

# *Direction*



FY 2024-2027  
Annual Strategic Plan

# The Director's Message



Idaho Fish and Game is proud to present our FY 2024-2027 strategic plan updates, and the tasks and actions we will undertake to achieve them.

Healthy and abundant fish and wildlife populations, and outdoor recreation, are highly valued by Idahoans. The active engagement of the citizens we serve is one of our greatest assets. I also believe Idaho has one of the finest fish and wildlife management agencies in the country. Without question, we have some of the best fish and wildlife professionals in North America.

However, there's nothing simple about fish and wildlife management in the 21st century. As identified in the following pages, we are faced with many challenges, ranging from increasing demand for outdoor recreation, loss of fish and wildlife habitat, fish and wildlife disease, wildlife depredations of crops and livestock, and human population growth of our state – just to name a few.

I have every confidence that the Department and the people we serve can and will effectively meet the challenges of the future.

The basis for this document was established in 2015, when the Idaho Fish and Game Commission adopted the Department's internal strategic plan, known as The Compass. The Compass identifies the following broad, overarching goals:

- Sustain Idaho's fish and wildlife and the habitats upon which they depend.
- Meet the demand for hunting, fishing, trapping and other wildlife recreation.
- Improve public understanding of and involvement in fish and wildlife management.
- Enhance the capability of Fish and Game to manage fish and wildlife and serve the public.

This update describes more specifically the goals and objectives for the FY 2024-2027 period.

Although the challenges evolve, they aren't new. Despite past challenges, we have robust and widely distributed populations of fish and wildlife, and we continue to enjoy unparalleled wildlife-related recreation, whether it be fishing, hunting, trapping, or simply viewing.

As we approach the 10-year mark of The Compass and prepare to develop the next long-term strategic plan, we look forward to working closely with hunters, anglers, trappers, and other Idahoans to chart the course for the future and Preserve, Protect, Perpetuate and Manage all of Idaho's wildlife.

  
**Jim Fredericks**  
Director

# Our Mission

## Idaho State Department of Fish and Game (Idaho Code Section 36-103)

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 only be 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 Fish and Game Commission

The Idaho Legislature created the Idaho Department of Fish and Game in 1899. In 1938, the Fish and Game Commission was established by voter initiative making it responsible for administering fish and game policy, approving the Department budget prior to Legislative action, and guiding the Department's management practices. Commissioners are appointed from seven administrative regions by the Governor and serve staggered, four-year terms.

The FY 2024 commissioners are as follows: Dave Bobbitt (Panhandle), Don Ebert (Clearwater), Tim Murphy (Southwest), Greg Cameron (Magic Valley), Jordan Cheirrett (Southeast), Derick Attebury (Upper Snake), and Ron Davies (Salmon). A new Upper Snake Region commissioner is soon to be appointed. The Commission holds most of the regulatory authority for fish and wildlife management and set its broad expectations to Idaho Fish and Game in the 2015 Strategic Plan.



**Dave Bobbitt**



**Don Ebert**  
Chairman



**Tim Murphy**

## OUR VISION

*The Idaho Department of Fish and Game shall work with hunters, anglers, trappers and other Idahoans to provide abundant fish and wildlife that enables their right to hunt, fish and trap, and provides the foundation for the rich wildlife heritage they value, which is enshrined in the Fish and Game mission.*



**Greg Cameron**



**Jordan Cheirrett**



**Derick Attebury**



**Ron Davies**  
Vice-Chairman

# GOAL

## Fish, Wildlife & Habitat

*Sustain Idaho's fish and wildlife and the habitats upon which they depend.*

### OBJECTIVES

*Maintain or improve game populations to meet the demand for hunting, fishing and trapping.*

*Ensure the long-term survival of native fish, wildlife and plants.*

*Increase the capacity of habitat to support fish and wildlife.*

*Eliminate the impacts of fish and wildlife diseases on fish and wildlife populations, livestock and humans.*

### STRATEGIES

- ▶ Develop and implement fish and wildlife management plans.
- ▶ Improve the scientific basis and public involvement process used to set harvest rules and regulations to achieve long-term sustainability of populations and habitat.
- ▶ Manage predation to ensure continued supplies of fish and wildlife for hunting, fishing and trapping.
  
- ▶ Identify and monitor native species with high priority conservation needs.
- ▶ Develop and implement management plans for conservation of high priority species to ensure survival and avoid new Endangered Species Act listings.
- ▶ Collaborate with interested and affected parties to recover threatened and endangered species.
  
- ▶ Provide incentives and assistance to landowners to improve habitat on private land.
- ▶ Work with sportsman's groups and other conservation partners to improve important habitats.
- ▶ Work with public land managers to achieve large-scale habitat improvements.
- ▶ Fully obtain and implement mitigation for habitat affected by infrastructure and development projects.
  
- ▶ Reduce or eliminate the risk of transmission of disease between captive and free-ranging fish and wildlife.
- ▶ Collaborate with other agencies and education institutions on disease control, prevention and research, including between wildlife and livestock.

# FY 2024-2027 MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

FY 2023-2026 Management Direction	Brief statement of FY 2023 status/progress/accomplishment	FY 2024-2027 Management Direction	Tasks/Actions planned in FY 2024
<p><b>Emphasize improvements to elk populations and elk hunting.</b></p>	<p>Staff engaged with RMEF during the PAC process. Staff reviewed and discussed 14 project proposals and recommended funding those projects that closely aligned the goals of the statewide elk management plan.</p> <p>Captured and radio-collared 150 calves and 108 adult cows in 8 zones. Monitored approximately 450 radiomarked elk statewide.</p> <p>Camera-based estimates continue to be evaluated in game management units 1, 6, and 10A in north Idaho and the Bannock mule deer DAU in southern Idaho (game management units 57, 58, 70, 73 and 73A).</p> <p>Collected long-term survival data on elk to inform the integrated population model and the season setting process.</p>	<p><b>Emphasize improvements to deer and elk populations and hunting opportunity.</b></p>	<p>Provide technical assistance to NGOs and Federal land management agencies to support sustaining and improving deer and elk habitat in Idaho.</p> <p>Continue survival monitoring of prioritized deer and elk populations.</p> <p>Continue to evaluate results from multi-species camera deployments for application in deer and elk population monitoring.</p> <p>Continue to monitor for chronic wasting disease statewide and actively manage chronic wasting disease where present to reduce the risk of disease spread.</p> <p>Assess Idaho deer and elk hunter preferences regarding hunter congestion and annual hunting opportunity.</p>
<p><b>Continue to align predation management efforts with elk management needs.</b></p>	<p>Revision of predation management plans is ongoing.</p> <p>Staff deployed 533 cameras across the state to estimate wolf abundance. Approximately 10 million photos were taken during July and August.</p> <p>Statewide wolf hunting and trapping seasons were extended in FY2023.</p> <p>Staff radio-marked deer and elk to monitor survival and evaluate causes of mortality. Staff deployed 750 cameras across game management units 1, 6, and 10A to continue to examine interactions between multiple predator and prey species.</p> <p>Staff initiated the development of an Integrated Population Model for wolves and Statistical Population Reconstruction models for wolves, mountain lions, and black bears. Each model uses genetics and age at harvest data to produce population estimates.</p>	<p><b>Continue to align predation management efforts with elk management needs.</b></p>	<p>Continue to revise five elk zone predation management plans and review feasibility of developing one comprehensive predation management plan.</p> <p>Deploy trail cameras and analyze resulting data to assess predator abundance and distribution.</p> <p>Implement and monitor predation management efforts where elk are below objectives and predation is identified as a limiting factor.</p> <p>Continue long-term monitoring of prey and predator interactions.</p> <p>Continue the development of population monitoring tools for large carnivores, utilizing efficient data sources (age at harvest, genetics) as much as possible.</p>
<p><b>Support state actions to maintain state authority over sage-grouse management.</b></p>	<p>1,147 sage-grouse were harvested by 1,234 hunters across 12 harvest zones for an average success rate of 43% (range 26%-65%). A total of 2,510 tags were offered.</p> <p>6,940 acres of conifers were removed, 68 acres of fuel breaks were created, 51 acres of riparian habitat was restored of which 31 acres resulted in expanded brood-rearing habitat, 200 acres of weeds were controlled and 70 acres of sagebrush seedlings were planted across Owyhee, Clark, and Oneida counties. Staff were also engaged in rehabilitation efforts following the 8,800 acre Wildhorse Fire in Camas Prairie and the 2,000 acre Bray fire in Gooding County.</p>	<p><b>Manage sage-grouse populations and habitat to maintain or increase sage-grouse populations and hunting opportunity.</b></p>	<p>Continue to utilize a dynamic harvest strategy to allocate hunting opportunity commensurate with fluctuating sage-grouse populations.</p> <p>Work with state and federal agency partners in an adaptive management framework to effectively identify and guide habitat restoration projects to benefit sage-grouse across southern Idaho.</p>

FY 2023-2026 Management Direction	Brief statement of FY 2023 status/progress/accomplishment	FY 2024-2027 Management Direction	Tasks/Actions planned in FY 2024
<p><b>Ensure an efficient and effective fish hatchery program and maintain full operating capacity.</b></p>	<p>Large transport tanks are currently being constructed. Office upgrades have been completed at Nampa Fish Hatchery and bids and designs have been obtained at other hatcheries.</p>	<p><b>Ensure an efficient and effective fish hatchery program and maintain full operating capacity.</b></p>	<p>Replace three water supply pumps at hatcheries which depend upon them. Continue updating hatchery offices and dormitories.</p>
<p><b>Manage avian predation where it affects native fish conservation and/or sport fish management objectives.</b></p>	<p>IDFG staff used a combination of nonlethal hazing and USFWS-authorized nest take to dissuade birds from nesting at Blackfoot Reservoir and actively manage the number of pelican nests at Chesterfield Reservoir.</p> <p>The designated “conservation area” in which birds were allowed to nest was reduced in size by approximately 50% compared to FY22; birds attempting to nest outside of this area were dissuaded using non-lethal hazing techniques.</p> <p>IDFG staff conducted both non-lethal and USFWS-authorized lethal hazing activities along the Blackfoot River, and contracted with Wildlife Services to implement non-lethal hazing at Silver Creek.</p> <p>Pelican breeding colonies were monitored with a combination of ground counts and drone surveys in conjunction with the triennial statewide aerial pelican fixed-wing flight survey of all major waterbodies.</p> <p>IDFG staff used a combination of electric fish weirs and traps, backpack electrofishing and tagging to estimate abundance and survival of various size classes of Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout; information collected allowed assessment of fish population trends and effectiveness of pelican management strategies.</p>	<p><b>Manage avian predation where it affects native fish conservation and/or sport fish management objectives.</b></p>	<p>Use a combination of lethal and non-lethal techniques to maintain breeding bird population objectives at nesting colonies in the Southeast and Upper Snake regions.</p> <p>Conduct pelican hazing activities at priority waters (e.g., Blackfoot River and Silver Creek).</p> <p>Conduct breeding population and productivity surveys at all active pelican colonies.</p> <p>Monitor population dynamics, abundance, and predation rates for the Upper Blackfoot River Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout population to measure the effectiveness of pelican management strategies.</p>
<p><b>Plan, design, permit and implement restoration activities in the Pack River Delta and pursue other wildlife restoration opportunities throughout Lake Pend Oreille.</b></p>	<p>Clark Fork Delta Phase 3 Restoration vegetation planting was completed in July 2022. A total of 95,000 willows, upland herbaceous, and upland woody plants were planted on the newly created 40 acres of wetland and riparian habitat. Worked on designing, planning, contractor prequalification and permitting for Pack River Delta Phase 2 Restoration construction planned for fall of FY24.</p>	<p><b>Plan, design, permit and implement restoration activities in the Pack River Delta and pursue other wildlife restoration opportunities throughout Lake Pend Oreille impacted by operations of Albeni Falls dam.</b></p>	<p>Coordinate with federal partners to implement North Idaho Memorandum of Understanding and initiate and complete Pack River Delta Phase 3 Habitat Restoration in FY24. Finalize project design and plans, complete permitting and environmental compliance, select contractor and complete construction.</p>

FY 2023-2026 Management Direction	Brief statement of FY 2023 status/progress/accomplishment	FY 2024-2027 Management Direction	Tasks/Actions planned in FY 2024
<p><b>Continue to integrate State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) implementation across Fish and Game programs and facilitate SWAP use and accomplishment reporting by Fish and Game staff.</b></p>	<p>Organizational structure remains in place as the SWAP is currently undergoing review by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Review Team.</p> <p>The SWAP 2022 revision effort incorporated the latest information on climate change, including the 2022 AFWA Voluntary Guidance for States to Incorporate Climate Adaptation in State Wildlife Action Plans and Other Management Plans (2nd ed.).</p> <p>Developing an online version of a user interface for a web-enabled SWAP is pending approval of the SWAP revision by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Review Team. In the meantime, the final draft is available on the IDFG public website.</p> <p>Further development of draft Conservation Opportunity Areas is currently on hold pending approval of the revised SWAP by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.</p> <p>All tasks associated with this action were completed and the final draft SWAP was submitted to the US Fish and Wildlife Service for Regional Review Team review in January 2023.</p>	<p><b>Continue to integrate State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) implementation across Fish and Game programs, facilitate SWAP use and initiate efforts to develop an accomplishments reporting tool.</b></p>	<p>Organize and deliver region-specific “SWAP Implementation” workshops in each of IDFG’s seven administrative regions to identify opportunities for integrated implementation.</p> <p>Develop an accomplishments reporting tool to track SWAP implementation across all Fish and Game programs.</p> <p>Pending approval of the revised SWAP by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Review Team, develop an online version of a user interface for a web-enabled SWAP.</p>
<p><b>Improve populations and resiliency of native fish by partnering with governmental agencies, landowners, and private entities to improve aquatic habitats and develop and maintain screening facilities to minimize entrainment into irrigation systems.</b></p>	<p>Specific efforts and actions include property acquisitions in the Clark Fork, diversion replacements in the Bear River, completion of the third and final phase of the Blackfoot River WMA in-stream rehabilitation project and participation in habitat rehabilitation working groups on the South Fork of the Snake River. Statewide, staff made a concerted effort to apply for external grants to fund habitat project design and implementation. The native fish habitat program is expanding capacity and projects are in development in Silver Creek, the Middle Fork of the Boise River and the Potlatch River.</p>	<p><b>Improve populations and resiliency of native fish by partnering with governmental agencies, landowners and private entities to improve aquatic habitats and develop and maintain screening facilities to minimize entrainment into irrigation systems.</b></p>	<p>Continue working with partners in the Clark Fork, Blackfoot, Bear, South Fork of the Snake river and other priority drainages. The primary goals of planned projects are to address fish passage barriers, screen irrigation diversions and restore habitat.</p>





FY 2023-2026 Management Direction	Brief statement of FY 2023 status/progress/accomplishment	FY 2024-2027 Management Direction	Tasks/Actions planned in FY 2024
<p><b>Formalize an effort to gather information to inform the public of the effects of unlawful harvest.</b></p>	<p>No progress to create user based report to evaluate unlawful big game data and merge historical data; ITS work load and capacity still in development.</p> <p>Mobile data terminal project (MDTP) went live in FY2023. Officers have been able to issue E-citations with their new equipment. District conservation officers (DCO) Stanley is still in the process of collecting data to determine if the project is feasible long term.</p> <p>ITS has assisted the enforcement bureau with technical problems in the reports management system.</p> <p>As of 6/22/2023, ISP is in RFP for their new records management system.</p> <p>DCO Stanley is tracking time spent in the patrol vehicle; performing administrative tasks (uploading body camera footage) to determine if more violations are found with officers using the MDTP vs. officers performing their administrative duties at their home office</p>	<p><b>Increase officer presence and patrol efforts statewide.</b></p>	<p>Finalize IDFG pilot project to evaluate mobile data terminal viability in patrol vehicles.</p> <p>Prioritize public contacts and violation detection.</p> <p>Reduce administrative effort for patrol officers. Identify a web-based storage system for body-camera footage to reduce hours spent downloading large quantities of video footage.</p>
<p><b>Prevent wildlife damage to private lands and compensate private landowners for wildlife damage to crops and forage.</b></p>	<p>The Department completed construction on 43 total stackyards during FY23.</p> <p>Facilitated bi-monthly Teams meetings, group emails, individual phone calls and emails to discuss, provide training and recommendations to staff based on depredation research; investigated potential depredation techniques; initiated development of an operations manual to evaluate big game crop damage with the use of drones and worked with a local company to develop an application for synthesizing drone data to assist with big game crop damage evaluations; compiled a big game depredations operating manual; updated, printed, and published on our website "A Landowner's Guide to Preventing Big Game Damage and Filing Damage Claims" brochure; updated our Big Game Depredation webpage.</p> <p>Completed FY23 and FY24 continued use agreement with Big Sky Farms to address big game depredations.</p>	<p><b>Prevent wildlife damage to private lands and compensate private landowners for wildlife damage to crops and forage.</b></p>	<p>Increase prevention efforts in Regions 5 &amp; 6 in response to changing big game movement and agricultural practices.</p> <p>Provide training and recommendations to staff based on depredation research; investigate additional potential depredation techniques; complete development of an operations manual for evaluating big game crop damage with the use of drones and an application for synthesizing drone data to assist with big game crop damage evaluations; and complete a big game depredations operating manual.</p>



FY 2023-2026 Management Direction	Brief statement of FY 2023 status/progress/accomplishment	FY 2024-2027 Management Direction	Tasks/Actions planned in FY 2024
<p><b>Update wildlife species management plans on a six-year interval.</b></p>	<p>Revision of the Elk Management Plan was initiated in FY2023.</p> <p>The Pronghorn Management Plan 2023-2028 was approved by the Fish and Game Commission in FY2023.</p> <p>Revision of the Mountain Lion Management Plan was not completed in FY2023 due to prioritization of completing a Wolf Management Plan.</p> <p>The Fisher, Wolverine, &amp; Canada Lynx Management Plan was approved by the Fish and Game Commission in FY2023.</p>	<p><b>Update wildlife species management plans on a six-year interval.</b></p>	<p>Provide the Elk Management Plan for Fish and Game Commission review and approval in FY2024.</p> <p>Initiate revision of the Black Bear Management Plan in FY2024</p> <p>Provide the Mountain Lion Management Plan for Fish and Game Commission review and approval in FY2024.</p>
<p><b>Restore and/or reconnect habitat in the Potlatch and Upper Salmon River basins to increase habitat for anadromous and resident salmonids.</b></p>	<p>Staff in the Potlatch River continued developing two large habitat restoration projects in a priority drainage and have completed a feasibility study related to increasing water availability in a priority watershed. In the Upper Salmon, staff successfully implemented all projects planned and developed six projects for implementation in the coming years.</p>	<p><b>Restore and/or reconnect habitat in the Potlatch and Upper Salmon River basins to increase habitat for anadromous and resident salmonids.</b></p>	<p>Habitat restoration biologists in the Potlatch and Upper Salmon will continue enhancing fish habitat to address factors limiting growth and survival of anadromous and resident fish species. Complete one project planned in the West Fork of Little Bear Creek, three projects in the Lemhi River, two projects in the Pahsimeroi River, and three culvert to bridge projects in development on Upper Salmon River tributaries.</p>

## FY 2022-2027 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance Measure	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Benchmark
<p>1: Compliance with regulations (<i># of violations / # of licenses checked</i>)</p>	<p>3,464/46,578 (7.4% / 7.4%)</p>						<p>Less than 10% of licenses checked result in violation/ check 8% of total licenses sold</p>

<p>2: Opportunity to harvest game fish (<i># of Department-operated hatchery-raised resident and anadromous fish stocked in ponds, lakes, and streams</i>)</p>	<p>29,996,944</p>						<p>30,000,000</p>
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**Performance Measure Explanatory Notes:**

- The benchmark is based on past performance by Department officers.
- The benchmark is based on meeting 92% of fisheries manager's requests for trout and kokanee and 92% of steelhead and salmon hatchery capacity.



# GOAL

## Fish and Wildlife Recreation

*Meet the demand for hunting, fishing, trapping and other wildlife recreation.*

### OBJECTIVES

*Maintain a diversity of fishing, hunting and trapping opportunities.*

*Sustain fish and wildlife recreation on public lands.*

*Increase the variety and distribution of access to private land for fish and wildlife recreation.*

*Increase opportunities for wildlife viewing and appreciation.*

### STRATEGIES

- ▶ Provide opportunities specific to the needs of beginners, youth, people with disabilities and families.
  - ▶ Assess participation, demand and satisfaction with hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities. Adjust management to achieve objectives.
  - ▶ Provide diverse hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities to meet the desires for a wide variety of user groups.
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- ▶ Protect the public's right to use public lands and waters for hunting, fishing, trapping and wildlife viewing.
  - ▶ Work with landowners to obtain public access across private lands to public lands.
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- ▶ Provide incentives and services to landowners who allow public access for hunting, fishing and trapping.
  - ▶ Improve landowner/sportsmen cooperation through communication and enforcement of hunting, fishing and trapping rules.
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- ▶ Promote and publicize wildlife appreciation opportunities.
  - ▶ Partner with other agencies, local communities and others to develop wildlife appreciation facilities, opportunities and materials on other land ownerships.

## OBJECTIVES

*Maintain broad public support for hunting, fishing, trapping and viewing.*

## STRATEGIES

- ▶ Emphasize ethics, safety and fair chase in hunting, fishing and trapping through Fish and Game education and enforcement programs.
- ▶ Publicize the economic and social benefits of hunting, fishing, trapping and wildlife viewing.
- ▶ Expand opportunities to take hunter and trapper education classes.
- ▶ Promote hunting, fishing and trapping as important tools for conserving and managing Idaho’s fish and wildlife.
- ▶ Emphasize the role of the sportsman conservationist in funding wildlife conservation and management in Idaho.
- ▶ Use research and marketing to maintain and increase participation in hunting, fishing and trapping.

## FY 2024-2027 MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

FY 2023-2026 Management Direction	Brief statement of FY 2023 status/progress/accomplishment	FY 2024-2027 Management Direction	Tasks/Actions planned in FY 2024
<p><b>Make it easier to go hunting and fishing, including streamlining purchasing, improving licensing options for special populations and other customer service improvements.</b></p>	<p>Vendor coordinator visited multiple locations throughout the state to provide requested training, assist with installation and setup of new vendors and to establish better communications between regional offices and local vendor location. Also implemented use of new communication channels directly to vendor terminals to provide important information directly to each vendor.</p> <p>Furbearer Trapping Report has been moved to an electronic platform, and is currently undergoing testing from a group of trappers willing to provide feedback. Additional online options are being explored, including demonstrations from our licensing system contractor on mobile app “text-to-harvest” options.</p> <p>Successful implementation of various system-wide enhancements to streamline “behind-the-scenes” processing to improve system speed and performance during high volume sales. Also found ways to remove clicks and selections from the purchase process during high volume sales, such as up-sells and hard card selections.</p> <p>767 additional subscribers were added, and a total of 3,800,736 emails were delivered in FY 2023.</p> <p>Expanded reach of social media channels as a tool to communicate high profile sales information in real time.</p> <p>Initiated evaluation of feasibility of implementation and timeline with our licensing vendor. Tentative experimental rollout in scheduled for 2024.</p>	<p><b>Make it easier to go hunting and fishing, including streamlining purchasing, improving licensing options for special populations, and other customer service improvements.</b></p>	<p>Implement electronic Salmon and Steelhead permits, with electronic validation and reporting of harvest.</p> <p>Continue to improve harvest-reporting opportunities by allowing electronic reporting for additional species.</p> <p>Evaluate the licensing system customer interface to find opportunities to enhance the user experience while using the licensing system.</p> <p>Grow email subscribers and continue to utilize email to keep customers informed on important news and information. Explore use of existing Brandt texting option to provide additional communication option for customers.</p> <p>Continue monitoring and maintaining the social media and digital customer service channels in a space that is seeing constant change and increasing demand.</p> <p>Implement and evaluate electronic Salmon and Steelhead permits along with electronic validation of permits and reporting of harvest.</p>

FY 2023-2026 Management Direction	Brief statement of FY 2023 status/progress/accomplishment	FY 2024-2027 Management Direction	Tasks/Actions planned in FY 2024
<p><b>Improve hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities on private and public lands, including Wildlife Management Areas, and ensure adequate access to a diverse array of lands and waters.</b></p>	<p>Fully implemented the third year of the NRCS access grant and worked to extend the grant to spend the remaining fund next fiscal year. Fully spent the \$300,000 allocation expanding parcels enrolled in Access Yes! program.</p> <p>Provided routine technical assistance to federal land managers during land management planning and decision processes that included recommendations to maintain or improve access to public lands for hunting, fishing, and trapping.</p> <p>Began implementing construction on a wetland project at Market Lake WMA based on the wetland review and will continue to seek funding to begin design work on a wetland project at Sterling WMA that is based on wetland review recommendations.</p> <p>The SEP project construction was started in late spring of 2023, construction and revegetation is currently ongoing. The NAWCA project has a contractor selected, a project design build plan is currently underway, and work is projected to begin during the fall of 2023.</p> <p>Provided technical and financial assistance to improve non-motorized access trails in the Frank Church and Selway Bitterroot Wilderness areas. Entered into 3 agreements for non-motorized trail maintenance, two for the Frank Church Wilderness area and one for the Selway Bitterroot Wilderness area. Also entered into a 5-year agreement to assist the Nez Perce-Clearwater Forest in improving 130 miles of non-motorized trails and pack bridges. We provided updated equipment for backcountry airstrip maintenance in the Salmon Region and provided staff and resources for a backcountry airstrip evaluations flight.</p> <p>Provided funding to assist with a fishing platform, boat ramp parking expansion and boat ramp restoration on the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest. Provided road maintenance (gravel) at Mud Lake, Deer Parks, Market Lake, Cartier, Andrus, Boundary Creek, Georgetown Summit, Craig Mountain, Boise River, and Sterling WMAs. Fishing and boating access projects were completed at Deer Creek (Salmon Region), Kids Pond (Salmon Region), Stonebreaker (Southwest Region), Shepherd (Panhandle Region), and Cedar Draw (Magic Valley Region). In addition, parcels are being or have been purchased for creating new sites at The SF Clearwater (Clearwater Region) and Coeur d'Alene rivers.</p> <p>30,131 pheasants were stocked at 24 sites located across all seven regions of the state during fall 2022 seasons. Stocking information for each release site was posted on the Department website.</p>	<p><b>Improve hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities on private and public lands, including Wildlife Management Areas, and ensure adequate access to a diverse array of lands and waters.</b></p>	<p>Implement final year of USDA NRCS Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program access agreement.</p> <p>Provide technical assistance statewide to federal land managers during land management planning and decision processes that includes recommendations to ensure access to public lands for hunting, fishing and trapping.</p> <p>Increase opportunities for viewers to experience wildlife at destinations across the state by building wildlife viewing blinds, analyzing viewer visitation on WMAs and promoting the Idaho birding trail.</p> <p>Finalize the SEP project construction and begin revegetation of the project. Approve design build plans for the NAWCA project and begin construction of the project. Both projects should be finalized up by the end of FY24.</p> <p>Support U.S. Forest Service and trail association activities to improve backcountry trail access in Frank Church and Selway Bitterroot Wilderness areas.</p> <p>Identify and secure new fishing and boating access sites at key locations and subsequently develop amenities (ramps, dock, restrooms). For existing sites, maintain and upgrade amenities as needed</p> <p>Stock approximately 29,000 pheasants at 23 sites during fall 2023 seasons. Add any new stocking locations to the Department website.</p> <p>Work with Idaho Department of Lands to update the access agreement to the 2.4 million acres of IDL lands across Idaho.</p>

FY 2023-2026 Management Direction	Brief statement of FY 2023 status/progress/accomplishment	FY 2024-2027 Management Direction	Tasks/Actions planned in FY 2024
<p><b>The hunter education program will select public range grantees annually in conjunction with the recommendations of the Citizens Advisory Committee.</b></p>	<p>This year the shooting range grant program awarded \$476,760 in Pittman-Robertson funds and \$32,100 in Fine &amp; Forfeiture funds to selected ranges across Idaho.</p>	<p><b>Maintain or grow hunter, bowhunter and trapper education student numbers. Spend efforts on recruiting and retaining quality instructors. Adapt technology to meet the public where they are as far as expectations for learning opportunities such as online or hybrid options.</b></p>	<p>Launch improved hunter education web pages that are simplified and customer-centric. Standardize programs across regions including course types, lesson plans and the length of courses. Adopt revised online hunter education course and insert updated Idaho specific videos.</p>
<p><b>Promote Access Yes! and seek out new participants and partners in public access.</b></p>	<p>Updated the Access Yes! website; updated, produced, and distributed 9,000 copies of the Access Yes! brochure; maintained Access Yes!, Large Tracts Access, and Idaho Department of Lands lease websites and WMA webpages; developed and improved Interactive Motorized Use Restrictions maps for Large Tracts properties; added Wildlife Habitat Areas and Forest Legacy parcels to our access webpage.</p>	<p><b>Improve accessibility of information on the variety of recreational access opportunities the Department provides for the public across the state.</b></p>	<p>Continue to implement Access campaign to provide information on the variety of access opportunities the Department provides, including Fish and Game-owned land, Access Yes! properties, Wildlife Management Areas, Idaho Department of Land Leases, Large Tract leases and Forest Legacy properties.</p>
<p><b>Continue management based fishery research projects to enhance the ability to conserve native fish populations and meet sport fish management objectives.</b></p>	<p>Statewide sampling of black bass continued. Tournament angling mortality evaluation added to study.</p> <p>Research evaluations are ongoing. Mediated discussions with Kootenai Tribe of Idaho on management approaches are ongoing.</p> <p>Diet and predation study complete; suppression monitoring ongoing.</p> <p>Quantitative methods, including evaluation of social capacity has been completed and submitted for peer review.</p>	<p><b>Continue management based fishery research projects to enhance the ability to conserve native fish populations and meet sport fish management objectives.</b></p>	<p>Finish statewide sampling of black bass, and begin project analysis and reporting.</p> <p>Continue evaluations of Kootenai River White Sturgeon density dependence.</p> <p>Continue evaluations of efficacy of walleye suppression in Lake Pend Oreille.</p>
<p><b>Train and outfit Idaho trappers with the information they need to trap safely and ethically.</b></p>	<p>Maintained course equipment and supplies in all IDFG regions. Trained and certified 24 new trapper education instructors. Fur School was held in May 2023 with 18 attendees.</p> <p>Conducted 42 trapper and 30 wolf trapper education classes for 1,415 students throughout Idaho. Often paired trapper and wolf trapper classes to allow students to complete both classes in tandem.</p> <p>Videos are now available through AFWA YouTube channel and other media outlets. This project is completed, but may be updated in future years.</p>	<p><b>Train and outfit Idaho trappers with the information they need to trap safely and ethically.</b></p>	<p>Maintain trapper and wolf trapper course equipment and supplies; train and certify new instructors; and conduct annual Fur School for Fish and Game employees.</p> <p>Teach trapper education courses to meet demands of the public. Update trapper education exam. Refine wolf trapper education curriculum.</p>

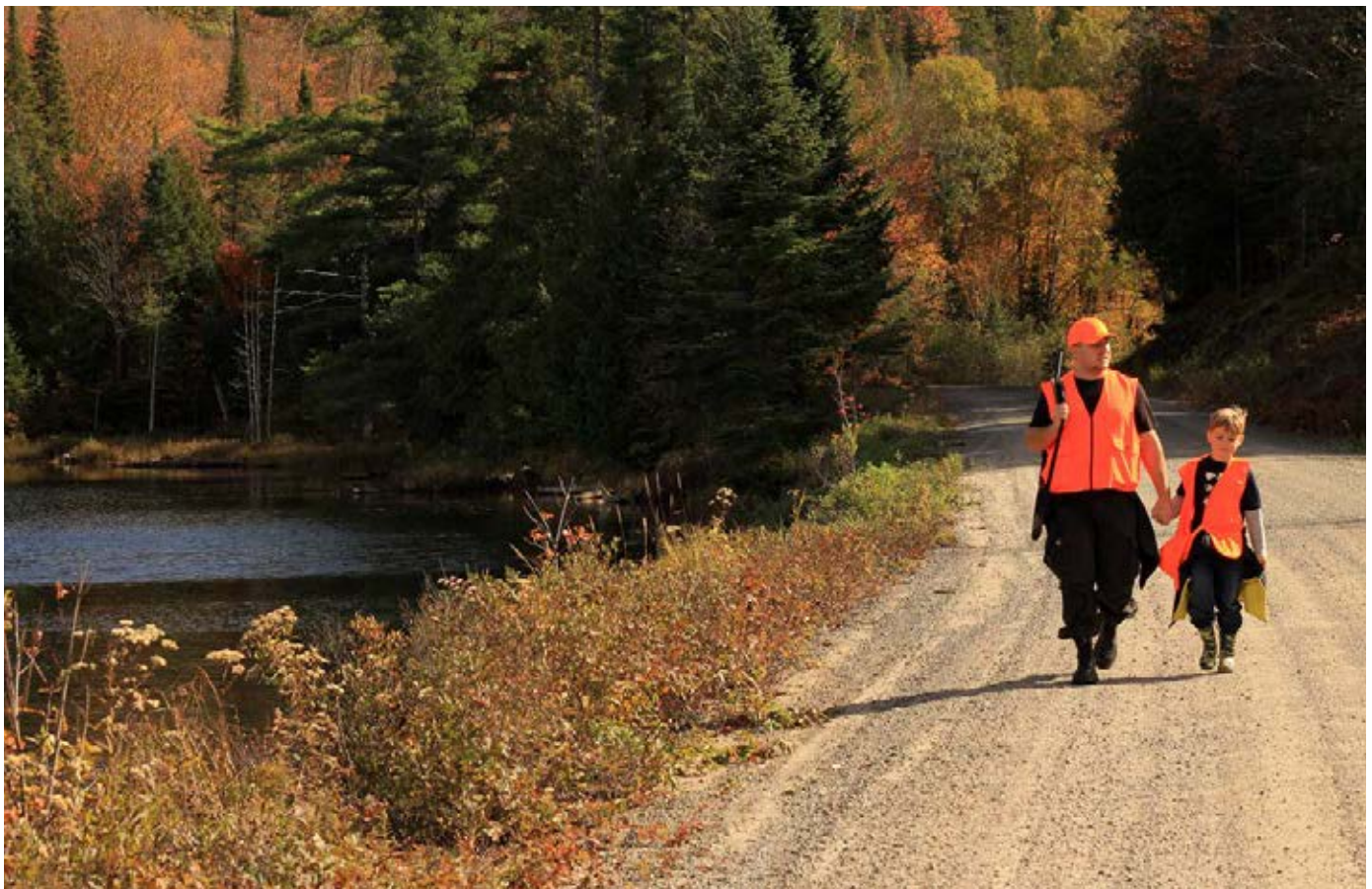


# FY 2022-2027 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance Measure	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Benchmark
3: Landowners allow access for fish & wildlife recreation (# of properties enrolled / # private acres in Access Yes! Program)	93 / 336,518						90 / 350,000
4: Landowners with 50,000+ acre parcels allow access for fish & wildlife recreation (# private acres in Large Tract Program)	893,343						941,000
5: Idahoans can access endowment lands for fish and wildlife recreation, while maintaining the integrity of IDL's constitutional responsibility (# acres in Idaho Endowment Lands Partnership Program)	2.35 Million						2.35 Million
6: Idaho citizens hunt, trap, and uphold the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation (# of resident hunting and combination license holders / # resident trapping license holders)	259,547 / 2,191						245,000 / 2,300
7: Idaho citizens fish and uphold the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation (# of resident fishing license holders)	177,497						166,000

**Performance Measure Explanatory Notes:**

- 3. The benchmark is based on past success of the Access Yes! program, and the cost per acre.
- 4. This measure was added in FY 2020. The benchmark is based on maintaining the FY 2020 level of acreage, past success of the Large Tract program, available budget and cost per acre.
- 5. This measure was added in FY 2020. The benchmark is based on maintaining the FY 2020 level of acreage, past success of the Endowment Land Agreement, available budget and cost per acre.
- 6. This measure was added in FY 2020. The benchmark is based on maintaining the calendar year 2019 level of resident hunting and combo license holders and FY 2020 trapping license holder.
- 7. This measure was added in FY 2020. The benchmark is based on maintaining the calendar year 2019 level of resident fishing license holders.



# GOAL

## Working with Others

*Improve public understanding of and involvement in fish and wildlife management.*

### OBJECTIVES

*Improve citizen involvement in the decision-making process.*

*Increase public knowledge and understanding of Idaho's fish and wildlife.*

### STRATEGIES

- ▶ Ensure that interested and affected stakeholders are notified of opportunities to participate in decisions and that all voices are heard.
  - ▶ Improve variety and convenience of opportunities for citizens to be involved in Fish and Game decisions.
  - ▶ Utilize new information technologies, such as social media and other web-based platforms to broaden participation in proposal development and agency decision-making.
  - ▶ Utilize opinion surveys to sample a cross-section of sportsmen and sportswomen.
- 
- ▶ Provide biological information on Idaho's fish and wildlife to convey the status of populations and the basis for management decisions.
  - ▶ Expand utilization of new information technologies to improve public outreach.
  - ▶ Provide timely and accurate information on recreational opportunities, management actions and important news related to fish and wildlife an hunting, fishing, trapping and viewing opportunities.





# FY 2024-2027 MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

FY 2023-2026 Management Direction	Brief statement of FY 2023 status/progress/accomplishment	FY 2024-2027 Management Direction	Tasks/Actions planned in FY 2024
<p><b>Continue to build citizen engagement in wildlife conservation and management and use existing programs like Master Naturalist and volunteers to involve citizens and keep them engaged.</b></p>	<p>Statewide volunteer management system was put on hold due to lack of technical capacity within the department.</p> <p>Biennial Master Naturalist training rendezvous held in September, 2022 with 50 attendees. Support and coordination provided to statewide Master Naturalist chapters throughout the year.</p>	<p><b>Continue to build citizen engagement in wildlife conservation and management and use existing programs like Master Naturalist and volunteers to involve citizens and keep them engaged.</b></p>	<p>Explore new systems for accurately and efficiently recording volunteer time.</p> <p>Continue to provide support and coordination to Master Naturalists chapters statewide.</p>
<p><b>Build capacity and utilize website and social media in a strategic manner.</b></p>	<p>Website upgrades to the current software version continued including ongoing content migration. Content continues to be regularly updated and the application of best practices for usability have been initiated.</p> <p>Staff training opportunities were included as part of the ongoing website upgrade process to ensure end-users have necessary knowledge and capabilities.</p> <p>Standardized template for public virtual meetings using Zoom Webinar platform. Transitioned to use of in-person meetings and self-directed web portals for public feedback as Covid restrictions were removed.</p> <p>The website digital content management system upgrades continued for the current software version. Both technical functionality upgrades and content migration are ongoing. Content continues to be regularly updated and the application of best practices for usability have been initiated.</p>	<p><b>Build capacity and utilize website and social media in a strategic manner.</b></p>	<p>Complete the website software upgrade and content migration, and continue enhancing website usability through application of best practices.</p> <p>Train staff on the upgraded website functionality and data management processes to improve information delivery and accessibility, and support staff use of the website and social media as part of their regular duties.</p> <p>Identify opportunities for statewide webinar educational opportunities to maximize reach of curriculum created for smaller audiences.</p> <p>Plan for a comprehensive website modernization project, including bureau and end-user research, to meet long-term Department and public communications needs.</p>
<p><b>Continue to increase public knowledge of the importance of sportspeople to fish and wildlife conservation efforts.</b></p>	<p>A new kiosk was completed during FY23, providing a larger space for educational displays for nature center visitors.</p> <p>Created and executed hunter-focused and angler-focused marketing campaigns and ongoing email campaigns that serve to elevate the role of hunters and anglers and educate the public about the role that license sales play in conservation management.</p>	<p><b>Continue to increase public knowledge of the importance of sportspeople to fish and wildlife conservation efforts.</b></p>	<p>Complete comprehensive statewide identity survey and subsequent focus group research to inform a strategic communications plan on the importance of sportspeople to conservation.</p>
<p><b>Increase public knowledge of unlawful fishing and hunting activity; better inform the public about flagrant violations; and promote citizen reporting of wildlife crime.</b></p>	<p>Assistant Chief Jack's CPM project was completed and "Be a Good Witness" video was successfully released via YouTube and through social media.</p> <p>RCMs collaborated regularly with regional enforcement staff to alert the public and seek help on high-profile cases. Publicized poaching convictions to highlight enforcement success and to disincentivize potential poachers.</p>	<p><b>Increase public knowledge of unlawful fishing and hunting activity; better inform the public about flagrant violations; and promote citizen reporting of wildlife crime.</b></p>	<p>Work with Enforcement to scope FY24 communications priorities for enforcement on a statewide level.</p> <p>Continue successful collaboration between RCMs and regional enforcement staff to communicate enforcement issues as they arise.</p>

FY 2023-2026 Management Direction	Brief statement of FY 2023 status/progress/accomplishment	FY 2024-2027 Management Direction	Tasks/Actions planned in FY 2024
<b>Develop and implement educational outreach materials and programs aligned with Fish and Game Commission and agency priorities and goals to be used throughout the state.</b>	Conservation programs were streamlined this year to focus resources on areas with the greatest return on investment. Due to a significant decline in demand for Project WILD programs, this program was discontinued in FY23 and staff shifted to provide support for nature center education programs. The Aquatic Education (AE) program added new opportunities to include Spanish and school group fishing trailer events.	<b>Adopt standardized approaches for all regions that concentrate efforts on fewer programs, but increases the quality and desired outcomes.</b>	Review FY23 AE regional fishing trailer innovations to determine if these changes should be implemented statewide.
<b>Continue Controlled Hunt management efforts to minimize the timeframe between close of the application period and posting of results.</b>	Formalized procedures and step-by-step instructions on processing the draw have been established. With addition of new staff, these procedures are being further refined and expected to be completed by the end of 2023.	<b>Continue Controlled Hunt management efforts to minimize the timeframe between close of the application period and posting of results.</b>	Create a checklist of prior year items that caused delays in posting results to proactively address before the application periods are closed.
<b>Expand understanding and acceptance of IDFG's mission.</b>	Scoped project, hired survey provider and drafted first comprehensive Idaho Fish and Game identity survey in several years. Data gathered will form the basis of the plan to communicate IDFG's mission to the public.	<b>Expand understanding and acceptance of IDFG's mission.</b>	Conduct survey, analyze results and begin focus group research to inform communications plan.
<b>Employ marketing best practices to produce the results most desired by our commission and department leadership; strengthen the department's relationship with license holders and the public; and strengthen our fiscal resilience by growing the department's user base at a reasonable level.</b>	<p>Created Communications Bureau workplan that set new goal to integrate IDFG identity and goals into all Idaho Fish and Game communications.</p> <p>The Communication Bureau was briefed and integrated into the ongoing crowding research project being conducted by the department in collaboration with Kenny Wallen at the University of Idaho. Results of this survey will inform future communications efforts.</p> <p>Hunting and angling marketing campaigns were developed and executed to improve public perception and acceptance of hunting, fishing and conservation.</p> <p>Total license sales were down 2.1%, and resident license holders were unchanged for calendar year 2022 versus 2021.</p> <p>Planned, developed and executed statewide hunting, hunter ed and fishing marketing campaigns with a focus on the importance of mentoring to support new hunters, anglers and trappers.</p>	<b>Employ marketing best practices to produce the results most desired by our commission and department leadership; strengthen the department's relationship with license holders and the public; and strengthen our fiscal resilience by growing the department's user base at a reasonable level.</b>	<p>Information and Marketing sections of the Marketing Bureau will analyze survey data and create messaging for integration into all department communications.</p> <p>Integrate University of Idaho survey results into long-term crowding perceptions communications effort.</p> <p>Create revised hunting and angling campaigns using lessons learned from 2023 campaigns.</p> <p>Achieve annual rate of growth of 2.5% for all license sales and 3% for resident license holders over the next three years.</p> <p>Assess success of FY 2023 campaigns and revise FY 2024 campaigns to improve effectiveness and broaden reach.</p>

## FY 2022-2027 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance Measure	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Benchmark
8: Effectively convey and distribute information about wildlife and wildlife-based recreation (# of unique visitors per year to Fish and Game website)	3.64 million						2.00 million

**Performance Measure Explanatory Notes:**

8. The benchmark is based on expected growth in web traffic.

# GOAL

## Management Support

*Enhance the capability of the Department to manage fish and wildlife and serve the public.*

### OBJECTIVES

*Attract and retain a diverse and professional workforce.*

*Provide programs, equipment and facilities for excellent customer service and management effectiveness.*

*Improve information management and business systems.*

### STRATEGIES

- ▶ Seek competitive salaries for Fish and Game employees.
- ▶ Provide training and professional development opportunities.
- ▶ Reward leadership, integrity, competency, professionalism and innovation.
  
- ▶ Use the fleet management program to efficiently acquire and manage Fish and Game vehicles and field equipment.
- ▶ Promote and strengthen volunteer programs to assist with habitat and fish and wildlife management and education.
- ▶ Work closely with license vendors to ensure accurate delivery of licenses and tags.
- ▶ Provide facilities that foster effective customer service and productive work environments.
  
- ▶ Develop data management system to make Fish and Game data more readily usable and available to the public, other agencies and employees.
- ▶ Implement an electronic licensing system that is reliable, adaptable, user friendly and cost effective.



# FY 2024-2027 MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

FY 2023-2026 Management Direction	Brief statement of FY 2023 status/progress/accomplishment	FY 2024-2027 Management Direction	Tasks/Actions planned in FY 2024
<p><b>Increase enforcement-related public outreach and community involvement at the local level to keep citizens informed of opportunities to engage and participate.</b></p>	<p>Four new Regional Conservation Officers engaged their regional communications managers resulting in increased enforcement related outreach.</p> <p>Assistant Chief B. Jack completed his CPM project. This included four, two-minute videos to educate the public on key pieces of information needed to allow officers the opportunity to apprehend individuals that commit a fish and game violation.</p>	<p><b>Continue efforts to maintain an enforcement-related public outreach and community involvement at the local level to keep citizens informed of opportunities to engage and participate.</b></p>	<p>Encourage regional interest to publish enforcement related information that has a regional nexus and local interest.</p> <p>Publish regional articles that highlight wildlife crime investigations.</p>
<p><b>Optimize revenue through Session 2017 HB 230 and Price Lock in accordance to the Commission discount order.</b></p>	<p>Auto-Renew program is being upgraded to include the Sportsman Package as an available renewal license. Additional email reminders are planned to be sent in the late fall/early winter, with updated reminder language to provide clearer information on the Auto-Renew process.</p>	<p><b>Optimize revenue through Session 2017 HB 230 and Price Lock in accordance to the Commission discount order.</b></p>	<p>Expand efforts to market 3-year license options, highlighting the price lock option.</p>
<p><b>Improve technical and administrative infrastructure to increase efficiency and effectiveness of outreach efforts.</b></p>	<p>Initial integration work has been completed. IDFG staff is working on final steps to complete integration, with a goal of having the project completed by late 2023. This will allow for more transparent reporting on hunter education course graduates and their license purchase patterns.</p> <p>The agency privacy policy has been updated with revisions based on state of Idaho law. Additional legal review and guidance is being provided to allow IDFG to continue to best implement an updated policy. Marketing ROI is more easily trackable with the agency's upgrade to GA4 analytics, and connection with our licensing vendors existing analytics tools, allowing us to see accurate return on investment for all marketing efforts.</p>	<p><b>Improve technical and administrative infrastructure to increase efficiency and effectiveness of outreach efforts.</b></p>	<p>Review opportunities for additional education and skills courses to be integrated into the license sales system.</p> <p>Update agency's privacy policy, and work with license vendor to track marketing ROI on outreach efforts.</p>

# FY 2022-2027 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance Measure	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Benchmark
<p>9: Attract and retain highly qualified personnel (<i>% successful registers / % retention of hired FTEs after 2 years employment</i>)</p>	72 / 88						98 / 88

## Performance Measure Explanatory Notes:

9. A "successful register" is defined as one with at least 5 qualified applicants. The percent of successful registers was determined by the formula  $[\# \text{ successful registers} + \text{total open competitive registers}] * 100$ . The benchmark is based on the average over the past four fiscal years.

# The Landscape 2024: Key External Factors

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game strives to achieve the goals and meet or exceed the benchmarks established in this strategic plan. However, there are factors outside of the Department's control that may affect or prevent implementation of pieces and parts of the plan. Key external factors include:

## Population Increase

- o Growth in the population in both urban and rural areas requires new development to sustain the population needs, leading to diminished and/or reduced wildlife habitat and an increase in human-wildlife conflict.
- New resident expectations are created for the Department to assist them with wildlife conflicts.
- o Outdoor recreation demand increases with population growth, creating crowding issues at Department sites such as wildlife management areas and fishing and boating access sites.
- Maintenance and upgrade costs to meet general public expectations are rising.
- Sportsmen and sportswomen are frustrated with lack of access to resources paid for by their license dollars.

## Weather and Climate

- o Heat waves, harsh winters, droughts, or large wildfires contribute to adverse conditions for fish and wildlife.

## Energy and Mineral Development

- o The potential for abundant renewable energy resources requires the Department to evaluate possible effects of energy development on fish and wildlife. This is done in collaboration with the Governor's Offices of Species Conservation and Energy and Mineral Resources.

## Wildlife Disease

- o Prevention and control of disease continues to be a priority for establishing and maintaining wildlife populations that meet management objectives.





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