



## Non-Resident Tag Issuance Advisory Group MEETING MINUTES

August 28, 2024

Ellary TuckerWilliams, Legislative and Community Engagement Coordinator, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Members attending in-person included: Benn Brocksome, Ned Burns, Jerry Cloninger, Brad Compton, Senator Mark Harris, Aaron Lieberman, Tyrel Stevenson, and Mike Viele.

Members attending virtually included: Representative James Petzke and Michael Fuller, however, both were present for portions of the meeting.

IDFG staff in attendance included: Director Jim Fredericks, Ellary TuckerWilliams, Tara Reichert, Rick Ward, and Elizabeth Page

In compliance with open meeting law, members of the public had the opportunity to attend in-person at and Idaho Department of Fish and Game regional office, or virtually, through a Zoom meeting link.

Director Jim Fredericks gave opening comments.

Ellary TuckerWilliams reiterated the ground rules for the meeting, as established in the prior meeting on July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

### **Finalization of Non-Resident Tag Issuance Advisory Group Charter – Action Item**

Present advisory group members agreed to accept the finalized Non-Resident Tag Issuance Advisory Group Charter. (Benn Brocksome, Ned Burns, Jerry Cloninger, Brad Compton, Senator Mark Harris, Aaron Lieberman, Tyrel Stevenson, and Mike Viele)

### **Review of Staff Assignments from Prior Meeting**

Prior meeting assignments included an overview of Western States outfitter hunting tag allocations, as follows:

- Alaska – Alaska does not allocate tags to outfitters. Alaska does require someone to secure an outfitter if they receive a tag for grizzly bears, mountain goats, or sheep over safety concerns. A person must complete an affidavit showing that they will be

accompanied by a person who is qualified to guide, but they are responsible for securing their own outfitter.

- Arizona – Arizona does not allocate tags to outfitters. Hunters are to draw their own tags and then seek the services of an outfitter, if they so choose. Arizona does not have a landowner tag program.
- Colorado – Colorado does not allocate tags to outfitters. Hunters are to draw their own tags and then seek the services of an outfitter, if they so choose. Colorado does have a landowner tag program.
- Montana – Montana does not allocate tags for the exclusive use of outfitters; however, Montana does incentivize going through an outfitter through their preference point system. Montana does have a landowner tag program.
- Nevada – Nevada does allocate general season mule deer tags to outfitters.
- New Mexico – New Mexico allocates 10% of the total big game draw tags for hunters who are contracted with a legally licensed NM outfitter. Licenses are granted through an algorithm which applies the quota on a hunt code basis. New Mexico also had a landowner tag program.
- Oregon – Oregon does allocate deer and elk tags to outfitters via controlled hunts
- Utah – Utah does not allocate tags to outfitters. Utah does have a landowner tag program.
- Washington – Washington does not allocate tags to outfitters.
- Wyoming – Wyoming does not allocate tags to outfitters. Landowner tags are for immediate family members and non-transferable. Guides (professional or resident) are required for non-residents to hunt in wilderness areas.

Advisory members also discussed the December 1 tag sale preparations, which begin immediately after the previous year's sale. Ms. Reichert outlined the process, including the importance of load testing, ensuring tag accuracy, and coordinating with the vendor's schedule. She noted that the December 1 tag sale is more demanding than the July 10 tag sale, due to uncertainties and staffing needs. Mr. Cloninger mentioned challenges with employee absences during tag sales and draws due to public dissatisfaction. Mr. Burns suggested learning from other states' approaches, while Mr. Lieberman emphasized Idaho's uniqueness and the state's role as a model for others.

### **Overview of Public Comments Received**

Members of the public had the opportunity to submit public comments, which were summarized and provided to the advisory members prior to the meeting. Public comments received after August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, will be summarized and provided to the advisory group at the next meeting.

Overall, the comments highlight a need for improvement, to address concerns about fairness, efficiency, and the experience for both residents and non-residents.

Transparency and communication with the public were emphasized to address misunderstandings and build trust. The ability to have predictability, transparency, and hunt with friends and family, was found to be a reoccurring desire between resident and non-resident hunters. The possibility of implementing a family-first approach, similar to Montana's "Come

Home to Hunt" program, was explored. While a draw system could simplify the process for non-residents, it would require careful consideration and potential adjustments to current rules. The group also discussed learning from other states' experiences and addressing the potential impact on outfitters.

### **Open Discussion**

The advisory group explored potential improvements to the current over-the-counter system and alternative options like a draw or hybrid system. They considered extending the December 1 tag sale window to reduce crowds and administrative burdens. The advisory group identified key problems with the current system, then envisioned what an ideal system would look like. They then evaluated whether over-the-counter, draw, or a hybrid approach would best address the identified issues.

### **Review and Summation:**

The group decided to move forward with discussions surrounding moving Idaho to a draw system and agreed to continue discussing the new system in further detail at the next meeting. The group will focus on the tag sale process and discuss timelines, quota pool management, payment options, and desired outcomes. A request was also made to designate an entire future meeting to discussing outfitter tag allocation.

Ellary TuckerWilliams thanked members of the advisory group for their time and mentioned providing a Doodle Poll to be sent out to set the next in-person meeting.

**Adjourn 5:00 p.m.**