

## Protecting Wildlife, One Video Call at a Time: Idaho Fish & Game Stays Connected with LifeSize HD Video

State agency saves money on travel, improves communication with HD video communications from LifeSize

### Organization

#### Idaho Department of Fish & Game, Boise, Idaho, USA

The department's mission is simple: All wildlife, including all wild animals, wild birds and fish, within the state of Idaho, is the property of the state of Idaho. It is to be preserved, protected, perpetuated and managed.

Idaho's landscape is rugged, with some of the largest unspoiled natural areas in the United States. For example, at 2.3 million acres, the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness Area is the largest contiguous area of protected wilderness in the continental United States. Idaho has natural resources and scenic areas. The state has snow-capped mountain ranges, rapids, vast lakes and steep canyons.



With seven regional offices statewide and roughly 1000 seasonal and full-time employees, the department of Fish and Game currently boasts roughly 500,000 license holders and serves all citizens of Idaho.



### Challenge

The department is widely dispersed across the state in some of the most remote parts of Idaho. With 26 wildlife management areas, 29 hatcheries and several fish and wildlife health laboratories, it is imperative that staff members stay physically close to their respective areas. Face-to-face meetings are necessary, but bringing together such a remote work group was costly in terms of expense and travel time.

As with many state agencies, budgets continue to decline as responsibilities and overall costs continue to increase. With some officers telecommuting and some field service staff working from remote facilities, hatcheries and wildlife areas, for many staff members, it requires a day's travel time and expenses each way to attend meetings at the various locations.

Idaho Fish & Game needed a video communications tool that provided true-to-life, HD video quality for meaningful communication that was not only easy to use, but easy to deploy and maintain. The solution also needed to be able to connect eight or more locations simultaneously at a price point that made sense.



#### CHALLENGE

To cut down on travel and bring a widely dispersed work group together while creating an immersive communications experience.



#### SOLUTION

After evaluating several products, LifeSize® Room™ HD video systems were chosen for their quality, ease of use and price performance.



#### RESULTS

\$7,000 in travel costs saved per video call with field staff; Reduced travel-related costs overall, improved communication among remote regional teams.



## Solution

Idaho Fish & Game evaluated the various video conferencing vendor's products to find that LifeSize gave them the most bang for the buck.

"Our deciding factors in choosing LifeSize were ease of installation, operation, maintenance, overall quality and price performance," said Craig Potcher, Idaho Fish & Game. "If we build it, they will come. Soon after purchasing and installing the systems, we made trips to all the regions to train staff on the operation of the endpoints. In addition, we held several department-wide meetings. As people gained more exposure to the technology, they got more comfortable using it."

Idaho Fish & Game chose the LifeSize® Room™ HD video conferencing product. An ideal fit for large conference rooms, LifeSize Room allows video calls with multiple participants through an embedded high definition multipoint control unit (MCU). 6-way Continuous Presence (with 4 visible participants), complete with transcoding, is now possible in a compact, sleek unit that's less than half the size of comparable solutions.



## Results

Since the implementation, the Wildlife Bureau conducted a short study and determined that each video conference meeting involving field staff saves, on average, \$7000 in travel cost. Each video conference meeting involving field staff saves two travel days, meetings can be conducted with little or no advanced scheduling and can often be conducted in less time than on-site meetings.

"We weren't sure how it would be received, or how it would work on our limited network," said Potcher. "Although the network piece was a challenge to overcome, the system uses fewer network resources than we initially anticipated. Our initial purchase of the LifeSize Room system in the seven regions and headquarters were used a tremendous amount and use of that facility has increased steadily over the past three years of use."

"Poor communication can cause failed projects and incursion of extra cost and time to remedy projects," Potcher said. "With LifeSize, we've experienced better communication statewide, a growing interest in the use of videoconferencing, lower travel costs for our bureaus and shorter, more productive meetings overall. Videoconferencing doesn't completely eliminate the need for face-to-face meetings, but it significantly reduces that requirement."



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