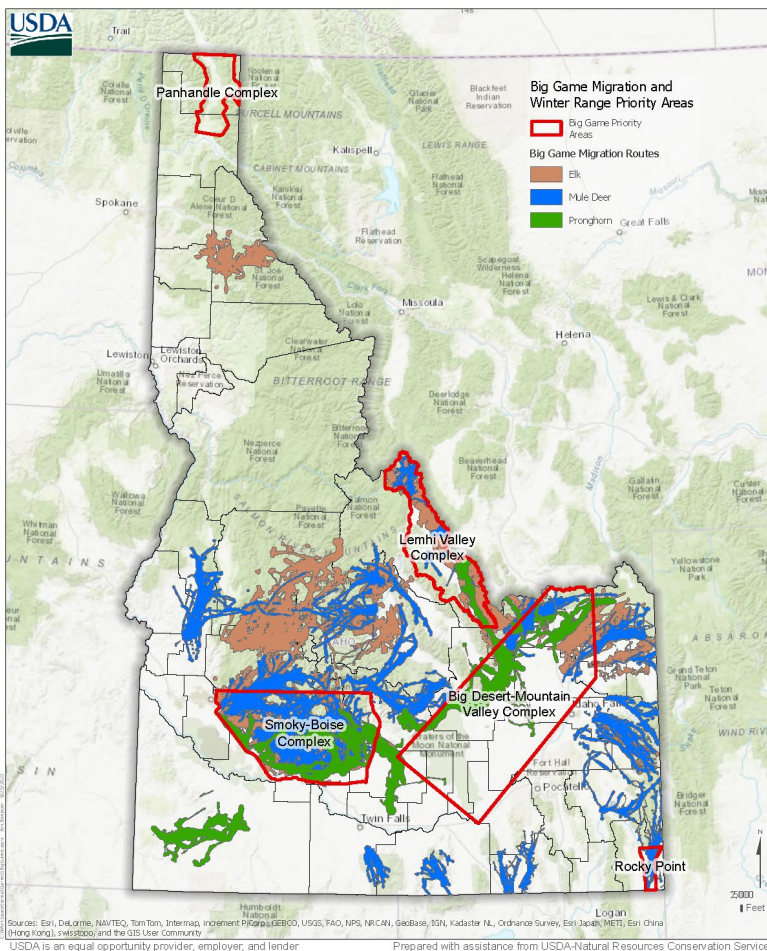


Big Game Migration Natural Resource Specialist

Idaho NRCS is hiring 2 positions to work with NRCS staff and partners engaged in the Big Game Migration Initiative.

Idaho Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is working closely with its many partners to develop an approach where existing Farm Bill programs could be strategically implemented in a way that maximizes benefits to both migrating animals and the working lands that support them. The Action Plan developed by Idaho Fish and Game is the foundational document.

Secretarial Order (S.O.) 3362 (Improving Habitat Quality in Western Big-Game Winter Range and Migration Corridors) emphasizes the importance of conserving and improving elk, mule deer, and pronghorn habitat. The order recognized that state wildlife agencies have high quality information to inform actions connected to conserving and enhancing big game populations and requested that state agencies develop state action plans that identify their top 3-5 priority areas based on elk, mule deer, and/or pronghorn winter ranges and migration corridors. The state action plans provide focus, facilitate partnership development, inform grant making programs, and ultimately serve as a tool to accomplish habitat conservation. - *provided by IDFG*



USDA is supporting this partnership with a focused application of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP). The initiative is open to producers across the State, however there are several priority areas within big game migration corridors that will be the focal point of conservation efforts. The action plan's extensive collection of migratory field data can be seen in the map produced below. This provides the basis for the priority areas we prioritize.

EQIP focuses on integrating practices on working lands, such as prescribed grazing systems, wildlife-friendly fencing, and invasive species control. See below for the full list of eligible practices. ACEP assists producers who want to protect sensitive landscapes and prime farmlands from conversion to non-compatible land uses, such as residential subdivisions, through establishment of long-term conservation easements.

Figure 1. Priority areas in Idaho include, but are not limited to: the Panhandle Complex, Lemhi Valley Complex, Big Desert Mountain Valley Complex, Rocky Point and the Smoky-Boise Complex.

Conservation Planning and Assessment:

Eligible practices:

314	Brush Management
315	Herbaceous Weed Management
382	Fence*
390	Riparian Herbaceous Cover
391	Riparian Forest Buffer
420	Wildlife Habitat Planting
500	Obstruction Removal
528	Prescribed Grazing
595	Pest Management Conservation System
643	Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities
644	Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management
645	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management**
647	Early Successional Habitat Development/Management
649	Structures for Wildlife*
666	Forest Stand Improvement
550	Range Planting
612	Tree/Shrub Establishment

For program year 2024, Idaho has allocated \$4.4 million EQIP dollars to the Big Game Migration Initiative. In addition, over \$5.3 million is dedicated to ACEP-ALE.