

THREAT LEVEL

IDAHO FISH & GAME

Secure (S5): :

Widespread, abundant, and secure within the jurisdiction



CALL TO ACTION

- ▶ Collect data on population sizes and range
- ▶ Protect key food sources from grazing
- ▶ Research how climate change will impact the spread of disease



White-tailed Deer

Odocoileus virginianus

Photo Credit: idfg.idaho.gov

OVERVIEW

The white-tailed deer population in northern Idaho is at little risk, although significant habitat changes have been pushing populations northward. Increased urban and agricultural development is shrinking their grassland and shrubland habitats. Important food sources, such as native grasses and shrubs, are threatened by warming temperatures and increased wildfires. White-tailed deer are also vulnerable to disease, which can spread rapidly through large, dense populations. This species is not considered threatened due to its large and widespread populations.

CONSERVATION CONSIDERATIONS

VULNERABILITY RANKING

CLIMATE

LOW - MODERATE

NON-CLIMATE

MODERATE

CONFIDENCE

HIGH

Physiological, phenological, or ecological factors to consider when planning conservation projects:

- ▶ White-tailed deer inhabit diverse ecosystems, ranging from grasslands to high elevation forests
- ▶ Large, widespread populations increase resilience threats
- ▶ Large, dense populations make white-tailed deer susceptible to disease

Vulnerability Rankings Methodology

These priority species have been assessed for climate and non-climate vulnerability using a process adapted from the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife's Methodology for ranking the Climate Change Vulnerability of Species. WDFW's approach includes rating each species' climate sensitivity and exposure. These two rankings are then averaged for a climate vulnerability ranking. The Tribe developed a non-climate vulnerability ranking to capture species' relative risk and adaptability to factors such as human-caused development, predator/prey relationships, or low population numbers. Confidence rankings were assessed based on the availability of scientific research.

KEY THREATS

Habitat Modifications

One of the largest stressors is land use, such as development and agriculture. Heavy grazing from sheep and other domesticated animals reduces deer habitat. Human development has increased deer mortality caused by vehicles.

Climate Change

- ▶ Warming temperatures will cause a shift in suitable habitat in the north and higher elevations, which may cause deer to migrate northward. An expanding deer population will increase competition for resources and draw predators into those habitats.
- ▶ Drought and other changes in precipitation will reduce the availability of key food sources. Warmer temperatures can increase the encroachment of non-native species, decreasing the native species deer feed on.
- ▶ Drought can also increase outbreaks of diseases spread by midges. Drought will lead to fewer water sources, increasing interactions between populations, and speeding up the spread of disease. Midges also reproduce in warm water, with increases in water temperatures leading to larger midge populations.

Hunting and Predators

In northern Idaho, deer are also extensively hunted, which can be harmful to overall population. At the same time, regulated hunting can also serve as a management tool to control population size. White-tailed deer also face predation from domestic dogs and coyotes.

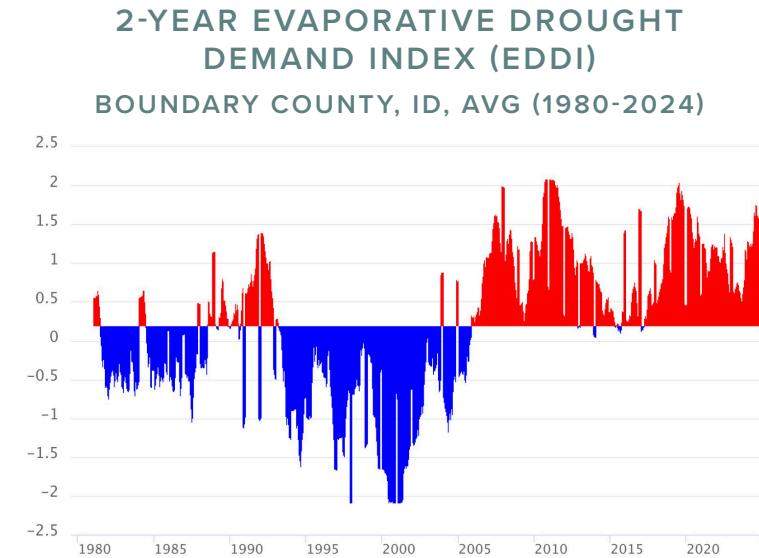
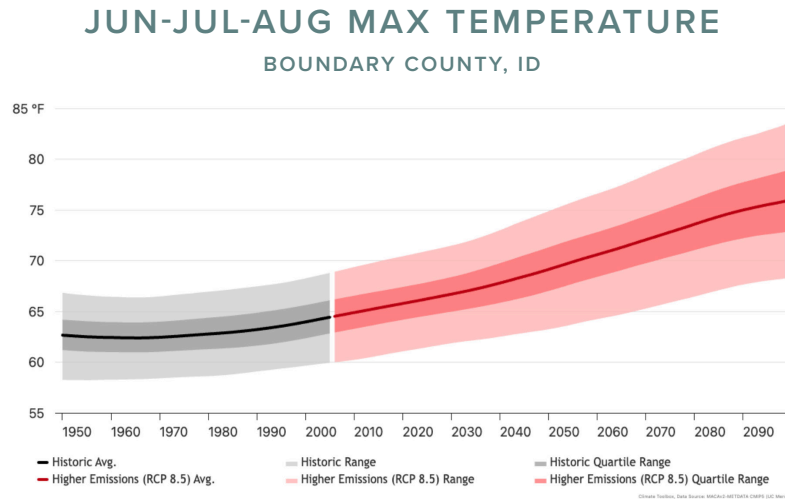
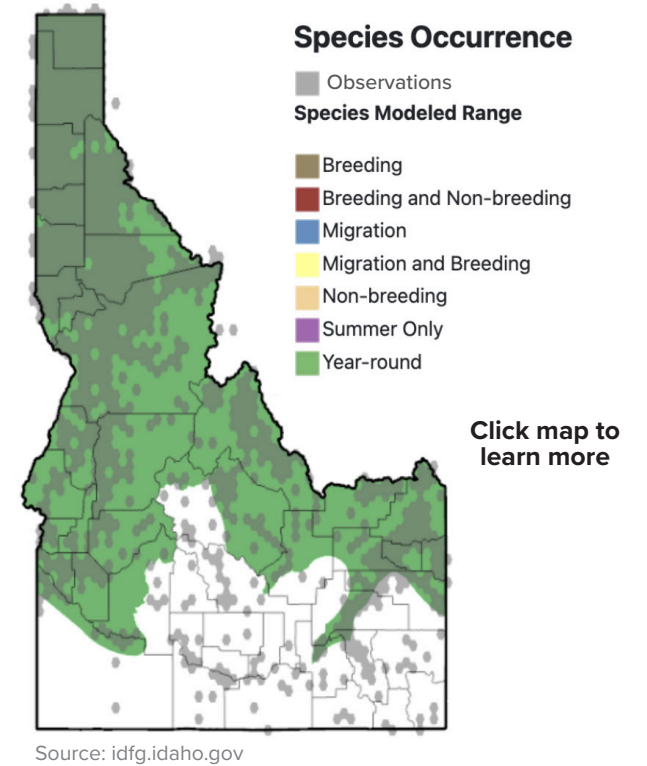


Photo Credit: John Smith, wdfw.wa.gov



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- “White-Tailed Deer (*Odocoileus Virginianus*) | Idaho Fish and Game.” Idaho.gov, idfg.idaho.gov/species/taxa/18807.
- “Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease and Bluetongue Virus Detected in White-Tailed Deer in North Idaho.” Idaho Department of Fish & Game, 2025, <https://idfg.idaho.gov/article/epizootic-hemorrhagic-disease-and-bluetongue-virus-detected-white-tailed-deer-north-idaho>.
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PRIORITY AT-RISK SPECIES
KOOTENAI TRIBE OF IDAHO