

# Idaho Department of Fish and Game's Land Acquisition and Land Management Program

by  
Carla Wise and Jay O'Laughlin

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- The Idaho Forest, Wildlife and Range Policy Analysis Group was established by the Idaho Legislature in 1989 to provide objective analysis of the impacts of natural resource proposals (see *Idaho Code* § 38-714).
- The Policy Analysis Group is administered through the University of Idaho's College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences, John C. Hendee, Dean.

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- No. 2. BLM riparian policy in Idaho: analysis of public comment on a proposed policy statement. *K.L. Johnson, C. Mosley, J.C. Mosley, and J. O'Laughlin* (June 1990).
- No. 3. Idaho Department of Fish and Game's land acquisition and land management program. *C. Wise and J. O'Laughlin* (October 1990).

# **Idaho Department of Fish and Game's Land Acquisition and Land Management Program**

by

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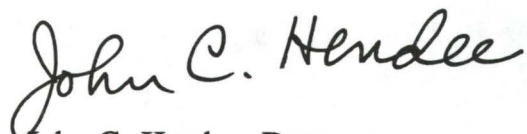
## Foreword

The Idaho Forest, Wildlife and Range Policy Analysis Group (PAG) was created by the Idaho legislature in 1989 to provide Idaho decision makers with timely and objective data and analyses of pertinent natural resource issues. A standing nine-member advisory committee (see inside cover) suggests issues and priorities for the PAG. Results of each analysis are reviewed by a technical advisory committee selected separately for each inquiry (see the acknowledgments, page ii). Findings are made available in a policy analysis publication series. This is the third report in the series.

Idahoans are fortunate to have abundant fish and wildlife resources throughout the state and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDF&G) has a mandate to manage and protect those resources. To meet that mission, one of IDF&G's activities is the acquisition and management of critical lands for fish and wildlife habitat and public access. The IDF&G land acquisition and management program was selected by the PAG advisory committee as a topic for analysis for several reasons.

Almost two thirds of the land in the state is publicly owned, giving rise to long-standing concern about further acquisition of private land by any state agency. The purpose and scope of IDF&G land stewardship have also been questioned, an indication that the public may not have a clear understanding of how IDF&G lands are managed. But of even greater concern today is that IDF&G lands are exempt from taxation. An amendment to the *Idaho Constitution* has been proposed (H.J.R. No. 14) that would allow IDF&G to provide local governments with payments in lieu of property taxes on its undeveloped lands if the legislature then specifically authorized those payments. This proposed amendment will be decided on the general election ballot by Idaho voters on November 6, 1990.

This report is intended to answer questions that citizens, legislators, and interest groups might have about the scope, purpose, and impact of IDF&G's land acquisition program when they consider their response to the proposed constitutional amendment allowing (but not authorizing) payments in lieu of property taxes on IDF&G lands.



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## Executive Summary

Should the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDF&G) be allowed to make payments in lieu of property taxes to the counties in which the Department owns land? Voters will be asked this question as a proposed constitutional amendment appearing on the November 6, 1990, general election ballot. The *Idaho Constitution* exempts state property from taxation and must be amended before the legislature can authorize payments to the counties. If a majority of the voters approve the amendment, the legislature may or may not decide to authorize such payments.

IDF&G supports the amendment, and would like to make reasonable payments to counties in order to promote better relations with the counties and private landowners, and make future land acquisitions easier. One criticism of the Department's land ownership is the decrease in local property tax revenue when the agency acquires land. If in lieu payments are authorized by the legislature, the total bill to the Department could be as much as \$300,000 per year, less than one percent of the Department's \$34.9 million budget.

The purpose of this report is to help citizens make an informed choice on the proposed constitutional amendment. Other information made available by the Legislative Council is included here. Questions have been raised about how much land IDF&G owns, why it owns land, how decisions about acquisitions are made, and how the land is managed. The report provides answers to these and other questions.

IDF&G owns 116,101 acres, less than one-fourth of one percent of the land in the state, and manages under easement, lease, or cooperative agreement an additional 91,113 acres of private, state, and federal land in Idaho for wildlife purposes. This ownership pattern is comparable to those of neighboring states, with the exceptions of Washington and Utah, where the fish and wildlife agencies own three times more land than IDF&G does. Fish and wildlife agencies in five neighboring states make payments in lieu of property taxes.

The two primary purposes of IDF&G lands are to provide (1) habitat for wildlife and fish, and (2) public access opportunities for hunting, fishing and other recreation involving wildlife. Land acquisitions for fish and wildlife purposes were first authorized by law in 1921. Acquisitions today are based on recommendations from IDF&G personnel, the judgment of the Director, and decisions by the six-member Fish and Game Commission. Occasionally land is given to the Department, and occasionally land is exchanged with other agencies, but most of the Department's land was purchased. Acquisition expenditures averaged \$598,377 per year from 1981 through 1990 with funding from a variety of sources, including hunting and fishing license fees, waterfowl stamps and artwork sales, and several federal programs. No land acquisition funding comes from general tax revenues. The sources of funds for in lieu payments have not been identified yet, but are likely to come from the same funding source used to acquire or manage individual land parcels.

IDF&G lands are multiple-use lands. Although the primary purpose of land management activities is to benefit wildlife and fish, a variety of other activities also occur on IDF&G lands, including farming, livestock grazing, timber harvest, and recreation activities.



## Issue Overview

Wildlife and fish populations clearly benefit from IDF&G lands, and many people in Idaho use and enjoy them. However, some people oppose any increase in public land ownership in Idaho. One reason is that public lands represent almost two-thirds of the land in the state. Another reason is that federal and state land is exempt from taxation under the *Idaho Constitution*,<sup>1</sup> so local governments lose property tax revenue used for schools and roads when a state agency acquires land previously in private ownership. The federal government, with vast holdings in the western states, dealt with this issue by enacting a law in 1907 to share revenue from the national forests with the counties.<sup>2</sup> Since then, 25 percent of timber sales and other receipts have been paid to the counties.<sup>3</sup> The Bureau of Land Management also shares revenues locally.

An amendment to the state constitution has been proposed that would make it possible for IDF&G to pay fees in lieu of taxes to counties in which IDF&G lands are located if the legislature subsequently authorizes such payments. In order to amend the *Idaho Constitution*, the majority of voters must approve the amendment,<sup>4</sup> which will appear on the November 6, 1990, general election ballot.

### Why has a Constitutional Amendment been Proposed?

IDF&G acquires several thousand acres each year. Most of it was previously taxed at low rates, and classified as dry grazing land, wetland, or forest land. In rural counties where property tax revenue is low and public land ownership is high, any reduction in revenues when lands change to state ownership can present a potential problem for local school districts.

The Idaho legislature tried to resolve the property tax issue in 1950 by enacting a law authorizing IDF&G to make payments in lieu of taxes to counties to be used locally as if they were tax revenues. The Idaho Supreme Court found this law unconstitutional<sup>5</sup> because it violated Section 4, Article VII, of the *Idaho Constitution*, which exempts public property from taxation with the following language:

"The property of the United States, except when taxation thereof is authorized by the United States, the state, counties, towns, cities, villages, school districts, and other municipal corporations and public libraries shall be exempt from taxation."  
[Emphasis added.]



This provision of the constitution still exists, and IDF&G has continued to acquire land that legally must be exempt from taxation. The following language will appear on the Idaho ballot this November:

"Shall Section 4, Article VII, of the Constitution of the State of Idaho be amended to provide that the unimproved real property owned or held by the Department of Fish and Game may be subject to a fee in lieu of taxes if the fees are authorized by statute and to provide that the fee may not exceed the property tax for the property at the time of acquisition by the Department of Fish and Game unless the tax for that class of property shall have been increased?"

If approved by a majority of voters, the above language of the proposed amendment would be added to the constitution following the existing Section 4, Article VII language on the previous page.

The proposed amendment is only the first step in requiring in lieu payments on IDF&G lands. If passed, unimproved property owned by the Department could be subject to an annual fee in lieu of property taxes if that fee is specifically authorized by the legislature, which may or may not decide to pass such a law. The amendment specifies that payments may not exceed the amount at which the unimproved land would have been taxed had it remained in private ownership. Improved property remains exempt from taxation; therefore office buildings, hatchery improvements, and other structures owned by IDF&G would not be subject to such fees. Land and public property held by other state and federal agencies in Idaho would not be affected and would retain its tax-exempt status.

### **Arguments For and Against the Proposed Amendment**

The Legislative Council--an impartial fact-finding agency established by the Idaho Legislature in 1963--has put together the information in Table 1\* describing some arguments for and against the proposed constitutional amendment.

The four arguments for the proposed amendment all have to do with the financial relationship between IDF&G, counties, and private landowners (Table 1).

The four arguments against the proposed amendment in Table 1 are more diverse and not as easily categorized as the arguments for it. The four points cover such things as (1) "bad precedent" and "double taxation," (2) "money...would be better spent in the propagation of fish and wildlife," (3) "there are more effective ways [to assist local units of government with fiscal problems]," and (4) "a fee in lieu of tax system should be done uniformly...and not target only one agency."

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\* Tables and Figures appear in order following the notes at the end of the report.



In point (3) of the arguments against the amendment (Table 1) the cost to the Department is likely to be closer to \$300,000 than the stated \$100,000 to \$150,000. Point (3) also states that this is "not a great deal of money" (even at \$300,000 it is less than one percent of IDF&G's budget) but the money will have to come from somewhere. Several potential sources are mentioned in the next section of this report.

An additional fact regarding the proposed amendment is that five neighboring state fish and wildlife agencies make payments in lieu of property taxes. Those states are Utah, Wyoming, Montana, Washington, and Oregon.

### **What is IDF&G's Position on the Proposed Amendment?**

The IDF&G Director supported the amendment to the *Idaho Constitution* during the 1990 legislature primarily because it would allow the Department to continue to acquire lands deemed necessary to meet its mission and would eliminate one source of controversy regarding IDF&G land ownership.

### **How much will the payments in lieu of taxes be?**

The exact amount of in lieu payments on IDF&G lands is unknown. However, 26 of the 44 Idaho counties have provided the Department with estimates of in lieu payments. By extending these figures, IDF&G estimates that annual in lieu payments on currently owned unimproved property could possibly be as much as \$309,654.47.<sup>6</sup> This likely is a maximum amount. Some counties may have included improved property in their preliminary estimates. Some counties also may be assessing IDF&G lands at higher rates than they were taxed at prior to IDF&G acquisition, which the constitutional amendment specifically prohibits unless the tax for that class of property has increased. For these reasons, some counties may have overestimated the amount of in lieu payments they can expect from IDF&G. The amount of payments in lieu of taxes would also depend on the type of law passed by the legislature if the proposed constitutional amendment is approved by voters. The law could require payments on some or all of IDF&G's unimproved lands, and may or may not specify funding mechanisms. In any case, the annual cost to IDF&G for payments in lieu of taxes on all its unimproved property would probably not exceed \$300,000.

### **Where will the money for in lieu payments come from?**

This issue has not been decided yet. The Department has several options. Lands were acquired with various sources of funds described in a later section of the report. The Department may decide that the source of funds to be used for the payments in lieu of taxes will be tied to the source of the funds used to acquire the lands. For example, on lands that were acquired with or are currently managed using Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration funds, those funds may be used for in lieu payments. A substantial portion of the purchased lands were acquired with fees from hunting licenses. In lieu payments on these lands are



likely to come from license fees. The potential effect of these payments on license fees may or may not become a future argument for increased license fees.

### **How Much Land Does IDF&G Own?**

The 116,101 acres owned by the Department have been acquired through purchase, exchange, or gift. In addition, IDF&G manages 91,113 acres through lease, easement, and cooperative agreement.<sup>7</sup> This additional acreage is owned by federal and state agencies and private citizens, and managed by the Department for wildlife purposes.

The focus of this report is the 116,101 acres IDF&G owns outright, not the 91,113 acres it manages cooperatively with other owners because the proposed constitutional amendment would not affect these additional managed lands.

Table 2 shows IDF&G land ownership compared to that of similar agencies in adjacent states. Idaho owns substantially less land for fish and wildlife purposes than Washington or Utah, and slightly less than Oregon, Wyoming, or Montana. Table 3 shows IDF&G land ownership by county and by administrative region. Figure 1 illustrates the regional breakdown of land ownership, and shows that IDF&G land is distributed throughout the state. As Table 4 indicates, more than 90 percent of the land owned by IDF&G is in parcels larger than 150 acres. Most of these large parcels are in 23 separate Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) that altogether represent 87 percent of the Department's lands.

Figure 2 illustrates IDF&G lands acquired over the past ten years. On the average, IDF&G acquired 2,549 acres per year during this period. Only 7,513 acres have been sold or exchanged out of Department ownership to date; these dispositions have been deducted from new acquisitions in Figures 2 and 3. Figure 3 depicts Department land acquisitions over the past 50 years in five-year increments. The average number of acres acquired over this period was 2,121 acres per year. No clear trends are apparent except that more land was acquired in 1986-1990 than in any other five-year period. One land exchange, described below, accounted for a substantial portion of the land IDF&G acquired during this period.

#### **The Snow Peak-St. Maries land exchange**

The controversial Snow Peak land exchange (sometimes called "Buck Creek") was completed in 1990 after more than a decade of effort. This transaction accounted for almost all of the 8,623 acres of acquisitions for 1990 indicated in Figure 2.<sup>8</sup> IDF&G traded 3,680 acres of forest land in the St. Maries WMA in Benewah County for 12,055 acres of forest land of equal market value in the Canyon Creek drainage near Snow Peak in Shoshone County.

The Snow Peak lands are interspersed with national forest lands. These lands were previously owned by a private timber company and scheduled for logging. IDF&G acquired the land to protect prime elk habitat. In the trade, the company received forest land in the



St. Maries WMA that was less steep and thus more suitable for logging. Some logging will still occur on the Snow Peak lands, but some people are upset about the reduced timber harvest and the loss of property taxes in Shoshone County that resulted from the exchange. Others feel that the Snow Peak-Canyon Creek area is too steep and fragile to be logged at all. Still others are unhappy about IDF&G releasing some of the St. Maries WMA lands. The U.S. Forest Service has agreed to manage the area cooperatively with IDF&G for elk and other wildlife, so most of the Snow Peak area will not be logged.

### Why does IDF&G Have These Lands?

The Department has land for two purposes: (1) wildlife habitat, and (2) public access.

Legislation authorizing land acquisition by the state for fish and game purposes was originally passed in 1921. As amended, the law now authorizes the Idaho Department of Fish and Game to:

"(a)cquire for and on behalf of the state of Idaho by purchase, condemnation, lease, agreement, gift, or other device, lands or waters suitable for the purposes hereinafter enumerated....[after making a good faith attempt to obtain a conservation easement]...and develop, generate, and maintain the same for said purposes, which are hereby declared a public use:

- (A) For fish hatcheries, nursery ponds, or game animal or game bird farms;
- (B) For game, bird, fish, or fur-bearing animal restoration, propagation or protection;
- (C) For public hunting, fishing, or trapping areas to provide places where the public may fish, hunt, or trap in accordance with the provisions of law; or the regulation of the commission;
- (D) To extend and consolidate by exchange, lands or waters suitable for the above purposes.<sup>9</sup>

IDF&G is the state wildlife agency. The Department's job is to "preserve, protect, and manage the state's wildlife resources for the use and enjoyment of all the people now and in the future."<sup>10</sup> IDF&G is responsible for virtually all wildlife in the state. The Department has a program for nongame species funded primarily through donations, but its main focus is on providing fish and game for Idaho's hunters, anglers, and trappers who in turn finance IDF&G programs with license fees. The Department's work is to preserve and enhance habitat for desirable game species and to regulate harvest so as to sustain population levels.

Lands are acquired for reasons consistent with this mission, either for habitat management to benefit wildlife and fish, or to provide for the access needs of hunters, anglers, and other wildlife enthusiasts. The 23 WMAs are managed not only for wildlife purposes, but also to provide public access. In addition to WMAs are more than 200 access areas throughout the state that provide hunting and fishing opportunities for the public. These access points and the WMAs may be identified by "Sportsman Access" highway signs. All lands are



described, tabulated, and mapped in the new "Idaho Sportsman's Access Guide" published and distributed by the Department.<sup>11</sup>

The primary use of IDF&G land is illustrated in Figure 4, which includes land managed as well as land owned by the Department. Big game, waterfowl, and upland game habitat constitute, respectively, the largest proportions of IDF&G lands. Only a small amount of land is needed for administrative purposes, offices, hatcheries, rearing ponds, game farms, and check stations.

### Why do Several State Agencies Own Land in Idaho?

IDF&G is one of the three state agencies that manage substantial tracts of land in Idaho. The other two are Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) and Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR). IDF&G owns land separately from these other agencies because the three agencies serve different purposes. Each agency acquires and manages land consistent with its authorizing legislation.

IDF&G owns 116,101 acres for fish and wildlife purposes, as described in the preceding section. IDPR owns 41,305 acres of state park land, and has a different mission. The agency's job as defined in the *Idaho Code* is:

"to acquire in the name of the state of Idaho... such land as in its judgment may be necessary, suitable and proper for roadside picnic, recreational or park purposes."<sup>12</sup>

IDPR lands are managed for recreation, and are for the most part located near lakes, rivers, waterfalls, or other natural curiosities. State parks provide opportunities for the public to picnic, swim, boat, fish, hike, observe wildlife, and otherwise enjoy Idaho outdoors. Hunting is not allowed in 24 of the 26 state parks. Migratory waterfowl may be hunted at Heyburn State Park, and bow hunting for deer is allowed at Farragut State Park. Although state parks provide important wildlife habitat, that is not their primary purpose.

IDL owns approximately 2.4 million acres, or about 4.5 percent of the land in Idaho. IDL has a specific mission to manage the state's endowment lands that were granted to Idaho by the federal government at the time of statehood for the benefit of the state's school system and other public institutions.<sup>13</sup> IDL's management is directed by the State Board of Land Commissioners, whose duty it is:

"to provide for the location, protection, sale or rental of all lands...granted to or acquired by the state by or from the general government... in such a manner as will secure the maximum long term financial return to the institution to which granted..."<sup>14</sup>

Although the endowment lands are public lands, their primary purpose is to provide revenue for schools and other public institutions designated as trust beneficiaries. Wildlife



management and recreation opportunities are not specific management objectives for these state lands.

## How does IDF&G Decide Which Lands to Acquire?

### Procedures

Any IDF&G employee can initiate a land acquisition request. Some acquisitions are proposed because landowners approach IDF&G and offer to sell their property; occasionally gifts are made. Interest groups such as Ducks Unlimited or the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation may suggest an acquisition and offer funding. After the proposed acquisition is reviewed at the regional level to assess its potential value for fish, wildlife, and public access, the Regional Supervisor rates all potential acquisitions in the region in relative terms, deciding the priority in which proposed acquisitions should be pursued.

The proposal then goes to IDF&G headquarters in Boise, where it is reviewed by the Wildlife, Fisheries, and Engineering Bureau Chiefs and the State Wildlife Land Manager. All proposed acquisitions are reviewed and their priority determined by the Director. The top priority lands are appraised to determine their market value, then presented to the Fish and Game Commission for final action.<sup>15</sup>

### Priorities

Under the broad categories of habitat enhancement and public access, IDF&G has specific priorities for land acquisition. These priorities are based on the Department's assessment of the most urgent needs for wildlife in the state, given the desires of Idaho's wildlife-using public. Therefore, these priorities change periodically. Currently these acquisition priorities include:

- Critical habitats, particularly wetlands;
- Access to waterways;
- Lands adjacent to Wildlife Management Areas;
- Upland habitat adjacent to population centers;
- Big game winter range; and
- Lands that under present or potential future management threaten the welfare of fish and wildlife resources.<sup>16</sup>

### Constraints

The most serious constraint on the land acquisition program is financial, and is covered in the next section.

Several nonfinancial limitations on the acquisition program exist. IDF&G land purchases are based on both the desirability and availability of land parcels. The Department's policy is to buy land only from willing sellers, although the *Idaho Code* gives the Department legislative authority to use condemnation as a means to acquire land.<sup>17</sup> Condemnation has



been used in only two acquisitions, both resulting from lawsuits filed by adjacent landowners in Canyon County.

A related constraint is public relations. The Department recognizes that social, political and economic factors play a role in acquisition decisions, and that such factors may limit the desirability of some acquisitions.

### **How Much is Spent for Land Acquisitions?**

The expenditures for IDF&G's land acquisition program vary from year to year, as they depend on available funding and the availability of high-priority lands. IDF&G buys land only with funds earmarked for land acquisition. No such funds are appropriated from the state's general fund. Most of the money comes from hunting license fees.

Figure 4 shows the expenditures for land acquisitions from 1981-1990. Expenditures varied a great deal but averaged \$598,377 per year. The high expenditure in 1982 for the very small amount of land depicted in Figure 1 for 1982 was the result of a \$750,000 expenditure for an operational fish hatchery with three residences on 13.75 acres of land in Canyon County. Land acquisition expenditures represent approximately two percent of IDF&G's total budget, which for fiscal year 1990-91 is \$34,895,500. Another seven or eight percent of the total budget is used to develop and manage the Department's properties.<sup>18</sup>

Funding for land acquisitions comes from a variety of sources, including hunting and fishing license fees, waterfowl stamps, and federal programs. The largest source, called the HB530 account, is funded by a \$2 charge on hunting licenses that by law can only be used to acquire and develop habitat for big game, upland game and waterfowl. The HB530 account provides approximately \$450,000 per year for land acquisition and development. Revenues from the state waterfowl stamp and associated art work provide money for wetland acquisition, development, and enhancement. A \$5 charge on waterfowl stamps, a \$2 charge on sportsman licenses, and stamp and art royalties fund the Waterfowl Stamp account. Money from salmon and steelhead permits is used to acquire land for fishing access. The Salmon/Steelhead Permit account is funded by a \$3 charge on salmon and steelhead permits and on sportsman licenses. Most of it is used for development of access sites.<sup>19</sup>

Federal funds have also been used to acquire land. Federal funds for fisheries improvement (Dingell-Johnson or "DJ" funds) and wildlife improvement (Pittman-Robertson or "PR" funds) are available on a cost-share basis with the state.<sup>20</sup> These two federal aid programs authorize the federal government to provide funds to state fish and game departments for management of sport fish, birds, and mammals. States must apply for DJ and PR funds, and federal participation is limited to 75 percent of the cost of funded programs. IDF&G has used PR and DJ funds for land acquisitions in the past, but currently uses these monies primarily for development and management of the land it already owns.



Occasional sources of funding arise that offer opportunities to purchase lands. Private donations from wildlife groups, such as Ducks Unlimited and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, also help fund certain acquisitions. Another example was money received by the state from the Bureau of Reclamation as mitigation following the failure of the Teton Dam near Rexburg in 1976. IDF&G used some of this money to acquire portions of the Tex Creek and Sand Creek WMAs in southeastern Idaho.

### **What are Some of the Benefits and Costs of IDF&G's Land Acquisition and Management Program?**

Many of the benefits of IDF&G's land acquisition and management program are in the eye of the beholder and difficult to evaluate because of their subjective nature. Nonetheless, adjacent landowners and the public benefit to the extent that they will enjoy having more fish and wildlife available to them. Costs other than direct cash outlays also defy evaluation.

No one has tried to assess the overall benefits and costs of the acquisition program in economic terms. On the benefit side, some estimates of the economic value of hunting and fishing in Idaho have been made,<sup>21</sup> but it would be difficult to tie them to the 116,101 acres owned by IDF&G. Numbers of hunters and fishermen using IDF&G lands are for the most part rough estimates. Increases in wildlife populations or wildlife use of an area can result from management activities. However, the information that exists is an incomplete basis for assessing the land acquisition program's overall benefits and costs. What follows is a descriptive list of some benefits and costs attributable to the program.

#### **Benefits**

The two main benefits from IDF&G's land acquisition program are public access and wildlife habitat. The land owned by the Department benefits the state's fish and wildlife populations by providing protection for and improvement of habitat. These lands are open to the public and are used heavily for hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing.

***Public access to fish, wildlife, and recreation.*** Perhaps the most important benefit of the IDF&G land acquisition and management program is the public access it provides. Many private landowners do not allow hunting, trapping, fishing, or even hiking on their lands. The Department provides a wide variety of access sites where Idaho residents and visitors can attain access to fish and wildlife areas.<sup>22</sup>

Land acquisition for hunting access is popular with Idaho hunters as long as there is no increased cost to them. In survey research conducted by the University of Idaho,<sup>23</sup> 825 randomly selected shotgun hunters who hunted waterfowl and upland game birds and mammals in Idaho in 1987 responded to a questionnaire. One question described seven alternatives for managing hunter access to game birds. The most popular response was to continue the present program of acquiring land for habitat development and hunting at no



increased cost to hunters. The least popular alternative would be to acquire new hunting areas and charge additional fees for their use.

IDF&G has made some attempts to quantify the number of people using its lands. However, except in a few cases, these numbers are rough estimates used for planning purposes. Some areas receive heavy recreational use. Coeur d'Alene River WMA is estimated to receive more than 20,000 user days annually from hunters, trappers, and anglers, and 34,000 user days from other recreational users.<sup>24</sup> IDF&G estimates that the mile of access to Silver Creek in Blaine County owned by IDF&G receives 1,258 angler days annually. This unique resource is highlighted in the sidebar on the next page. Horsethief Reservoir in Valley County receives an estimated 40,000 angler days each year. Winchester Lake in Nez Perce County and Spring Valley Reservoir in Latah County each received approximately 10,000 angler days in 1987.<sup>25</sup> Some areas may receive only several hundred visitor days in a year, such as the Portneuf and Montpelier WMAs. But these areas provide winter ranges for deer, and are located far from population centers.

Although it is hard to say how many people actually use IDF&G lands, it is safe to say that hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing are popular activities in Idaho. Out of a total population of approximately one million people, 209,372 Idahoans and 28,750 nonresidents bought hunting licenses in 1988. An even larger number--255,591 residents and 146,799 nonresidents--bought fishing licenses.<sup>26</sup> Eighty-five percent of the state's households hold at least one fishing license.<sup>27</sup> An estimated 48 percent of Idahoans over the age of 5 either hunt or fish, or do both. Only three states--Alaska, Wyoming, and Minnesota--have a higher proportion of hunters and anglers than Idaho.<sup>28</sup>

Not included in the above figures is use for nonconsumptive purposes, such as bird-watching, wildlife viewing, and photography. An estimate of the number of people who enjoy these nonconsumptive uses of wildlife far exceeds those who hunt and fish.<sup>29</sup> An estimated 64 percent of Idahoans over the age of 5 enjoy observing, photographing, or feeding fish and wildlife as a primary recreation activity. Only four states--Wyoming, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Montana--have a higher proportion of nonconsumptive wildlife enthusiasts than Idaho.

While nonconsumptive use occurs to some extent on most all Department-owned lands, a few areas receive very heavy use by those who observe or photograph wildlife as a primary recreation activity. For example, Market Lake WMA, a large marsh bordering the Snake River in Jefferson County, is a major stopover for ducks, geese, shorebirds and swans during spring and fall migrations. Thirty species of waterfowl and 47 species of shorebirds, grebes, and gulls have been identified there. Although the area is a popular waterfowl hunting area, nonconsumptive use of the area is estimated to be even higher. IDF&G estimates that the area receives up to 12,000 visits per year from hikers, school groups, bird-watchers, sightseers, and other non-hunters.<sup>30</sup>



### Silver Creek: An Idaho Gem

Silver Creek is a spring-fed stream in the midst of semiarid sagebrush country in Idaho's Magic Valley about 30 miles south of the renowned Sun Valley resort. A tributary of the Little Wood River, Silver Creek is world famous as a high quality rainbow trout fishery. Private landowners use Silver Creek water to transform the dry alkaline soil in the valley of the Picabo Hills into a lush farming and ranching area.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC)--a private nonprofit organization dedicated to the acquisition and management of ecologically significant lands--began to acquire land where spring-fed tributaries join to form Silver Creek in 1975. TNC now owns 825 acres and has conservation easements on another 1,965 acres at the headwaters of Silver Creek. TNC allows catch and release, barbless hook fly fishing along Silver Creek and restricted three-day-a-week waterfowl hunting on a portion of the Silver Creek Preserve. Visitors from across the nation and around the world log in at the visitor center to obtain the free right to enter onto TNC land. TNC manages this land first for habitat preservation for, among other species, bald and golden eagles, the Wood River sculpin, and an ecologically sensitive species of phlox. Recreational use of the land is a distant secondary consideration.

Fifteen years before TNC acquired their property, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game purchased land on Silver Creek. Several miles downstream from the preserve are two adjoining 80 acre parcels of IDF&G land on Silver Creek. These lands were acquired in 1960 and 1965 and have since provided many thousands of days of fishing by Gem State residents and visitors for stream-bred trout in this highly productive spring creek environment. Silver Creek has profuse hatches of aquatic insects and provides opportunities to catch wild trout on dry flies under demanding conditions, all parameters of a high-quality angling experience. The property provides good waterfowl and goose habitat and is a popular hunting area.

The original IDF&G acquisition has been used creatively to secure other benefits. A portion of the original purchase that did not border the stream was subsequently exchanged for the 75-acre Sheep Bridge area, a mule deer migration corridor with access along the Big Wood River some 12 miles west of Silver Creek. Another 28 acres of land still owned by IDF&G near (but not on) Silver Creek are farmed in exchange for fishing access to Lava Lake, a put-and-take trout fishery owned by the farmer/rancher some 20 miles east of the Silver Creek access.

IDF&G management of the property draws criticism as well as praise. The fishery has special regulations, but they are not as restrictive as TNC's. Anglers are allowed to keep two trout, but those between 12" and 16" must be released. No special restrictions are imposed on gear. Although no designated campsites are on the property, people camp there anyway. Neighbors and other visitors may not be happy with trash left on IDF&G lands, but this problem is not unique to these public lands. With federal Wallop-Breaux funds recently made available, the Department has upgraded toilet facilities along Silver Creek and improved the roads. A road formerly paralleling the stream for a mile was closed--to the consternation of some users and the delight of others--but is hard to notice now. Other management problems IDF&G must contend with include complaints about noxious weed control, one of the Department's major headaches. To control weeds on the 36,000 acres of land it owns and manages in Region 4, the Department keeps two spray trucks busy all summer, and hires commercial applicators to fill in as needed. Along Silver Creek, the roadside willows are mowed back with equipment borrowed from the Department of Transportation.



*Fish and wildlife habitat protection and enhancement.* Department lands provide habitat for birds, mammals, fish, and other wildlife. Many acquisitions are made for very specific needs, such as winter range for deer and elk. Even so, each area provides benefits for a wide variety of species. Although each Department land holding is unique, some examples can illustrate particular benefits for wildlife.

The McArthur Lake WMA on the Boundary-Bonner County line in North Idaho provides shallow lake habitat for waterfowl. The Department built a small dam, dug a channel, and constructed some small islands to provide wetland habitat. Many species of waterfowl use the area and nest there. IDF&G estimates that approximately 400 mallards, 250 wood ducks, and 100 teal and other ducks are produced on the area annually, and about 6,000 migratory ducks visit in spring and fall. Many other birds and mammals also use the area.<sup>31</sup>

The Sand Creek WMA in Fremont County provides winter range for elk and habitat for a number of other species of wildlife. Here IDF&G land is intermingled with other state, federal, and private lands. Prior to the beginning of Sand Creek WMA acquisitions in 1947, approximately 400 elk wintered on private land in the area. By the late 1980s, the same land supported more than 3,000 wintering elk and provided an estimated 25,363 elk hunter days. Although IDF&G does not own much of the critical winter range, the Department has use-trade agreements with private landowners in the area that allow wintering elk to use suitable private lands in exchange for livestock use of IDF&G lands not critical to elk.<sup>32</sup> Other species that use the Sand Creek WMA include mule deer, moose, bobcat, lynx, pronghorn antelope, sage and sharp-tailed grouse, many species of waterfowl, osprey, and nine species of hawks. IDF&G has also built ponds that provide a rainbow trout fishery and produce waterfowl.<sup>33</sup>

The Fort Boise WMA in Canyon County includes islands, delta, and floodplain areas at the mouth of the Boise River and along the Snake River. More than 110 species of wildlife have been identified on the Fort Boise WMA. Management is directed toward a number of wildlife purposes. In order of priority, they are pheasant and waterfowl production, public hunting, other wildlife production, public fishing, and wildlife appreciation. More than 200 acres of land in the WMA are farmed. Cover and grain crops are grown and left standing for wildlife. Cock pheasants are raised on commercial game farms, purchased by IDF&G, and released during the hunting season. Rio Grande turkeys have also been released there. Ponds were created on the WMA to increase waterfowl habitat and nesting structures are provided for geese and ducks. Geese, mallards, teal, other ducks, white pelicans, and many shore birds use the area.<sup>34</sup>



## Costs

Cost items include cash expenditures for land acquisitions and land management activities. These costs have been mentioned elsewhere in the report. In summary, the Department spent a total of almost \$6 million during the 1981-1990 period (Figure 5) to purchase 17,597 acres of land at an average cost of approximately \$340 per acre. By exchanging land acquired prior to 1981, the Department acquired an additional 8,375 acres in the 1990 Snow Peak exchange described earlier. The Department will spend roughly \$3 million in fiscal year 1990-91 to manage the land it owns and manages for other landowners to protect and enhance wildlife habitat and provide public access.

Most of the money for land acquisitions and management comes from hunters through license fees and special permits. Federal aid for wildlife restoration also provides funds.

Lost local property tax revenues are additional costs to counties and private landowners and thus represent costs to society. So too are problems encountered by adjacent landowners and others, but these and other social costs are difficult to measure.

*Loss of tax revenue to local governments.* The loss of property taxes to local governments can create a potential financial burden on counties and private landowners who may have to make up the lost revenues by paying increased taxes. This specific cost of the program was explained in an earlier section of the report, and could represent as much as \$300,000 per year. The proposed constitutional amendment directly addresses this problem.

*Conflicts with farm and ranch operations.* Wildlife damage to crops and forage on farms and ranches adjacent to IDF&G lands is sometimes a problem. The Department has a depredation program designed to reduce the problem and to compensate landowners for crop losses. Program activities include responding to depredation complaints, providing supplemental feed for wildlife, especially during the winter; and initiating depredation hunts.<sup>35</sup> Noxious weed control is another problem often mentioned as a detriment by the Department's neighbors, and can be addressed through management efforts. In spite of these activities, some friction still exists between IDF&G and neighboring farmers and ranchers.

*Other unquantifiable costs.* Costs of IDF&G's land acquisition and land management program include people's perceptions of changes in land use that result from the program. For example, allowing traditional grazing to continue on several Department properties surrounded by federal land in the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness does not please everyone, and must therefore be regarded as a social cost. Concerns about timber supplies are another example. Any reduction in the available timber base, whether for wildlife or any other purpose, is a cause for concern by people who depend on timber for their livelihood. Some people feel the Department's forest lands should be harvested more heavily than they are; others feel that timber harvests are inappropriate on IDF&G lands.



## Summary

Many fish and wildlife species benefit from Department lands and many Idaho residents use IDF&G lands for hunting, fishing, and other wildlife-related recreational uses. Some IDF&G lands are more heavily used, and probably more valuable, than others. Wildlife grazing on adjacent farm and ranch lands can be a problem. Some local tax revenue is lost, and there is some opposition to the Department owning land based on the belief that Idaho already has too much public land. A full analysis of the benefits and costs of IDF&G's land acquisition and management program would be relevant and interesting. However, a substantial research effort would be required to evaluate the full range of costs and benefits that result from Department land ownership and management.

### What Uses and Management Activities Occur on Department Lands?

IDF&G lands are multiple-use lands. The Department engages in many different activities and permits others to use its land for many purposes. Some of these activities are designed to benefit fish and wildlife species, and some are allowed in order to accommodate various segments of the public. Although efforts are made to enhance the land for wildlife, some activities occurring on IDF&G lands may conflict with wildlife needs or the desires of some hunters or anglers. Without more restrictive land use regulations, some conflicts are probably inevitable--that is the nature of multiple-use land management.

Management activities on IDF&G lands include farming, livestock grazing, timber harvesting, prescribed burning, mowing, road maintenance, noxious weed spraying, planting desirable vegetation, fencing, marsh-building, and constructing nest platforms. Recreational activities include hunting, trapping, fishing, ORV use, hiking, skiing, picnicking, swimming, boating, camping, wildlife viewing, and horseback riding. Campgrounds, boat ramps, and rest rooms are provided at many access sites.

IDF&G management is directed toward providing for uses most suitable for each particular piece of land. Some lands have been acquired for access to fishing areas, some for waterfowl hunting, and some for big game winter range. Uses are ranked in order of priority for each WMA, and efforts are made to manage each area to enhance those uses given highest priority.

Because IDF&G owns hundreds of parcels of land throughout the state, describing management on each one is not possible in this report. Management direction is presented in five-year plans, which are under revision in 1990. Brief descriptions of some WMAs in the preceding benefit/cost section provided some examples of wildlife management goals. The agricultural, ranching, and forestry activities that occur on WMAs provide other examples, and will be briefly described.

Eight of the 23 WMAs support some livestock grazing. Twelve of them have sharecropping agreements, whereby a cooperating farmer works IDF&G land and keeps a



share of the crop. IDF&G uses its share of the crop for wildlife food and cover. The Department views these agricultural and grazing activities as compatible with wildlife needs.

IDF&G land ownership is not limited to WMAs and highway access sites. Between 1946 and 1949, IDF&G acquired 15 back country ranches that total 2,127 acres. Twelve of these are located within the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness. These lands were acquired to reduce livestock overgrazing and improve big game ranges, and to provide public access for hunters to facilitate big game harvest in remote roadless areas. In 1987 nine of these ranches were under lease to commercial outfitters who guide wilderness hunting trips. They maintain the ranch buildings and graze packstock in irrigated pastures.<sup>36</sup>

The Department hired a professional forester in 1987 to develop and implement a forest management program to harvest timber on its forested lands. Twelve timber sales have been completed in three years, and many others are planned. So far, approximately \$184,000 has been generated from timber stumpage receipts. The program's objectives are to manage the Department's forest lands to enhance or maintain fish and wildlife habitat and to allow compatible recreation activities.<sup>37</sup>

In summary, IDF&G will generally allow activities that do not seem to conflict with habitat management or public access goals. For example, the Department allows the city of Montpelier to use old mine pits on the Montpelier WMA for sanitary landfills.

As mentioned earlier, conflicts between uses and users are inevitable on multiple-use lands. It is not the purpose of this study to evaluate the effectiveness or direction of IDF&G's management of its lands. Instead, this section was intended to describe the variety of uses and management activities occurring on IDF&G lands.

## Conclusions

Three questions serve to summarize this report:

***Should the Idaho Department of Fish and Game own land?*** The answer to this question depends upon how one feels about the relationship of the public and private sectors in the sensitive area of land ownership and property rights. Some people think IDF&G land ownership is a good program, others may disagree. In a survey, shotgun hunters expressed support for Department land acquisition for hunting access as long as it didn't increase their cost of hunting.<sup>38</sup>

The fact is that the Department currently owns 116,101 acres, and manages another 91,113 acres owned by other agencies and private individuals for wildlife purposes. Neighboring states have comparable amounts of land dedicated to fish and game purposes. Under the legislative authority originally granted in 1921, IDF&G intends to continue their program to acquire land for wildlife habitat and public access.



***Should the Department make payments in lieu of property taxes to the counties in which it owns land?*** All Idahoans will be asked this question on the November 6, 1990, general election ballot. The information in this report should help citizens make an informed choice. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game supported H.J.R. No. 14, the bill passed in the 1990 Idaho legislature for the proposed constitutional amendment. Fish and wildlife agencies in five neighboring states make such payments. Four statements FOR the proposed amendment and four statements AGAINST it as compiled by Idaho's Legislative Council are included in Table 1.

***How should the Department manage these lands?*** The Department owns and manages these lands for the purposes of public access and wildlife habitat. Each of the hundreds of parcels has its own management problems and opportunities. Department personnel welcome citizen input to help guide their land and resource management plans and programs.



## Notes

1. *Idaho Constitution*, art. 7, § 4, "Public property exempt from taxation."
2. Disposition of Receipts from National Forest Revenues (16 U.S.C. 499 (note)).
3. Twenty-Five Percent Fund (16 U.S.C. 500) See also Payments in Lieu of Taxes Act of 1976 (31 U.S.C. 1601-1607).
4. *Idaho Constitution*, art. 20, § 1, describes procedures that must be followed to amend the constitution. Any proposed amendment must pass both houses of the state legislature by a two-thirds majority, and then be put to the voters and pass by a simple majority.
5. *Robb v. Nielson*, 71 Idaho 222, 229 P.2d 981 (1951).
6. IDF&G calculated the average in lieu payment per acre based on county estimates and then multiplied this by total acres owned. This projection is based on ownership and county assessments as of September 14, 1990.
7. Information from Idaho Department of Fish and Game database, current as of August 20, 1990.
8. Id.
9. *Idaho Code* 36-104(b)7, "General powers and duties of [fish and game] commission."
10. *Idaho Blue Book 1989-1990*, State of Idaho, Boise, ID (1990), page 59.
11. Idaho Department of Fish and Game, *Idaho Sportsman's Access Guide*, Boise, ID (1990).
12. *Idaho Code* 67-4224, "Duty of [park and recreation] board to acquire, develop, and maintain land."
13. See discussion in *Idaho's Endowment Lands: A Matter of Sacred Trust*, Report No. 1, Idaho Forest, Wildlife and Range Policy Analysis Group, University of Idaho, Moscow (March, 1990).
14. *Idaho Constitution*, art. 9, § 8, "Location and disposition of public [education and school] lands."
15. Acquisition procedures and priority list derived from Idaho Department of Fish and Game, "Draft Policy Plan 1990-2005," Boise, ID (1990); "Land Acquisition Priority Criteria," (1979); and personal communication with Tom Parker, IDF&G State Wildlife Land Manager.
16. Id.



17. *Idaho Code* 36-104(b)7.
18. Budget information provided through personal communication with Tom Parker, IDF&G State Wildlife Land Manager.
19. Idaho Department of Fish and Game, *Annual Report 1989-1990*, Boise, ID (1989) page 2.
20. Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act of 1950 (16 U.S.C. 777) and Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937 (16 U.S.C. 669)
21. See Loomis, J.B., et al., *Net economic value of hunting unique species in Idaho*, USDA Forest Service Res. Bull. RM-10 (1985); Sorg, C.F., et al., *Net economic value of cold and warmwater fishing in Idaho*, USDA Forest Service Res. Bull. RM-11 (1985); Donnelly, D.M., and L.J. Nelson, *Net economic value of deer hunting in Idaho*, USDA Forest Service Res. Bull. RM-13 (1986); Sorg, C.F., and L.J. Nelson, *Net economic value of waterfowl hunting in Idaho*, USDA Forest Service Res. Bull. RM-14 (1987); and Young, J.S., et al., *Net economic value of upland game hunting in Idaho*, USDA Forest Service Res. Bull. RM-15 (1987).
22. Idaho Department of Fish and Game, *Idaho Sportsman's Access Guide*, Boise, ID (1990).
23. McLaughlin, W.J. et al., *1987-1988 Idaho Shotgun Hunting Study, Volume 1: Results*, Contribution no. 501, Idaho Forest, Wildlife and Range Experiment Station, University of Idaho, Moscow (October, 1989).
24. Idaho Department of Fish and Game, *Wildlife Management Area Plans, Region 1, 1986-1990*, pages 91-92.
25. Estimates provided by Al Van Vooren, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Boise, ID.
26. Idaho Department of Fish and Game, *Annual Report 1988-89*, Boise, ID (1989), page 11.
27. Idaho Department of Commerce, *Idaho Facts*, Division of Economic Development, Boise, ID (1990), page 10-1.
28. USDI Fish and Wildlife Service. 1985 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife Associated Recreation, Washington, D.C. (1988), compiled from various tables.
29. Id.
30. Idaho Department of Fish and Game, *Wildlife Management Area Plans, Region 6, 1986-1990*, page 8.



31. Idaho Department of Fish and Game, *Wildlife Management Area Plans, Region 1, 1987-1990*, pages 5-21.
32. Personal communication with Dennis Aslett, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Sept. 7, 1990.
33. Idaho Department of Fish and Game, *Wildlife Management Area Plans, Region 6, 1986-1990*, pages 68-78.
34. Idaho Department of Fish and Game, *Wildlife Management Area Plans, Region 3, 1986-1990*, pages 5-19; and personal communication with Clair Kofoed, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Sept. 4, 1990.
35. Idaho Department of Fish and Game, *Annual Report 1988-89*, Boise, ID (1989), pages 2, 6. The Winter Feeding/Depredation program is funded through a \$1.50 surcharge on deer, elk, and antelope tags.
36. Pehrson, Ralph V. "Idaho Department of Fish and Game's Backcountry/Wilderness Ranches," Idaho Department of Fish and Game report prepared by the State Wildlife Land Manager, (1987).
37. Information derived from Draft Idaho Department of Fish and Game Timber Management Position Statement, and personal communication with Steve Narolski, Idaho Department of Fish and Game Staff Forestry Specialist, September 19, 1990.
38. McLaughlin, W.J., et al., op. cit.



**Table 1. Idaho Legislative Council's Statements *FOR* and *AGAINST* the Proposed Constitutional Amendment.**

Statements <i>FOR</i>	Statements <i>AGAINST</i>
<p>1. If adopted, this amendment would improve relations between the Department of Fish and Game and local units of government, as well as other landholders. Currently, when the Department of Fish and Game, or any other unit of government, purchases real property, it is removed from the tax rolls because of the constitutional prohibition against taxing property owned by units of government. When property is removed from the local property tax rolls, that means that the remaining taxpayers are forced to bear a larger tax burden to fund certain necessary functions of local governments.</p>	<p>1. The proposed constitutional amendment would set a bad precedent. The rationale for not having public property subject to taxation is that those properties provide a public function for which the tax paying public has already paid a tax or fee, and the property should not be subject to double taxation. While this proposed amendment would only apply to certain property held by the Department of Fish and Game, it could set a precedent to having the constitution amended to allow all state and local government properties to be subject to taxation or the payment of a fee in lieu of taxes.</p>
<p>2. The Department of Fish and Game utilizes certain services provided by local units of government. It is only fair that some form of compensation to local units of government be made by the Department of Fish and Game for the services provided as do taxpayers.</p>	<p>2. This proposed amendment would be adverse to the sportsmen of this state. The amount of money that would be utilized to pay the fee in lieu of property taxes would be better spent in the propagation of fish and wildlife so that Idahoans could enjoy enhanced fishing and hunting opportunities.</p>
<p>3. This amendment will assist financially strapped counties which are feeling the impact of having large amounts of public lands within their boundaries and being faced with the property tax limitations as a result of the one percent initiative. Some counties are at or near the maximum amount of ad valorem taxes that can lawfully be levied and this constitutional amendment could grant them some assistance and provide them with some needed revenues.</p>	<p>3. The amount of money that would be raised by the fee in lieu of taxes would be relatively small. The Department of Fish and Game estimates the payment for the fee in lieu of taxes to be \$100,000 to \$150,000 per year. When this sum is distributed among the various counties and taxing districts, it is not a great deal of money. If the legislature is interested in assisting local units of government with fiscal problems, there are more effective ways to do it than through this mechanism.</p>
<p>4. If adopted, this amendment would make it easier for the Department of Fish and Game to proceed with necessary land acquisition for public access and wildlife management purposes. Currently, the Department of Fish and Game encounters resistance to land purchases from the local governments and the legislature because the purchased land is removed from the local property tax rolls. This amendment would remove that objection and would make it easier for the Department of Fish and Game to perform its functions, and should not reduce the income from taxes or fees levied on real property to affected local governments.</p>	<p>4. The constitution is a document that is intended to be general in scope and this proposed amendment is written in such a way that it is almost as specific as a statute. If there is to be a constitutionally established fee in lieu of tax system, it should be done uniformly and imposed on all units of government, and not target only one agency. Future generations should not have to grapple with the meaning of this proposed amendment.</p>



State Wildlife Agency	Acres Owned	% of Land in State Owned by Agency	Acres Controlled (by lease, easement, or other agreement)	% of Land in State Owned & Controlled by Agency
<b>Idaho</b> Department of Fish and Game	116,101	0.22	91,113	0.39
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources	361,204	0.69	data unavailable	>0.69
Wyoming Department of Game and Fish	119,132	0.19	165,980	0.46
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks	207,743*	0.22	124,102*	0.36
Washington Department of Wildlife	395,229	0.93	411,254	1.89
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife	131,525	0.21	210,660	0.56

\* Includes only lands managed for fish and wildlife purposes.

Source: State wildlife agencies.



**Table 3. Land Ownership by County and Region, Idaho Department of Fish and Game**

County	Region <sup>1</sup>	Acres Owned <sup>2</sup>	County	Region <sup>1</sup>	Acres Owned <sup>2</sup>
Ada	3	7,721	Gem	3	296
Adams	3	27	Gooding	4	2,104
Bannock	5	3,235	Idaho	2	537
Bear Lake	5	1,866	Jefferson	6	10,966
Benewah	1	2,845	Jerome	4	249
Bingham	6	1,966	Kootenai	1	6,640
Blaine	4	1,050	Latah	2	296
Boise	3	2,822	Lemhi	6	556
Bonner	1	1,306	Lewis	2	292
Bonneville	6	7,537	Lincoln	4	120
Boundary	1	1,104	Madison	6	145
Butte	6	4	Minidoka	4	13
Camas	4	2,893	Nez Perce	2	16,182
Canyon	3	2,824	Oneida	5	0
Caribou	5	24	Owyhee	3	521
Cassia	4	83	Payette	3	680
Clark	6	173	Power	5	120
Clearwater	2	435	Shoshone	1	12,055
Custer	6	544	Teton	6	469
Elmore	3	6,405	Twin Falls	4	107
Franklin	5	5	Valley	3	1,483
Fremont	6	17,327	Washington	3	76
			<b>Total</b>		<b>116,101</b>

<sup>1</sup> Regional totals are provided in Figure 1.

<sup>2</sup> Rounded to the nearest acre.

Source: Idaho Department of Fish and Game.



**Table 4. Land Ownership by Size of Parcel, Idaho Department of Fish and Game**

Size Range (Acres)	Total Acres	% of Total	Number of Parcels	% of Total
≤ 5	158	0.1	91	22.1
5.1 - 50	2,674	2.3	118	28.7
50.1 - 150	7,449	6.4	82	20.0
> 150	105,820	91.1	120	29.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>116,101</b>	<b>100.0*</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Does not add due to rounding.

Source: Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

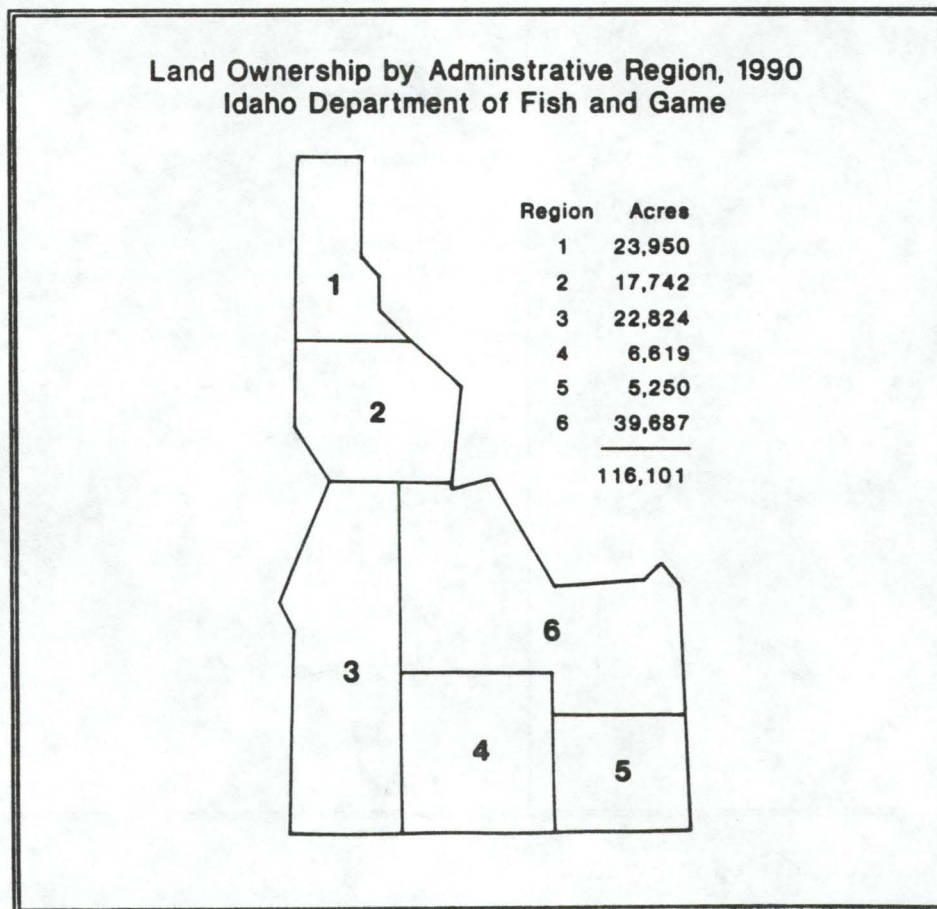


Figure 1

Source: Idaho Department of Fish and Game



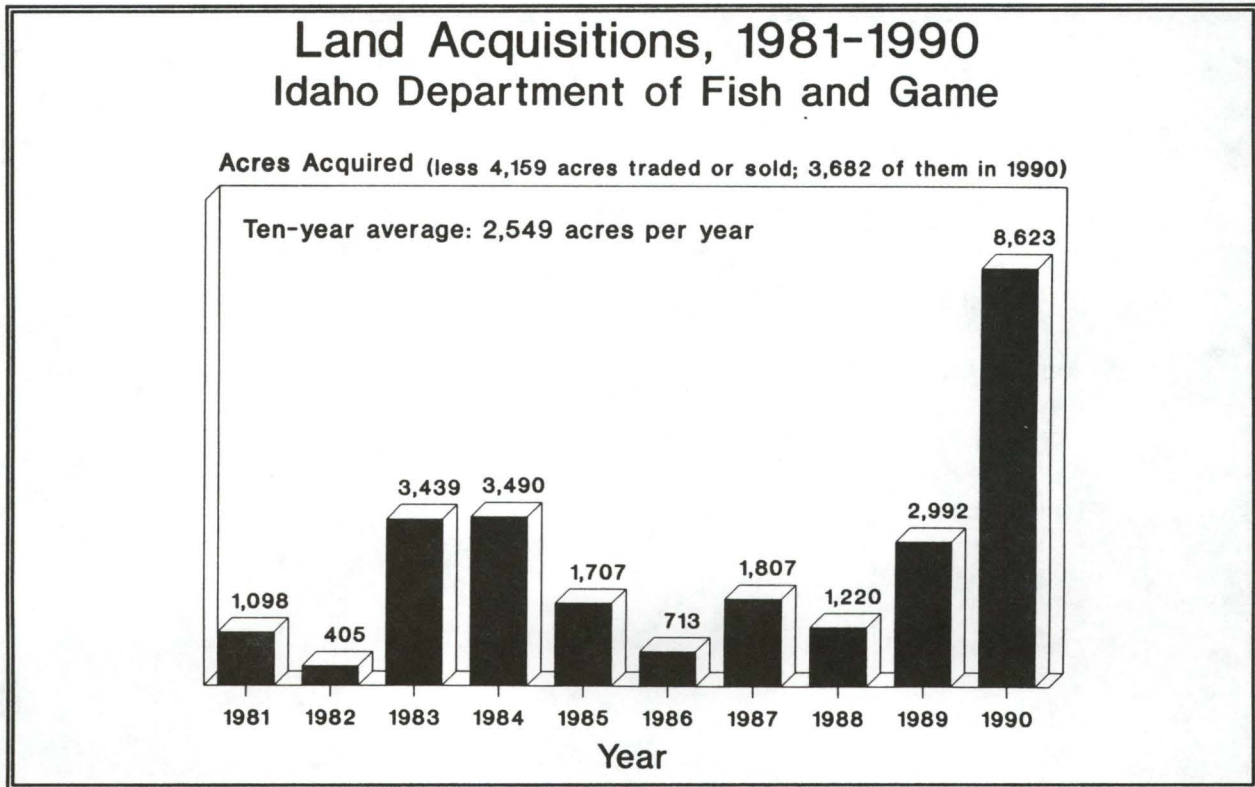


Figure 2

Source: Idaho Department of Fish and Game

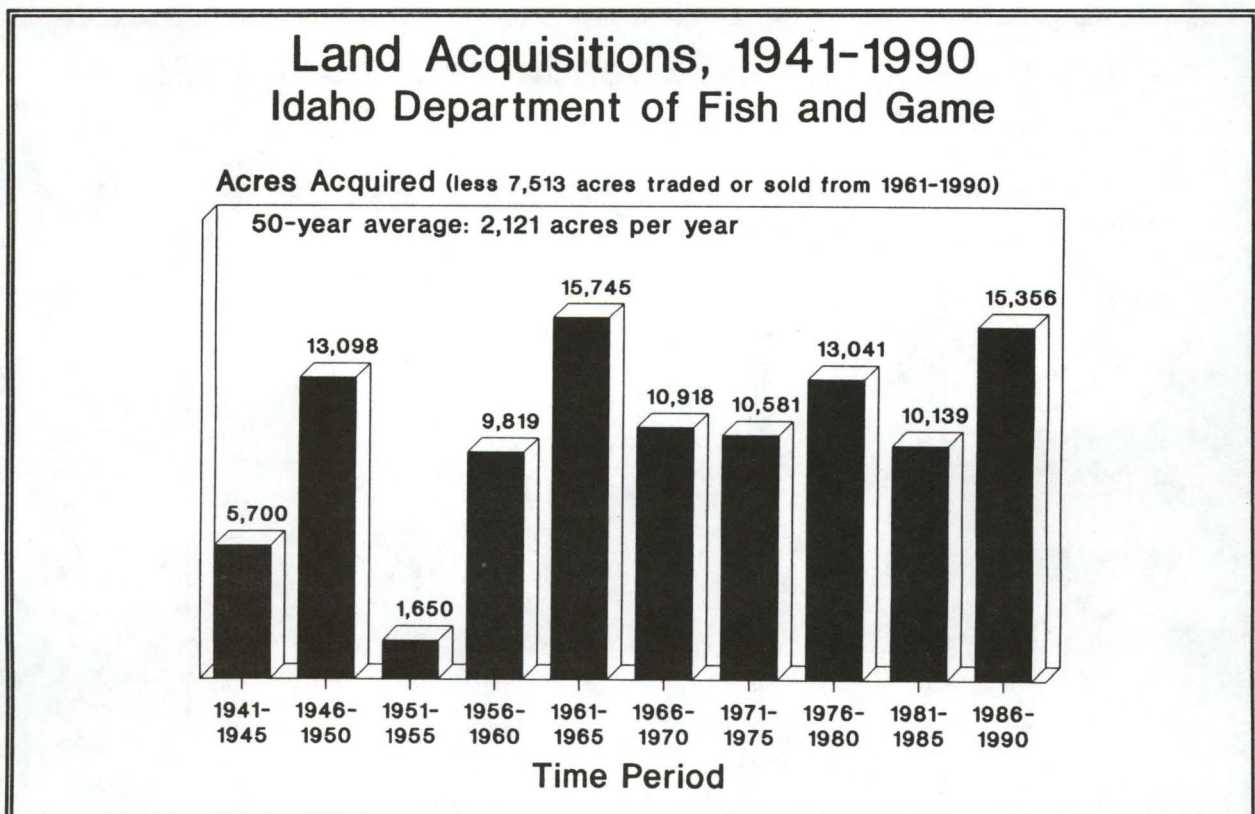


Figure 3

Source: Idaho Department of Fish and Game



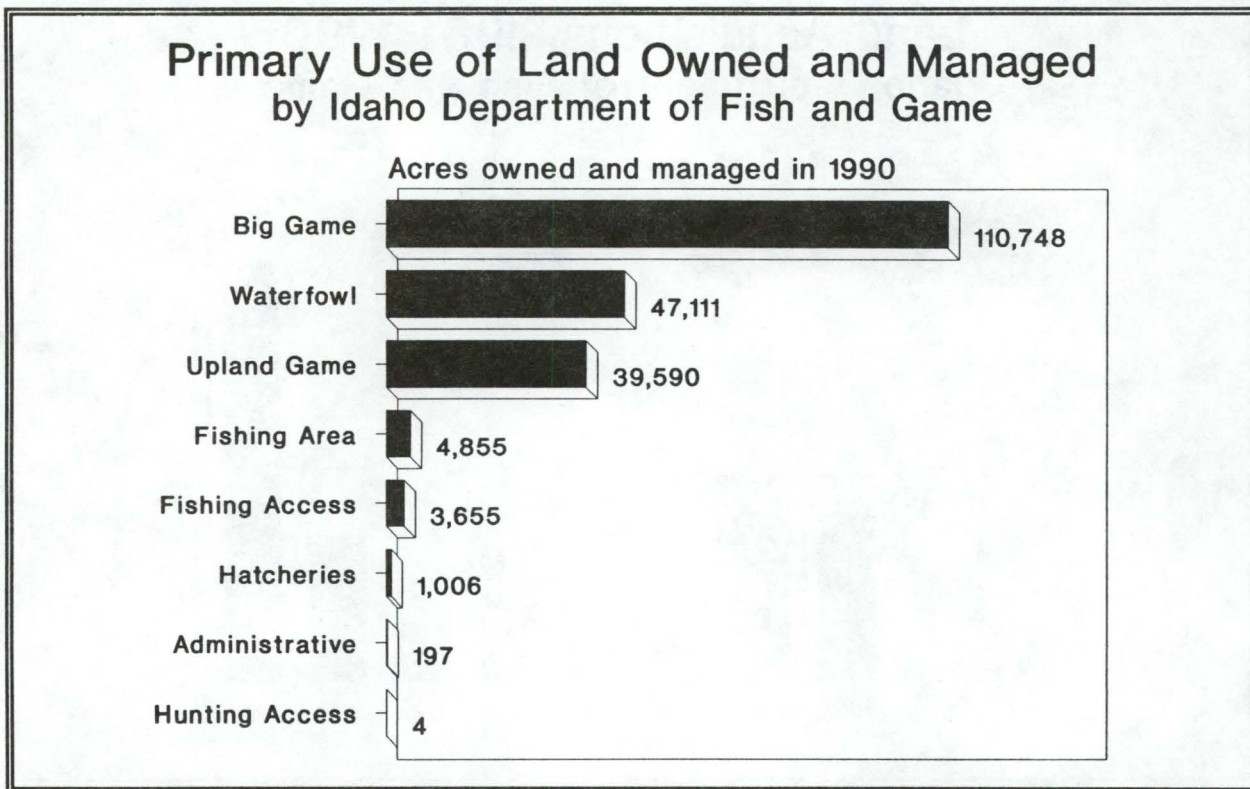


Figure 4

Source: Idaho Department of Fish and Game

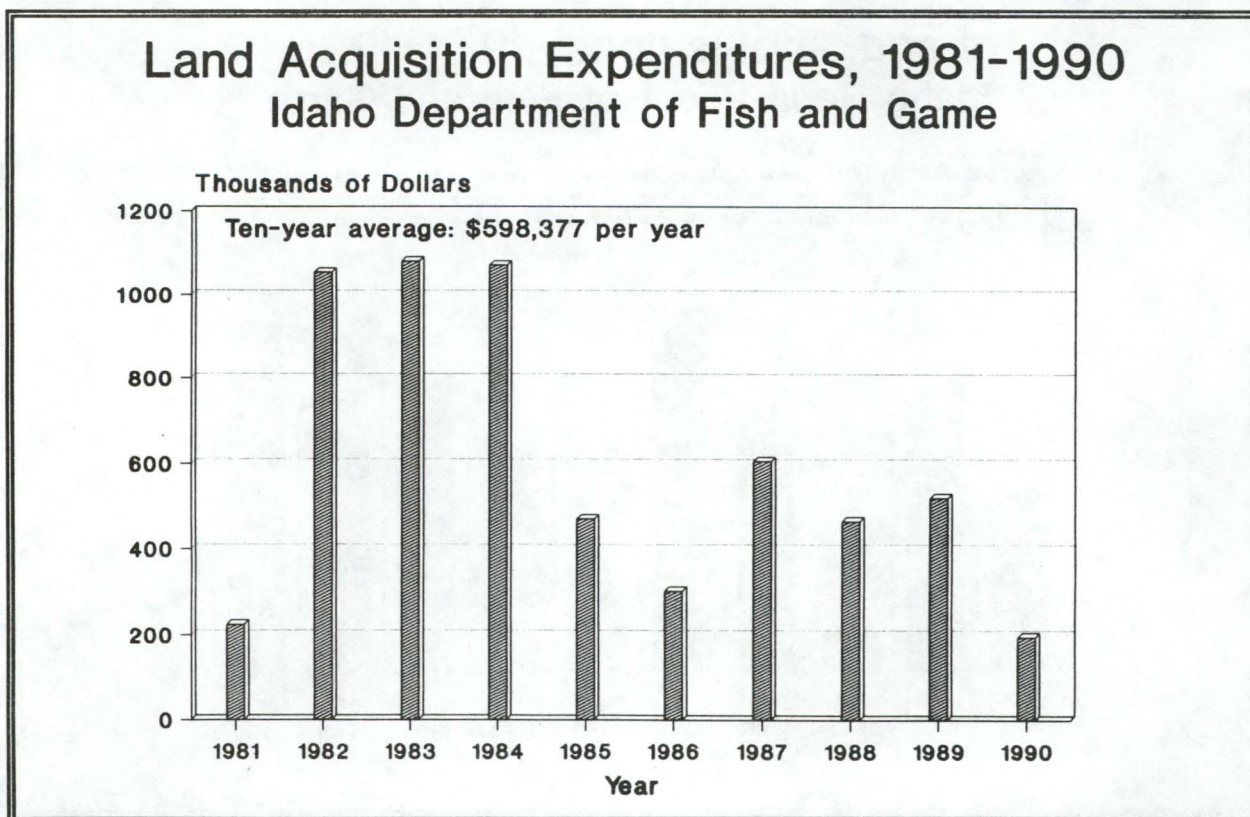


Figure 5

Source: Idaho Department of Fish and Game











