

2015 & 2016 BIG GAME

Seasons & Rules



Controlled Hunt Application Periods

Deer, Elk, Pronghorn & Fall Black Bear: May 1 - June 5

Spring Black Bear: January 15 - February 15

Deer, Elk, Pronghorn Seasons: August 2015 - February 2016 & August 2016 - February 2017

Black Bear, Mountain Lion Seasons: August 2015 - June 2016 & August 2016 - June 2017

Gray Wolf Seasons: July 2015 - June 2016 & July 2016 - June 2017

Including Controlled Hunts for Deer, Elk, Pronghorn and Black Bear



2nd Edition, 2016



Director Moore's Open Letter to the Hunters, Anglers and Trappers of Idaho

Over 75 years ago, Fish and Game's Mission was created by the people of Idaho. Hunters, anglers, trappers and others who cared about wildlife wrote it and passed it by a citizens' initiative, approved by 76 percent of voters in 1938 - still the highest margin of victory for any such initiative in the history of our state.

Fish and Game is proud of our Mission:

Wildlife Policy: All wildlife, including all wild animals, wild birds, and fish, within the state of Idaho, is hereby declared to be the property of the state of Idaho. It shall be preserved, protected, perpetuated, and managed. It shall be only captured or taken at such times or places, under such conditions, or by such means, or in such manner, as will preserve, protect, and perpetuate such wildlife, and provide for the citizens of this state and, as by law permitted to others, continued supplies of such wildlife for hunting, fishing and trapping. IC 36-103(a)



For me personally, the Mission has been the single most important guide throughout my 37 years as a fishery and wildlife management professional in Idaho. It keeps me on track, reminding me who we are at Fish and Game and what we do for the public we serve and I refer to it regularly.

Fish and Game is a public trust management agency providing benefits to Idahoans with specific direction to preserve, protect, perpetuate, (i.e., conserve wildlife), and once that is done, our paramount role is to provide for continued supplies for hunting, fishing and trapping. Harvest of wildlife is implicit in our Mission.

Fish and Game funding in Idaho comes predominantly from hunter and angler user fees, with no state general tax funds. This approach has been a key and successful aspect of the North American Model of Wildlife Management, the most successful large scale approach to wildlife conservation ever taken in the world.

Idahoans hear a lot about threats to that heritage from anti-hunting and anti-trapping groups. In Idaho, I believe we are united to confront such threats as demonstrated in 2012 when the citizens of Idaho reaffirmed our Mission by overwhelmingly approving a constitutional amendment (75 percent of voters). The amendment preserves the public's right to hunt, fish and trap, and states these are the preferred methods of managing Idaho's wildlife populations.

In 1977, as a newly hired Idaho Fish and Game fisheries biologist, I witnessed the closure of Idaho's Chinook salmon fishing and I wondered if it was gone for good. Today, we are regularly opening seasons and catching Chinook on the Snake, Clearwater and Salmon Rivers, providing opportunity to thousands of anglers to experience that fishing heritage. Idaho hunters experienced one of the best deer seasons in years, thanks to recent mild winters and management that have helped populations grow, providing much opportunity. The new Elk Plan (idfg.idaho.gov/conservation/plan/elk) provides zone-specific population objectives and strategies to deal with limiting factors including predation mortality by wolves and other predators. After four-and-a half successful hunting seasons, working together with Idaho hunters and trappers, we're getting our wolf population down to more manageable, but still sustainable levels, and our elk population is beginning to show signs of improvement in many zones.

Idaho Fish and Game has been front and center as part of Governor Otter's Sage-Grouse Task Force (idfg.idaho.gov/conservation/sage-grouse). Many volunteers, including hunters, are doing everything from participating in population surveys to helping us plant sagebrush. In addition to these on-the-ground efforts, hunters and falconers are helping support sage-grouse conservation through their purchases of licenses and tags. Despite that, a Southern Idaho newspaper recently claimed in print that sage-grouse hunting creates a "perception problem." I responded with an op-ed pointing out that sage-grouse seasons are set based on science, not perception and that we carefully monitor sage-grouse populations and allow hunting only where populations are strong and do not hesitate to close areas where populations or habitat are limiting. That's how we manage all game species, with sound science, and with opportunity for our hunters, anglers, and trappers always in mind.

Fifty three percent of Idahoans fished and 35 percent hunted in the last two years and our numbers are growing. We certified over 13,500 new hunters, bow hunters and trappers last fiscal year, a 14 percent increase over the previous year. And 3,900 ten and eleven year olds hunted their first deer or elk this year. We are also busy with our "Take Me Fishing" trailers, helping nearly 24,000 people over the last two years learn to fish. These are just a few examples of how Fish and Game, and a dedicated corps of volunteers are working to preserve, protect and perpetuate Idaho's wildlife and our hunting and fishing heritage.

Indeed, hunting, fishing, and trapping generate \$1.4 Billion per year for Idaho's economy, supports over 14,000 jobs, and is the second most popular outdoor activity in Idaho (behind camping) because we have such outstanding wildlife resources. Fish, game, and other species exist today thanks to your license dollars and the strong foundation for wildlife conservation and management outlined by our forefathers when they created and implemented the Fish and Game Mission. That is why we use it as a daily guide as Fish and Game strives to make Idaho a better place for fish, wildlife, hunters, anglers, and trappers, and all citizens who benefit from this incredible resource.

Looking ahead, I want to both thank you and reassure you that a top priority at Idaho Fish and Game will always be the hunter, angler, and trapper, and maintaining our wildlife heritage. Demands and issues facing our agency (i.e., endangered species, habitat loss, etc.) are much greater than they were when our Mission was created and the challenges will continue to grow, but nothing will ever be more important than making sure our fish and wildlife populations are healthy and available for hunters and anglers to use.


 Virgil Moore
Director



Idaho Department of Fish and Game

Idaho Wildlife Policy

“All wildlife, including all wild animals, wild birds, and fish, within the state of Idaho, is hereby declared to be the property of the state of Idaho. It shall be preserved, protected, perpetuated, and managed. It shall be only captured or taken at such times or places, under such conditions, or by such means, or in such manner, as will preserve, protect, and perpetuate such wildlife, and provide for the citizens of this state and, as by law permitted to others, continued supplies of such wildlife for hunting, fishing and trapping.”

— Idaho Code Section 36-103

Idaho Fish and Game Commission

- Mark Doerr - Chairman - Magic Valley
- Brad Corkill - Panhandle
- Daniel Blanco - Clearwater
- Blake Fischer - Southwest
- Lane Clezie - Southeast
- Derick Attebury - Upper Snake
- Will Naillon - Salmon

Idaho Department of Fish and Game

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Boise, ID 83707
208-334-3700 - idfg.idaho.gov

- Director - Virgil Moore
- Deputy Director - Sharon Kiefer
- Deputy Director - Ed Schriever

Regional Offices

- Panhandle Region**208-769-1414
2885 W. Kathleen Ave., Coeur d'Alene ID 83815
- Clearwater Region**208-799-5010
3316 16th St., Lewiston ID 83501
- Southwest Region**208-465-8465
3101 S. Powerline Rd., Nampa ID 83686
- McCall Subregion** 208-634-8137
555 Deinhard Lane, McCall ID 83638
- Magic Valley Region**208-324-4359
324 S 417 E; Suite #1, Jerome ID 83338
- Southeast Region**208-232-4703
1345 Barton Rd., Pocatello ID 83204
- Upper Snake Region**208-525-7290
4279 Commerce Circle, Idaho Falls ID 83401
- Salmon Region** 208-756-2271
99 Highway 93 N., Salmon ID 83467


Idaho Fish and Game offices are open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday except state holidays. Offices in the Panhandle and Clearwater regions are in the Pacific Time Zone; all others are in the Mountain Time Zone.

Other Information Numbers

- Rules booklets, nonresident license applications: 208-334-3700
- U. S. Forest Service:
 - Southern Idaho www.fs.usda.gov/r4
 - Northern Idaho www.fs.usda.gov/r1
- Bureau of Land Management: www.blm.gov/id
- Idaho Relay Service (TDD)1-800-377-3529

To Buy a License, Tag or Permit:

- In person, go to any Idaho Fish and Game office or license vendor.
- By credit card, within the United States call 1-800-554-8685. Outside the U.S., use the Internet or mail. From your computer or mobile device, go to idfg.idaho.gov. A service fee is added for online and telephone transactions.
- Commercial licenses and tags, duplicate tags, documents that require proof of disability, lifetime licenses, and bear baiting permits may be purchased only at Fish and Game offices.



To report wildlife crimes, call Citizens Against Poaching at 1-800-632-5999.
Emergency information can be relayed to Fish and Game personnel through any Idaho law enforcement agency.

For more information on laws in this rule book, visit the Idaho Administrative Procedures Act at <http://adminrules.idaho.gov>.

Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) adheres to all applicable state and federal laws and regulations related to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, gender, disability or veteran's status. If you feel you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility of IDFG, or if you desire further information, please write to: Idaho Department of Fish and Game, P.O. Box 25, Boise, ID 83707 or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Federal Assistance, Mailstop: MBSP-4020, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203, Telephone: (703) 358-2156. This publication will be made available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact IDFG for assistance.

Costs associated with this publication are available from IDFG in accordance with Section 60-202, Idaho Code.

Information in this brochure summarizes rules and is an official proclamation of the Idaho Fish and Game Commission for the taking of wildlife and/or fish. The official rules are available from the Office of Administrative Rules, Department of Administration, Statehouse Mail, Boise, ID 83720, and may be reviewed in some libraries. Maps are for general reference only.

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Costs associated with this publication are available from IDFG in accordance with Section 60-202, Idaho Code.

2015/2016_Big Game-2nd Edition/BOC/pca 41918/3-2016/275,000 ROP/kyk

Getting Started

To use this brochure:

- Pick the species you want to hunt, then refer to the section on that animal.
- Refer to the map on pages 82 and 83 to find an area to hunt.
- Find the unit numbers on the map and look up the seasons and restrictions for those units.
- For help in this process, try the online Hunt Planner at the Fish and Game website <http://idfg.idaho.gov>.

Big game hunting in Idaho is regulated by numbered **game management units**. For a map of Fish and Game regions and game management units see pages 82 and 83.

General seasons for black bear, mountain lion, mule deer and white-tailed deer are arranged by units.

Some seasons labeled **regular deer** include mule deer and white-tailed deer, other seasons are labeled **white-tailed deer** only.

General seasons for elk are arranged by larger areas called elk management zones, which are made up of one or more game management units. For a map of elk zones see page 33.

General seasons for gray wolf are arranged by larger areas called wolf management zones, which are made up of one or more game management units. *Wolf management zones are not the same as elk management zones.* For a map of wolf zones see pages 76 and 77.

Controlled hunts are listed by hunt numbers for controlled hunt areas, which consist of parts of one or more game management units.

Controlled hunt areas for deer are not the same as controlled hunt areas for elk, pronghorn or black bear.

For an explanation of controlled hunts and how to apply, see pages 106 - 109. When picking a controlled hunt, make sure to use the hunt number from the current year's rule book.

Detailed big game hunting rules and restrictions begin on page 95. License requirements and fees begin on page 112.

Note on licenses and tags:

A **hunting license** is required to hunt. A **trapping license** is required to trap gray wolf. In addition, a **tag** is required for all big game species.

Helicopter Surveys:

Hunters may encounter biologists conducting helicopter surveys during late season hunts December – March. They will try to avoid flying where hunters are observed.

What's New?

Two Year Seasons! The Idaho Fish and Game Commission set big game seasons for two years. **Please keep this booklet for both the 2015 and 2016 hunting seasons.**

Expanded Youth Hunting: There are several new youth hunting opportunities offered - see youth-only hunts for deer on page 23; elk on page 52; pronghorn on page 63; and black bear on page 70.

Information on junior licenses, youth hunts and Three-year licenses have been consolidated on page 105.

Use of Aircraft/Unmanned Aircraft:

It is unlawful to make use of any aircraft, including unmanned aircraft (drones), to locate any big game animals for the purpose of hunting those animals during the same calendar day those animals were located from the air. See page 95.

First-choice ONLY Unlimited








Controlled Hunts: Unlimited Controlled Hunts for antlered deer in Units 27 and 73 have been designated as First Choice ONLY. These hunts may only be applied for as your FIRST choice application. Applications for these hunts as a second choice will not be accepted. See page 109.

Note:

This brochure covers only rules for hunting deer, elk, pronghorn, black bear, mountain lion and gray wolf. Information about hunting upland game, turkey, furbearer, waterfowl and moose, bighorn sheep or mountain goat can be found separately in the Upland Game, Furbearer and Turkey; the Waterfowl; or the Moose, Bighorn Sheep and Mountain Goat Seasons and Rules brochures.

Idaho Department of Fish and Game 2015 & 2016 Big Game Seasons and Rules

July 2015 through June 2017

	<p>Key Dates in 2015 & 2016</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First controlled hunt application period: May 1 - June 5. Successful applicants will be notified by July 10. • All tags not picked up by August 1 (excluding unlimited controlled hunt tags) will be entered into the second drawing. • Second controlled hunt application period: August 5-15. Successful applicants will be notified by August 20. • To apply for controlled hunts see page 107 for application form. • Early deadline for depredation hunt application: June 30. See page 109 - 110. • For other important dates, see page 108. <p>Hunter Responsibilities and Notes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the responsibility of the hunter to become familiar with the rules that affect the hunt in which he or she is participating. This brochure provides seasons for general and controlled hunts, and it provides a summary of rules that govern big game hunting in Idaho. For details about the rules, please refer to these links: <p>Idaho Administrative Procedures Act: http://adminrules.idaho.gov/rules/current/13/index.html Idaho Code: http://legislature.idaho.gov/idstat/Title36/T36.htm</p>
	<p>Mandatory Hunting Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All deer, elk and pronghorn hunters are required to complete a Mandatory Hunter Report for each tag they purchase. Hunters are required to submit a report by phone or internet within 10 days after harvest. Hunters who do not harvest, or did not hunt, are required to report within 10 days after the close of the hunting season. • The best way to submit hunt information and the only way to get confirmation that the report was received is to report online at http://idfg.idaho.gov. • To submit by phone to a live operator, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, call toll free 1-877-268-9365 or 1-800-824-3729.
	<p>Hunting Passport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interested in hunting but haven't taken hunter education? Sign up for the Hunting Passport and a licensed adult friend or relative can be your hunting mentor for one year. See page 11.
	<p>Citizens Against Poaching (CAP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To report wildlife violators in Idaho by telephone: 1-800-632-5999.
	<p>Super Hunt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy a chance at a Super Hunt Tag, and help pay for more access to hunting and fishing. See page 75.
	<p>Access Yes!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Access Yes!</i> is a program designed to improve sportsmen's access to private land or through private land to public land by compensating willing landowners.
	<p>Hunt Planner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pick a species, date and hunt unit to see all that you can hunt. Links to maps, apps and guides.