

# Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game

## DRAFT Strategic Plan 2026

Dec. 1, 2025

**GOAL 1:**  
**Sustain Idaho's Fish and Wildlife and the habitats on which they depend.**

**Objective 1:**  
Maintain or improve populations of fish and wildlife for hunting, fishing, trapping, and wildlife-related recreation.

**Strategy 1:**

Manage predation to meet fish and wildlife management objectives.

**Action #1** – Develop, implement, and review predation management plans in accordance with Department policy.

**Action #2** – Collaborate to manage out-of-state downriver predation impacts on salmon and steelhead populations.

**Action #3** – Manage habitat to minimize predation on target populations where habitat conditions contribute to excessive predation.

**Strategy 2:**

Manage conflicts between wildlife and private landowners.

**Action #1** - Prevent or minimize wildlife damage to agricultural crops and livestock and compensate producers for wildlife damage in accordance with statute, rule, and policy.

**Action #2** – Continue to build landowner tolerance of deer, elk, and pronghorn on private lands through development of new prevention and mitigation measures or programs.

**Action #3** – Increase hunting and trapping access on private lands where conflicts are occurring by incentivizing landowners to allow public access for hunters.

<p><b>GOAL 1:</b> <b>Sustain Idaho’s Fish and Wildlife and the habitats on which they depend.</b></p>	<p><b>Objective 2:</b> Sustain populations of fish and wildlife by maintaining and enhancing the capacity and resilience of their habitats.</p>
<p><b><u>Strategy 1:</u></b> Prioritize the conservation of fish and wildlife habitat.</p> <p><b>Action #1</b> - Increase breadth and pace of priority habitat conservation through collaboration, partnership, and technical assistance.</p> <p><b>Action #2</b> – Prioritize landscapes most in need of restoration, conservation, or management to sustain fish and wildlife resources effectively and efficiently.</p>	
<p><b><u>Strategy 2:</u></b> Achieve landscape-scale habitat conservation and improvements on private and public lands.</p> <p><b>Action #1</b> - Implement habitat restoration and improvement projects that address factors limiting landscape productivity, function, and connectivity on private and non-Department public lands.</p> <p><b>Action #2</b> - Conserve and improve habitats on Department-owned or managed lands.</p>	
<p><b><u>Strategy 3:</u></b> Protect habitat on private lands in priority landscapes through long-term, incentivized, voluntary conservation agreements.</p> <p><b>Action #1</b> – Collaborate with private landowners, organizations, and partner agencies to secure habitat and water protections in priority landscapes with fee-title acquisition, conservation easements, and other agreements.</p>	

<p><b>GOAL 1:</b> <b>Sustain Idaho’s Fish and Wildlife and the habitats on which they depend.</b></p>	<p><b>Objective 3:</b> Ensure the long-term survival of native fish, wildlife, and plants.</p>
<p><b>Strategy 1:</b> Implement the Statewide Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) for conserving and managing Idaho’s most at-risk fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats.</p> <p><b>Action #1</b> – Identify and monitor native species with high-priority conservation needs.</p> <p><b>Action #2</b> – Provide strategic guidance on priority conservation actions.</p> <p><b>Action #3</b> – Create opportunities for stakeholders to collaborate in proactive, voluntary, and community-oriented partnerships to conserve at-risk species, fostering and incentivizing these partnerships.</p>	
<p><b>GOAL 1:</b> <b>Sustain Idaho’s Fish and Wildlife and the habitats on which they depend.</b></p>	<p><b>Objective 4:</b> Mitigate and manage the impacts of fish and wildlife diseases and invasive/incompatible species on fish and wildlife populations, livestock, and humans.</p>
<p><b>Strategy 1:</b> Develop collaborations, research projects, new tools and efficiencies to enhance the Department’s understanding of disease and invasive/incompatible species impacts on fish and wildlife populations.</p> <p><b>Action #1</b> – Investigate and deploy new and emerging tools and improve surveillance for fish and wildlife health monitoring and disease detection.</p> <p><b>Action #2</b> - Research population dynamics of emergent introductions of invasive/incompatible species and develop corresponding response and action plans.</p> <p><b>Action #3</b> - Research and develop strategies to enhance participation of anglers, hunters, trappers, and landowners in management activities related to invasive/incompatible species and disease.</p>	

**Strategy 2:**

Reduce the impact of disease as a limiting factor in fish and wildlife populations by monitoring, mitigating, and managing the transmission of disease.

**Action #1**– Implement disease plans and protocols to address risks of diseases in wild populations.

**Action #2** – Monitor and investigate mortality events and population declines for diseases to safeguard the long-term health and resilience of Idaho’s fish and wildlife.

**Action #3** – Coordinate surveillance and biosecurity measures with agencies and partners to assess and reduce disease transmission risks between wildlife and domestic animals.

**Strategy 3:**

Reduce the impact of invasive and incompatible species on the sustainability of Idaho’s fish and wildlife by detecting, monitoring and managing introduction, colonization or establishment.

**Action #1** – Minimize spread of invasive and incompatible species by researching, managing and monitoring existing populations.

**Action #2** - Implement a balanced, strategic approach to managing invasive and incompatible species by prioritizing actions based on their risk to desirable populations, feasibility of suppression or control, and alignment with social, economic, and conservation priorities.

<p><b>GOAL 2:</b>  <b>Improve user experience for hunting, fishing, trapping, and other wildlife-related recreation.</b></p>	<p><b>Objective 1:</b>            Increase satisfaction with hunting, fishing, trapping, and other wildlife-related recreation opportunities and experiences.</p>
<p><b><u>Strategy 1:</u></b>            Understand and be responsive to concerns related to user crowding.</p> <p><b>Action #1</b> – Collect, analyze, and distribute information on the demand and availability for hunting, fishing, trapping, and other wildlife-related recreation.</p> <p><b>Action #2</b> – Use information gathered to inform and engage with various user groups competing for limited resources and space on ways to reduce crowding.</p> <p><b>Action #3</b> – Work with private and governmental entities that manage public access to improve user experience and manage crowding.</p>	
<p><b><u>Strategy 2:</u></b>            Improve clarity and usability of hunting/fishing/trapping regulations.</p> <p><b>Action #1</b> – Solicit input on the format and complexity of regulations and regulations booklets to improve their clarity and useability.</p> <p><b>Action #2</b> – Improve efficiency and effectiveness of communications related to regulations through better understanding the content and form of delivery preferred by users.</p>	

**Strategy 3:**

Manage the variety and distribution of access for public hunting, fishing, trapping, and other wildlife-related recreation to provide a positive user experience.

**Action #1** – Secure short and long-term access agreements with private and corporate landowners and provide incentives and services to landowners who allow public access for hunting, fishing, trapping, and other wildlife-related recreation.

**Action #2** – Improve landowner/sportsman cooperation through communication and enforcement of hunting, fishing, and trapping regulations.

**Action #3** - Work with agency partners to manage access to publicly owned lands.

**Action #4** – Maintain access sites on Department-owned and managed lands to provide opportunity and facilitate public safety.

**Action #5** – Work with appropriate jurisdictions and stakeholders to ensure legally accessible public lands are not illegitimately restricted.

**Strategy 4:**

Strengthen public trust through implementation and enforcement of regulations that encourage safe, lawful and responsible participation in hunting, fishing, trapping, and other wildlife-related recreation.

**Action #1** – Increase the coverage and consistency of enforcement activities and overall visibility of staff in enforcement roles to the public.

**Action #2** – Promote an improved understanding of activities prohibited by law and ethical conduct, the distinction between them, and the importance of both in preserving the future of hunting, fishing, and trapping.

**Action #3** – Promote stronger deterrents to the illegal take of fish and wildlife.

**Strategy 5:**

Expand opportunities for non-consumptive forms of wildlife-related recreation.

**Action #1** – Increase engagement with non-consumptive wildlife-related recreationists (e.g., wildlife viewing) to better understand and facilitate their continued support of conservation.

**Action #2** – Expand shooting sport opportunities.

**GOAL 3: Improve Public Understanding of and Involvement in Fish and Wildlife Management.**

**Objective 1:**

Create partners and supporters among the Department’s constituents through timely, transparent, meaningful and proactive engagement, outreach and education.

**Strategy 1:**

Increase the effectiveness of public engagement by improving awareness of and participation in Department and Commission decision making processes.

**Action #1** - Increase awareness of opportunities to provide input on Department actions through more visible and frequent communications.

**Action #2** – Increase participation in decision making by simplifying and expanding methods to gather public input, including improved website tools, in-person opportunities and virtual meetings.

**Action #3** – Promote an understanding of the Department’s scope of authority and responsibility in context to other regulatory or management agencies.

**Strategy 2:**

Increase transparency on decisions impacting Idaho's fish and wildlife.

**Action #1** - Improve the public input feedback loop by thorough after-action outreach efforts following Department or Commission decisions by summarizing outcomes, rationale for decisions and the impact of public input.

**Action #2** – Provide staff with talking points on key decisions and training on how to facilitate input from the public.

**Strategy 3:**

Increase and enhance volunteer engagement through the development of a professional statewide volunteer program.

**Action #1** – Create a comprehensive plan to guide the volunteer program over the next five years.

**Action #2** – Provide all volunteers with exceptional service and resources, including web-based sign-up capabilities, convenient timekeeping processes, and necessary training.

**Action #3** - Provide efficient and effective volunteer management resources to staff by modernizing administration procedures, unifying statewide volunteer support and removing barriers to the use of volunteers.

**Strategy 4:**

Enhance the awareness and understanding of the Department's mission through coordinated marketing, communications, and outreach efforts.

**Action #1** - Strengthen digital platforms and tools by updating and enhancing the Department website and mobile app and exploring use of other digital resources.

**Action #2** - Unify messaging and establish a consistent voice and visual identity across all outreach methods.

**Action #3** - Build common ground with new and established audiences by developing opportunities to highlight connections between hunters, anglers, trappers and participants in other wildlife-related recreation.



**Strategy 5:**

Develop safe, ethical, and responsible hunters, trappers, and anglers that demonstrate stewardship of Idaho's fish and wildlife resources.

**Action #1** - Recruit, train, retain, and evaluate active hunter, bowhunter, and trapper education volunteer instructors to provide high-quality, engaging, and hands-on instruction for students.

**Action #2** - Activate and retain hunter education graduates by monitoring post-certification activity and engaging non-active hunters.

**Action #3** – Meet the demand for angling education by providing staff-led instruction and curricula and equipment for self-directed activities.

**Strategy 6:**

Provide educational experiences that build public understanding of fish and wildlife conservation, the importance of habitat, and the concepts of public trust.

**Action #1** - Provide conservation programs and materials at fish and game facilities to promote awareness of the importance of fish, wildlife, and habitat conservation.

**Action #2** – Promote an understanding of the potential impacts of diseases and invasive species on fish and wildlife populations, and associated challenges for fish and wildlife management.

**Action #3** - Provide aquatic education programming that encourages public understanding of healthy aquatic habitats and ecosystems, and how they can support conservation of Idaho's natural resources.

<p><b>Goal 4:</b>  <b>Goal 4: Enhance the Capability of Fish and Game to Manage Fish and Wildlife and Serve the Public.</b></p>	<p><b>Objective 1:</b>          Attract and retain a highly competent and professional workforce.</p>
<p><b>Strategy 1:</b>          Leverage insights from Employee Engagement Survey data to strengthen workforce retention and sustain employee satisfaction.</p> <p><b>Action #1</b> – Develop targeted initiatives to enhance employee experience by addressing improvement areas identified by the Engagement Survey.</p> <p><b>Action #2:</b> Implement targeted initiatives to attract highly competent professional employees.</p>	
<p><b>Goal 4:</b>  <b>Goal 4: Enhance the Capability of Fish and Game to Manage Fish and Wildlife and Serve the Public.</b></p>	<p><b>Objective 2:</b>          Maintain a sustainable funding structure to ensure IDFG can continue to preserve, protect, perpetuate and manage Idaho’s fish and wildlife.</p>
<p><b>Strategy 1:</b>          Manage revenues and expenditures to meet long-term wildlife and fisheries management and conservation objectives.</p> <p><b>Action #1</b> – Utilize fiscal analysis models to assess long term fiscal sustainability, recommending strategies to sustain Department operations in alignment with its mission.</p> <p><b>Action #2</b> – Develop a plan for prioritization of resources when there are substantial changes to economic conditions or agency initiatives.</p>	

**Goal 4:**  
**Goal 4: Enhance the Capability of Fish and Game to Manage Fish and Wildlife and Serve the Public.**

**Objective 3:**  
Develop and sustain a productive relationship with state, local and federal elected officials to support the Department's ability to meet its mission to preserve, protect, perpetuate and manage Idaho's fish and wildlife.

**Strategy 1:**

Promote a common understanding and appreciation amongst Department staff for the roles and responsibilities of the Department; the Commission; local, state, and federal elected bodies; the Governor; and other state agencies.

**Action #1** – Engage staff in policy processes to increase understanding and trust at the local, state and federal level.

**Action #2** – Ensure staff are informed of Commission decisions and relevant legislative actions as well as implications to the Department and the public.

**Strategy 2:**

Foster a strong working relationship with local, state and federal policy makers through engagement, relationship-building, and partnerships.

**Action #1** – Engage local, state and federal policy makers in field activities to showcase the work of the Department and to identify and build support for shared objectives.

**Action #2** – Continue to develop the Department's reputation as a trusted asset to local, state and federal policy makers by being available and responsive to inquiries and requests.

**Action #3** – Develop long term strategies to sustain a positive relationship with local, state and federal policy makers as policies and leadership changes over time.