

**IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME**

**Jerry Mallet, Interim Director**

**Project W-170-R-23**

**Progress Report**



**GAME HARVEST SURVEY**

Study I, Job 10

July 1, 1998 to June 30, 1999

Prepared By:

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Boise, Idaho

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## PROGRESS REPORT SURVEYS AND INVENTORY

<b>STATE:</b>	<u>Idaho</u>	<b>JOB TITLE:</b>	<u>Game Harvest Survey</u>
<b>PROJECT:</b>	<u>W-170-R-23</u>		
<b>SUBPROJECT:</b>	<u>8</u>	<b>STUDY NAME:</b>	<u>Big Game Population Trends,</u>
<b>STUDY:</b>	<u>I</u>		<u>Utilization, and Associated</u>
<b>JOB:</b>	<u>10</u>		<u>Habitat Studies</u>
<b>PERIOD COVERED:</b>	<u>July 1, 1998 to June 30, 1999</u>		

### ABSTRACT

In the 1998 hunting season, the annual telephone survey was contracted to a private vendor for the sixth year. A new contract was signed with Clearwater Research, Inc., for the 1998 and 1999 hunting seasons. Increasing costs of conducting the telephone harvest survey and budget limitations resulted in moose, mountain goats, and bighorn sheep being eliminated from this harvest survey program in 1996. The survey was further reduced to include only deer, elk, and antelope to maximize information collected on harvest of these 3 key species in 1997. An increase in deer and elk tag fees in 1998 provided funding to increase sampling intensity for deer and elk for the 1998 season.

Many management criteria in the current species management plans are related to hunter harvest and activity. Hunters were contacted by telephone and questioned about their hunting activity and harvest (Appendix A). The vendor contacted 46,164 hunters from October 1998 to February 1999, an increase of over 18% of the number of hunters contacted for the 1997 hunting season.

### INTRODUCTION

For the 1998 hunting season, a targeted telephone survey was conducted following each hunting season of deer, elk, and antelope controlled hunt participants and general season deer and elk tag buyers. Unlike previous years in which Clearwater Research conducted the survey, collected the responses, and analyzed the data, in 1997 and 1998 Clearwater Research only conducted the survey and delivered the raw data file to the Department. The analysis and tabulation was performed internally. To address concerns expressed by sportsmen and the Idaho Fish and Game Commission about accuracy and timeliness of the results, the Department increased the sampling intensity of deer and elk hunters in 1998 and required the contracted vendor to have the survey completed by mid-February 1999. The 1998 season survey was the most intensive survey the Department has ever conducted for deer and elk. The survey was completed on schedule and the results had been tabulated by the end of February.

For the 1998 hunting season, controlled hunts for deer, elk, and antelope were sampled at a rate of 100% for hunts with 50 permits, or 50 completed interviews plus 11% of the number of permits in excess of 50 for those hunts with >50 permits. There were 15,014 contacts completed for the controlled hunt segment.

The contractor surveyed general deer and elk tag holders at a rate of 15% of the total number of tags issued for each species. Approximately 12,402 general season elk hunters and 18,748 general season deer hunters were surveyed by telephone. No telephone survey was conducted for black bear, mountain lion, or general season archery antelope hunters in 1997 or 1998.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

This survey was partially supported by Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration (W-170-R) Statewide Big Game Harvest Survey. The 1998 telephone survey was conducted by Clearwater Research, Inc., Boise, Idaho, under contract from the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

## **APPENDIX A**

**Summary of  
1998  
Big Game  
Harvest Estimates**



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Species	Estimated		
	Hunters	Harvest	Days hunted
Deer	149,736	39,042	836,007
Elk	98,046	18,760	665,861
Antelope (controlled hunts only)	1,917	1,153	6,564

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Appendix Table 1. Statewide estimates of harvest, number of hunters, and activity for 1998.

Species	Season	Hunters	Harvest	Success (%)	Days hunted
Deer	Any weapon	127,543	32,953	26	701,607
	Archery	12,834	880	6	78,658
	Muzzleloader	3,205	436	14	13,889
	Total general	140,485	34,269	24	794,154
	Controlled	9,251	4,773	52	41,853
	Total <sup>a</sup>	149,736	39,042	26	836,007
Elk	Any weapon	63,966	8,081	13	394,476
	Archery	15,087	1,684	11	123,604
	Muzzleloader	5,094	620	5	23,650
	Total general	75,334	10,386	7	541,730
	Controlled	22,712	8,374	37	124,131
	Total <sup>a</sup>	98,046	18,760	19	665,861
Antelope	Archery <sup>b</sup>				
	Controlled	1,917	1,153	55	6,564
	Total <sup>b</sup>	1,917	1,153	55	6,564

<sup>a</sup> Because most hunters who participate in special weapons seasons also participate in the general season, the number of individual hunters is best represented by the sum of the general season and controlled hunt hunters.

<sup>b</sup> No survey was attempted to estimate participation or harvest of antelope during the general archery season in 1998.

Appendix Table 2. Big game harvest history, 1935-present.

Year	Deer	Elk	Antelope	Black bear	Mtn. lion	Moose	Bighorn sheep	Mtn. goat
1935	7,659	1,821	144	8			1	24
1936	7,800	1,917	124	79			4	81
1937	8,795	2,133		133			6	62
1938	11,597	2,298		49			12	61
1939								
1940			400					
1941								
1942	4,952		700					
1943	11,095	2,398		61				23
1944	13,982	2,874	1,470	118				33
1945	21,263	4,392	650	150				59
1946	26,936	5,435	0	233		26	13	125
1947	18,895	6,549	461	406		24	15	67
1948	21,924	5,944	419			27		
1949	22,285	5,395	383			27		
1950	22,578	7,165	539			50		8
1951	33,250	7,492	1,349			28		21
1952	30,454	8,792	1,520	500		71	13	14
1953	47,200	12,600	1,254	500		91	18	21
1954	51,400	12,451	970	2,600		105	13	27
1955	64,074	15,799	822	2,450		108	22	51
1956	71,862	15,910	919	3,124		134	20	61
1957	62,154	13,568	1,001	3,045		91	29	78
1958	71,013	16,450	821	3,709		77	37	59
1959	70,237	13,865	679	2,367	119	59	59	59
1960	75,213	16,545	701	3,373	83	40	62	114
1961	76,001	16,572	579	2,218	164	46		140
1962	66,645	13,653	549	3,951	98	45		144
1963	63,546	14,542	774	2,444	162	52	49	171
1964	67,379	13,835	839	3,419	127	59	35	161
1965	56,438	14,064	977	2,861	108	51	53	214
1966	64,629	14,631	1,219	3,386	156	55	14	161
1967	66,350	13,397	1,286	2,700	109	50	32	127
1968	78,441	17,064	1,294	2,597	164	53	47	161
1969	67,176	12,415	1,472	3,085	143	74	46	168
1970	77,087	14,146	1,551	3,404	114	81	64	151
1971	54,927	11,009	1,465	3,786	303	86	13	137
1972	47,599	9,324	1,486	3,783	70	88	21	152
1973	54,014	12,374	1,237	1,430	87	96	15	128
1974	42,026	8,712	1,301	1,747	112	112	16	121
1975	40,102	8,981	1,314	2,285	142	93	32	102
1976	25,427	4,135	1,380	2,516	123	94	38	103

Appendix Table 2. Continued.

Year	Deer	Elk	Antelope	Black bear	Mtn. lion	Moose	Bighorn sheep	Mtn. goat
1977	39,834	6,353	1,250	2,173	160	95	27	117
1978	39,879	7,662	1,345	2,300	167	99	38	106
1979	42,549	6,344	1,430	1,718	31	104	42	79
1980	45,988	8,303	1,498	1,619	97	118	32	47
1981	50,580	9,903	1,837	1,918	198	114	46	65
1982	48,670	12,485	2,112	1,584	189	147	64	32
1983	50,600	12,700	2,400	2,100	167	229	60	41
1984	42,600	15,600	2,070	2,100	400	268	70	52
1985	48,950	15,550	2,190	1,700	170	297	79	38
1986	59,800	15,500	2,540	2,150	250	355	79	56
1987	66,400	16,100	2,600	1,950	300	363	77	70
1988	82,200	20,400	2,800	1,900	550	399	76	62
1989	95,200	22,600	3,500	2,100	340	400	98	79
1990	72,100	21,500	3,180	2,300	350	422	92	76
1991	69,100	24,100	2,950	2,100	171	428	97	85
1992	61,200	26,600	3,150	2,800	330	420	106	67
1993	45,600	20,800	2,470	1,260	450	579	80	66
1994	56,900	28,000	1,835	2,250	450	558	78	69
1995	48,400	22,400	1,540	2,040	700	637	57	44
1996	50,800	25,600	1,460	1,740	450	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>
1997	38,600	18,500	<sup>b</sup> 1,300	<sup>c</sup>	<sup>c</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>
1998	39,042	18,760	<sup>b</sup> 1,153	<sup>c</sup>	<sup>c</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Because of budget shortfalls and increasing costs of conducting the telephone harvest survey, moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goats were eliminated from the survey in 1996. Harvest figures for these species were estimated based on a mandatory check requirement and were funded through a different project.

<sup>b</sup> Harvest estimate does not include antelope harvest during the general archery season.

<sup>c</sup> Black bear and mountain lions were dropped from the survey program in 1997 because of budget restrictions.

Submitted by:

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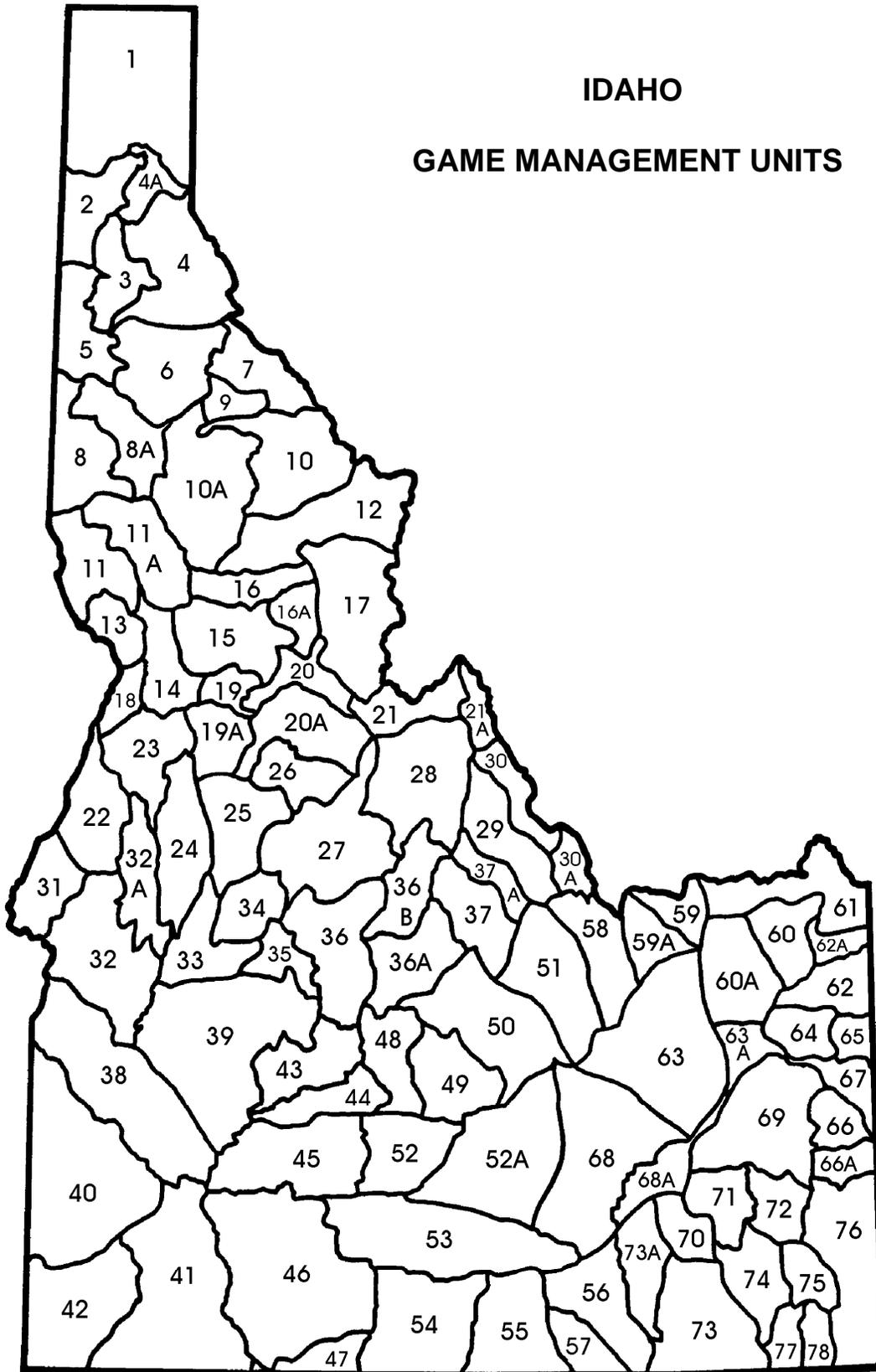
*Steven M. Huffaker*

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Tom Parker, Acting Chief  
Bureau of Wildlife

# IDAHO

## GAME MANAGEMENT UNITS



## FEDERAL AID IN WILDLIFE RESTORATION

The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program consists of funds from a 10% to 11% manufacturer's excise tax collected from the sale of handguns, sporting rifles, shotguns, ammunition, and archery equipment. The Federal Aid program then allots the funds back to states through a formula based on each state's geographic area and the number of paid hunting license holders in the state. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game uses the funds to help restore, conserve, manage, and enhance wild birds and mammals for the public benefit. These funds are also used to educate hunters to develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to be responsible, ethical hunters. Seventy-five percent of the funds for this project are from Federal Aid. The other 25% comes from license-generated funds.

