

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game considers the following document to be an agency guidance document for purposes of Idaho Executive Order 2020-002. The guidance document is not new law; it is the Department's interpretation or implementation of existing law.

Department Point of Contact (to obtain additional information or provide input):

Deputy Director, Programs and Policy
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
P.O. Box 25
Boise, ID 83707
Phone: (208) 334-3771
Email: rules@idfg.idaho.gov



IDAHO FISH AND GAME COMMISSION

600 South Walnut • Box 25 • Boise, Idaho 83707-0025 • 208-334-3700

Dirk Kempthorne
Governor

Steven M. Huffaker
Director

Commissioners:

Nancy Hadley
District 1
Sandpoint, Idaho

Alex Irby
District 2
Orofino, Idaho

John Watts
District 3
Boise, Idaho

Frederick L. Wood III, MD
District 4
Burley, Idaho

Marcus Gibbs
District 5
Grace, Idaho

Roy Moulton
District 6
Driggs, Idaho

John Burns
District 7
Carmen, Idaho

IDAHO FISH AND GAME COMMISSION POLICY

LAND ACQUISITION FOR SUSTAINABLE FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITATS AND RECREATION

Idaho Code 36-104 authorizes the Idaho Fish and Game Commission to acquire lands or water for the restoration, propagation and protection of fish and wildlife; to provide public hunting, fishing and trapping areas; and for other specific uses. Idaho Code also dedicates a portion of selected license fees for land acquisition and outlines specific procedures the Commission must follow in acquiring land and waters for these purposes. For the purposes of this policy land acquisition includes fee title, easements, agreements or gifts. This policy provides Commission guidance to the Department in identifying and acquiring property to sustain fish and wildlife resources and provide hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities as provided for by Idaho Code as follows:

The Idaho Fish and Game Commission recognizes acquisition and management of lands providing important habitat for fish, wildlife and associated recreation as an appropriate strategy to protect, preserve and perpetuate these resources for public use and enjoyment as well as for their ecological value. The Commission also recognizes that there are financial and other limitations on the amount of land the Department can own or manage. The Commission therefore directs the Department to focus on lands with high fish, wildlife and associated recreational value where Department ownership or management provides exceptional benefits for:

- Key habitats for game animals and fish
- Access for recreational use of fish and wildlife
- Mitigation for unavoidable impacts to fish and wildlife resources
- Habitats identified in state or regional fish or wildlife conservation plans
- Additions to existing wildlife management areas, easements or ownerships

The Department will first consider alternatives to fee title acquisition. Such alternatives may include easements, management agreements, leases and exchanges or other methods that may be more appropriate to address local conditions and stakeholder objectives.

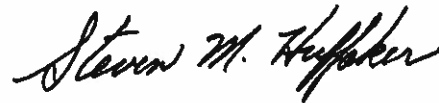
The Department will acquire land from willing sellers based on appraised value. Condemnation will only be used as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where no other alternative is available. As authorized by State law, the Department will pay fees in lieu of taxes on undeveloped land owned in fee title.

To enhance local community awareness and involvement in the land acquisition process, the Department will notify interested parties, county commissioners, members of the House and Senate Resources committees and local legislators of the proposed acquisition of fee title or other interest in property as early in the process as practical based on the Director's determination. The Department will consult with the Board of County Commissioners and other interested parties on all land acquisition proposals and conduct public hearings in affected counties where there is sufficient interest.

The Department may develop partnerships with other natural resource managers and non-governmental fish and wildlife conservation organizations that share the Department's mission to increase the cost effectiveness of the acquisition program.

The Department will develop plans and use a structured process with objective criteria to set priorities for future land acquisitions. The Department will continually evaluate all existing land holdings to determine if they should be sold or exchanged for lands of higher fish, wildlife and associated recreational value.

Approved by the Idaho Fish and Game Commission January 17, 2003.



Steven M. Huffaker
Secretary
Idaho Fish and Game Commission