



IDAHO FISH & GAME

600 South Walnut / Box 25
Boise, Idaho 83707-0025

Cecil D. Andrus / Governor
Jerry M. Conley / Director

October 14, 1994

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CH2M HILL
BOISE

Mr. Chuck Blair
The Wildlife Society
Boise ID 83706

Dear Mr. Blair:

At its October 6-7 meeting, the Idaho Fish and Game Commission (Commission) discussed the draft Conservation Strategy for Bull Trout. This document was prepared by fisheries staff from Idaho Department of Fish and Game (Department) and biologists from the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Commission believes if this conservation strategy is implemented, threats to bull trout in Idaho would be reduced sufficiently that a listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) would not be necessary.

Before the Commission adopts this strategy as policy, it needs to make sure those who will be affected agree that state implementation of this program is preferable to federal implementation under ESA.

In making your decision, it is important to consider two points. First, there is little doubt if actions are not taken before next spring, this species will be proposed for listing. The Department believes there is a very good chance that listing would be ruled warranted. Second, the Department does not believe that a watered-down version of this draft would be sufficient to remove the threats to bull trout to keep a listing from going forward as warranted. The Commission would appreciate your input. At the December meeting, the Commission will either adopt or disapprove this strategy as policy direction. The meeting will be held on December 1 and 2 in Boise. The Commission needs your input on this important decision on the State's leadership in the preservation and protection of Idaho's bull trout.

Sincerely,

Richard Hansen, Chairman
Idaho Fish and Game Commission

