



CASE STUDY

Idaho Department of Fish and Game



ASSOCIATION of
FISH & WILDLIFE
AGENCIES

Private Lands Working Group

Agriculture Conservation Committee



STATE AGENCY PRIVATE LANDS PROGRAM CASE-STUDY

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) private lands program was initiated over 30 years ago. The entire state of Idaho is broken up into habitat districts. Each district has a habitat biologist assigned to it. Those biologists are supposed to engage federal, private and state land managers on improving habitat. In addition to those biologists, Idaho has 3 farm bill biologists who work out of NRCS field offices with a focus on private lands habitat. IDFG also has 16 conflict biologists and technicians that work with private landowners to reduce conflict caused by big game animals.

LANDOWNER HABITAT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

Idaho has a number of habitat programs that we use on private lands. They are almost all funded with either Pittman-Robertson or license sales generated funds.

- *HIP-Upland*—Licenses funded to do upland game bird habitat work
- *HIP-Wetland*— Licenses funded to do wetland/waterfowl habitat work
- *Watershed Initiative*- Licenses funded to do landscape scale habitat work
- *Winter Feed Program* - Licenses funded to conduct habitat work to provide winter range for big game
- *Mule deer Initiative*--P-R & License funded to conduct habitat to benefit mule deer
- *Additional* - Idaho Governor's Office of species conservation receives general funds each year to conduct habitat work for sage grouse on private lands.

Regions

- Panhandle
- Clearwater
- Southwest
- Magic Valley
- Southeast
- Upper Snake
- Salmon



Program Insights: <https://idfg.idaho.gov/wildlife/lands>

STATE AGENCY PRIVATE LANDS PROGRAM CASE-STUDY: IDAHO

PRIMARY PARTNERS

- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- Conservation and Sporting NGOs
- Land Trusts
- Others Collaborators



EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT

- NGO positions
- Shared/Partner Positions

Most habitat biologists are hired out of school as technicians and then promote up to biologists.



PRIMARY FUNDING

- Pitman-Robertson Funding
- Hunting License Sales



PRIMARY MARKETING AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES YOUR AGENCY USES TO ENGAGE PRIVATE LANDOWNERS

Idaho has a population of less than 2 million people total and a very close knit agricultural/landowner community. Most of our efforts are developed through word-of-mouth and relationships built with landowners. Some projects are generated by phone calls to offices or website visits but this is a very small amount.

We also have staff housed in NRCS field offices, so they get landowner contacts from walk-in solicits.

We also have a strong network with other agencies and NGO staff so project contacts and ideas are shared amongst the group.

IDAHO PRIVATE LANDS CONSERVATION EFFORTS: WHAT WORKS?

- Idaho has a very strong partnership network.
- IDFG is well funded
- Several NRCS wildlife initiatives
- Intact systems and habitat across much of the state
- Strong wildlife and outdoor interest in state

IDAHO PRIVATE LANDS CONSERVATION EFFORTS: CHALLENGES?

- Significant growth of human population moving in from outside the state
- Project/Program funding
- Some habitat challenges are very large and difficult to address (wildfires and annual invasive grasses)

Special Note

I feel like our success is very closely tied to the relationships we have built with the various partners. There are very few private land projects of scale that are conducted solely by IDFG. Almost everyone has other agencies or NGO providing some assistance whether it is technical, outreach or financial.

Like probably many states we do a horrible job of tooting our own horn. One of the things we really need to work on is the celebrating part of our success and letting the public know everything we are doing.

Supporting Information

Landowner Habitat Enhancement Program:
<https://idfg.idaho.gov/wildlife/lands>



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