hunt Combo = $35.50 resident/$86.00 nonresident (including vendor fees)

20-62 Commissioner Clezie moved and Commissioner Cameron seconded to adopt the staff recommended discount order for a two-year period, effective from August 11, 2020 through August 10, 2022. Motion carries.

Rain Check Request
Presented by Paul Kline, Deputy Director.

The Commission considers requests for refunds or rain checks for once-in-a-lifetime (trophy) species, which include grizzly bear. The Commission has not delegated authority for making such determinations to the Director.

Mr. Wilde was drawn for the single grizzly bear controlled hunt authorized by the Commission in 2018 (Hunt 8601, Controlled Hunt Area 61-1, 9/1/2018 – 11/15/2018 season dates). This hunt was canceled as a result of a federal court order in litigation over the Endangered Species Act status of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem Grizzly Bear population.

Mr. Wilde requested a rain check for his grizzly bear controlled hunt tag from the Commission on October 2, 2018. On November 14, 2018 the Commission voted to approve Mr. Wilde's request for a period of up two years, should hunting seasons occur in 2019 or 2020. Consistent with state law (Idaho Code 67-1023) for the timing of settlement of claims against the state, the Commission determined it would issue Mr. Wilde a refund for his 2018 tag if no hunt were held in 2019 or 2020.

On March 5, 2020, Mr. Wilde asked the Commission to extend his rain check for an additional two-year period (2021 & 2022 hunting seasons).

Commission rules do not address refunds or rainchecks for this tag situation. Other known applications of rainchecks decisions allow participation in the hunting activity in the following calendar year (e.g., IDAPA 13.01.602 provides for rain checks for hunting the next calendar year). This situation involves a circumstance where there is no hunt opportunity in which to use the raincheck.

20-63 Commissioner Attebury moved and Commissioner Meyers seconded that the Commission rescind its prior decision in this matter, and instead approve Mr. Wilde's request to extend his rain check for his 2018 controlled hunt tag for a hunt to be determined at season setting for 2021-2022 in the event Idaho authorizes this hunt in calendar year 2021 or 2022. Motion carries.

FISCAL

Commission Community Challenge Grant Announcement
Presented by Paul Kline, Deputy Director

The Fish and Game Commission authorized a Commission Community Challenge Grant (Challenge Grant) Program funding at the regional level (7 @ $10,000 each) and statewide level ($30,000) to provide partnership opportunity to implement projects broadly supported by the local/statewide sportsman community and enhance fish and wildlife habitat, populations, or associated recreational opportunities.

Regional and statewide selection committee funding decisions:
Panhandle Region
Foundation for Wildlife Management: $10,000

Clearwater Region
The Game Bird Foundation – James Hill Property improvements: $5,080
The Game Bird Foundation – Carlson Property improvements: $3,700

Foundation for Wildlife Management - $1,220

Southwest Region
Foundation for Wildlife Management: $2,000
Idaho State Bowhunters: $8,000

Magic Valley Region
National Wild Turkey Federation: $5,000
Hurtig Shooting Center: $5,000

Southeast Region
National Wild Turkey Federation: $10,000

Upper Snake Region
Safari Club International: $10,000

Salmon Region
Back Country Hunters and Anglers: $10,000

Statewide
Henrys Fork Foundation: $20,000
Foundation for Wildlife Management $10,000

20-64 Commissioner Meyers moved and Commissioner Cameron seconded a motion to authorize the Department to announce the 2020 Commission Challenge Grant award recipients. Motion carries.

FY22 Budget Request Update
Prepared by: Michael Pearson, Chief, Bureau of Administration.

The Department has begun the planning process for preparation of the fiscal year 2022 budget request to be submitted to the Governor's Office by August 28. This presentation is the 2nd update to the Commission.

SEASON SETTING AND RULES

Sage-grouse Season Setting Process
Presented by Toby Boudreau, Chief of Wildlife

The Commission sets seasons for sage-grouse in August. This presentation reviews the sage-grouse season setting process which the Department has followed since 2008 and will provide an update on the current status of Idaho's sage-grouse populations.

REPORTS

Nonresident Deer & Elk Tag Outfitter
Presented by Jon Rachael, Southwest Regional Supervisor.

The number of general season nonresident deer and elk tags set aside for use by hunters using the services of a licensed Idaho outfitter is set by administrative rule:

- 1,985 deer tags (regular or white-tailed)
- 2,400 elk tags (A or B tags for all zones)

Outfitter set-aside quotas are a subset of the total nonresident deer and elk tag quotas (15,500 total deer tags and 12,815 elk tags), not an addition to the total nonresident deer and elk tag quotas. The statute and administrative rule relevant to the Outfitter Set-aside tags was amended during the 2019 legislative session. Additional modifications were made during the 2020 legislative to improve clarity.

Tags allocated to outfitters in capped elk zones are a subset of the outfitter set-aside quotas above. Outfitter set-aside tags not claimed by outfitted clients by July 15 revert back to the total statewide nonresident quotas for the Department to sell to as regular nonresident tags, except, set-aside tags allocated to outfitters in capped elk zones revert back to the statewide nonresident elk tag quota if unsold by July 31.

Update About Hunter Congestion/Hunter Surveys
Presented via teleconference by Dr. Kenneth E. Wallen, University of Idaho.

To continue the process of addressing hunter congestion, the Department began a statewide, regionally stratified elk, mule deer, and white-tailed deer hunter survey in March 2020 with the objective of assessing resident hunters' hunting experiences and perceptions of crowding, both overall and specific to 2019, to further address congestion issues.

Based on stakeholder assessments in 2007, 2014, and 2017-18, Idaho elk, mule deer, and white-tailed deer hunters have concerns about crowding. The extent to which these concerns are subjective and value-laden versus objective and density-dependent is unknown. This project is assessing perceptions of crowding among 2019 Idaho resident elk, regular deer, and white-tailed deer tag purchasers. To provide data on elk, mule deer, and white-tailed deer hunters, three separate species-specific questionnaires were developed and distributed on a regional basis to investigate perceptions of crowding, quality, and satisfaction on both statewide and regional levels.

On March 18 questionnaires were emailed to 13,386 individuals who purchased regular deer tags in 2019 and to 7,376 individuals who purchased white-tailed deer tags in 2019. On March 20, questionnaires were emailed to 16,400 individuals who purchased elk tags for the 2019 season. Responses were recorded on all three surveys through April 10. Survey response rates exceeded expectations and ranged 30% - 34%. Over 10,500 responses were received.

- Based on a standardized measure of crowding, general season elk, regular deer, and white-tailed deer tag holders perceived moderate crowding during the 2019 season.

- Perception of crowding among general elk and deer tag holders was comparable, whereas white-tailed deer tag holders perceived less crowding.

- Approximately 20% of general elk hunters, 23% of general deer hunters, and 37% of white-tailed deer hunters did not perceive crowding in 2019.

- Other measures of hunting experience expectations, hunting locale, and hunting practices are clear influences of Idaho hunters' perception of crowding.

Following additional analyses, a full report of the 2019-20 hunter crowding survey will be available in fall 2020. This winter a second phase survey will be implemented to understand what elements of elk and deer season structure hunters are willing to trade (accept an alternative) in exchange for improved management policies that reduce hunter congestion. A third phase of the project will begin in winter 2021, replicating the current survey to understand how IDFG management and rule changes influenced perceptions of crowding and hunter expectations.

Chronic Wasting Disease Update
Presented by Toby Boudreau, Chief of Wildlife.

In January of 2018, the Commission approved the Department's updated Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Strategy. This strategy revision included updates to new research and management of CWD, prevention, and surveillance for both pre- and potentially post-detection, rule change recommendations, potential management strategies for post-detection and communication strategies.

The response plan revision was written to be adaptive in nature and act as a toolbox for the IDFG and the Commission to implement enhanced, real-time surveillance and better plan for a positive animal detection in either a free-ranging or captive cervids. The adaptive nature of the plan gives IDFG the flexibility to react in the most appropriate manner based on the detection scenario. Over the past two years, a statewide team has been working to implement the plan's redesigned sampling strategy (able to detect a 1% prevalence with 95% confidence) and enhance CWD outreach and communications with sportsmen and other partners regarding CWD rule changes, CWD information, surveillance strategies, and overall agency response in the event Idaho has a positive CWD detection.

Depredation Program Overview & Update
Presented by Jon Rachael, Southwest Regional Supervisor.

The Department's depredation program began in 1984 to provide technical assistance and materials to landowners experience damage from big game. In 1989, in response to depredation losses compounded by multiple years of drought, an appropriation bill removed $500,000 from the Department's budget to compensate farmers and ranchers for

big game depredation losses to crops, fences, and equipment that occurred during 1988 and 1989. Also in 1989, the legislature established the Fish and Game Advisory Committee to make recommendations on the direction of Department's depredation program, and in 1990 legislation established a cooperative program among landowners, the Department, and Sportsmen to limit damage caused by wildlife.

The program is based on recognition of a shared responsibility of the Department and landowners. Prevention of depredations is a priority management objective of the Department, and landowners are obligated to take all reasonable steps to prevent property loss from wildlife. When damages cannot be sufficiently reduced or prevented, landowners may file a claim for compensation.

The Department's actions to prevent damage include hazing, preventing access to haystacks (panels, fencing, permanent stack yards), baiting animals away from attractants, and reducing depredating animals through a combination of harvest season tools including extra antlerless deer or elk tags, liberalization of tag numbers in capped elk zones, landowner permission hunts, greenfield hunts, depredation hunts, and when necessary, kill permits issued to landowners or implemented by Department staff.

The depredation program and laws have evolved through time, typically in response to increases in conflicts and damage costs. In the 5 year period prior to FY2017, the Department received 20 – 30 damage claims totaling about $250,000 annually. Despite increased financial commitment and intensive efforts focused on preventing damage, depredation claims and costs have increased dramatically since then, from 58 claims totaling about $755,000 in FY17 to a high of 89 approved claims in FY19 at a cost of $2,400,000, including one single claim that exceeded $1,200,000. The increase in depredation conflicts and costs is a result of multiple factors including difficult-to-resolve conflicts and high-dollar crops (e.g., elk in corn fields, organic crops), winter conditions, robust deer, elk, pronghorn populations near agriculture, and private land refuges adjacent to agricultural fields where depredations are occurring.

Mr. Rachael reviewed the statutory framework for funding of depredation prevention and compensation and processing claims (Idaho Code 36-111, 36-115, and 36-1108 to 1110).

IDFG Mandatory Hunter Education and Other IDFG Hosted/Participating Events During Covid-19 and Future Outlook

Presented by Sharon Kiefer, Communications Bureau Chief.

Mandatory Education - Response to COVID-19 orders by the State of Idaho and local governments beginning in March resulted in IDFG significantly modifying delivery of Hunter Education to an online-only platform with the field day waived. Previously, the online option still required an instructor-led field day for certification. All instructor-led classes, including Trapper Education and Wolf Trapper Education were cancelled.

The online course takes approximately 4-6 hours to complete and students have one year to complete the course. The online content is identical to the instructor-led student manual and includes the same videos and graphics. Students take a quiz at the end of each unit and complete a final exam at the end of course. The online course follows the International Hunter Education Association content standards.

The online course does not include Idaho specific rules and regulations, an in-person practical and field day exam, or specific Idaho wildlife identification. Online students do not receive the instructor-led student packet which includes pertinent information such as the CWD brochure. Students can take the online course at their own pace and convenience.

During the current online-only delivery of Hunter Education with a waived field day, there has been a substantive increase in the number of students taking the online course and becoming certified. During the period January 1-June 16, 2020, we recorded 10,670 Hunter Ed certifications, a 109% increase over 2019. Staff will evaluate how many of these students recruit as hunting license holders.

Online Bowhunter Education certifications increased by 39% (1,007) over 2019 for this same time period. However, the number of students during spring, 2020 may have also been influenced by the online provider offering a 50% discount for Hunter Education students who also wanted to take the bowhunter education class online.

Staff is working on protocols to reinitiate instructor-led Trapper Education and Wolf Trapper Education that are consistent with state and local health orders; about 120 students were "in the queue" when classes were cancelled. We are planning to reduce the length of these classes to be able to offer both Trapper Ed and Wolf Trapper Ed on the same day to reduce classroom contact time. Class size will be considerably reduced to ensure social distance and there will be restricted opportunity for "hands-on" training to reduce any sharing of equipment.

Future Outlook: Because of uncertainty about instructor capacity, availability of locations for classes, and status of Idaho COVID-19 protocols, staff is planning to continue the current Hunter Education model (online-only with field day waived) through at least the remainder of 2020. We will continue to evaluate requests for instructor-led classes to determine if conditions warrant resuming some instructor-led classes later this fall. We plan to pilot an instructor-led Trapper Ed and Wolf Trapper Ed class at the end of July or the beginning of August to gauge student interest and feasibility of our protocols to meet health orders.

Non-Mandatory Education: IDFG offers and participates in a wide range of educational topics and opportunities. Examples include our Fishing Trailer events to provide fishing opportunity and training, Project Wild classes to teach teachers about wildlife to incorporate lessons into the classroom, public presentations about Idaho wildlife resources, tours at Nature Centers and other IDFG locations, and large scale events with partners such as Hurtig University in Southeast Idaho. As a COVID-19 response, these

in-person education events have generally been cancelled. For example, IDFG cancelled events planned in conjunction with Free Fishing Day. Regions are evaluating on a case-by-case basis whether to participate in community events such as fairs.

Future Outlook: It is unlikely that IDFG will host any fishing trailer events through the remainder of 2020. The MK Nature Center has re-opened its building for public viewing and has some small-scale education classes and tours scheduled and Regions will continue to evaluate feasibility and necessity of resuming educational events, particularly once the State advances out of Stage 4.

Idaho Fish & Wildlife Foundation Report
Presented by Hilarie Engle, Executive Director, IFWF.

IDFG Headquarters Update: The Headquarters project sub-contractor bids have been reviewed and selected. The bids came in under budget which allowed the Foundation to upgrade the roofing materials and extend the warranty by 5 years. This also allowed the Foundation to pay an expedite fee for the concrete and electrical work which will allow the project to get the steel in place, and the building wrapped prior to winter.

- The building remnants have been removed from the property and the ground is being graded to prepare for construction.
- The Foundation is still awaiting the City of Boise building permit, we anticipate this being approved the last week of July.
- The Foundation will work with the Department to schedule a ground breaking ceremony to be scheduled in early August.

Board Update: IFWF will hold the next quarterly meeting on August 15th in Lewiston.

REPORTS

Directors' Report
Director Schriever updated the Commission on department happenings and the written report stands as written.

Commissioner Reports
Commissioner reports stand as written (Appendix 53, Exhibit 52).

MISCELLANEOUS

Planning for Next Meeting
The next Commission meeting is planned for August, 20, 2020 in Nampa, ID.

Executive Session
20-65 Commissioner Clezie moved and Commissioner Meyers seconded a motion to hold an executive session pursuant to Idaho Code 74-206(1)(c)(f) to discuss land acquisition and litigation.

Roll Call Vote Ayes: Brad Corkill, Doug Ebert, Tim Murphy, Greg Cameron, Lane Clezie, Derick Attebury, and Jerry Meyers.

20-66 Commissioner Clezie moved and Commissioner Meyers seconded a motion to come out of executive session, with the record to reflect that no action was taken. Motion carries.

Adjourn

Brad Corkill
Chairman

Ed Schriever
Secretary