

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

RS25003

This is a \$400,000 supplemental appropriation to the Department of Fish and Game from the dedicated Fish and Game Set-aside Fund for the Winter Feeding Program to address emergency conditions in the Upper Snake Region and throughout the state. In August of 2016, the Henry's Creek fire in Eastern Idaho burned nearly 53,000 acres including 25,000 acres of the Tex Creek Wildlife Management Area (TCWMA). The TCWMA provides crucial winter range for about 3,500 elk and 5,000 mule deer. The commission approved additional harvest and a plan to initiate emergency winter feeding following the hunting season, depending on snow conditions. Cost estimates to feed deer and elk at TCWMA are \$420,000 and the department anticipates up to \$150,000 of winter feeding in other locations statewide. The source of funding is from \$0.75 of each pronghorn, elk, and deer tag sold. Moneys are used for blocks, pellets, and hay or for seed and materials that provide feed and forage. The existing base budget is \$269,000 and cash reserves in the set-aside exceeded \$600,000 on June 30, 2016.

FISCAL NOTE

This one-time dedicated appropriation for \$400,000 adds to the \$269,000 base to provide \$669,000 for FY 2017. Revenues average about \$200,000 per year from a 75 cent set-aside on big game tags, and are deposited to the Winter Feeding Account within the Fish and Game Set-aside (License) Fund. Sufficient cash balances are available to support this appropriation.

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DISCLAIMER: This statement of purpose and fiscal note are a mere attachment to this bill and prepared by a proponent of the bill. It is neither intended as an expression of legislative intent nor intended for any use outside of the legislative process, including judicial review (Joint Rule 18).