

**IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
2270 Old Penitentiary Road
PO Box 7249
Boise, ID 83707**

**IDAHO WOLF DEPREDATION CONTROL BOARD
Minutes of October 14, 2021 Meeting**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Celia Gould, ISDA (Co-chair)
Ed Schriever, Idaho Fish and Game (Co-chair)
Richard Savage
Butch Suor

DEPARTMENT STAFF: Dallas Burkhalter, Office of Attorney General – ISDA
Chanel Tewalt, ISDA
Kelly Neilson, ISDA
Dicsie Gullick, ISDA

OTHERS PRESENT: Martha Wackenhut, Idaho Fish and Game
Toby Boudreaux, Idaho Fish and Game
Michael Pearson, Idaho Fish and Game
Ryan Boyans
Emily Merrigan, Idaho Animal Damage Control Board
Valerie Bollinger, Division of Purchasing
Rachel, Boise State Public Radio
Stevie, Interested party

The meeting was called to order by Co-chair Gould at 10:00 AM MDT.

INTRODUCTIONS

Board members, staff members and others present introduced themselves.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (ACTION ITEM)

Butch Suor made a motion to approve the minutes of August 31, 2021. It was seconded by Richard Savage. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION ON WOLF COLLARING

Co-chair Schriever began the discussion by giving the background. He stated that this topic goes back to the July meeting and SB1211, which gave the Board the flexibility to use outside contractors, not just Wildlife Services and Fish and Game. During the August meeting there was

a pointed discussion about having more wolves collared. Two years ago a law was passed regarding wolf collaring and having collared wolves on the landscape has helped tremendously. There was a request during the last meeting by Mr. Davis to have more wolves collared.

Co-chair Schriever continued stating that Idaho Fish and Game works with outside contractors and has negotiated price agreements through the Division of Purchasing, which is quite a process. He also stated that he talked with Kelly Nielsen about the carry over funds and there is some flexibility to take on extra work. He also pointed out that Wildlife Services usually spends a lot less than the amount listed on the work agreement. In years past, the unused money would carry over into the next fiscal year. This year, due to the continuous appropriation bill, the unused funds will go back into the general fund. Based on the past several years, Kelly estimated that Wildlife Services will not spend approximately \$150,000 and a plan is needed to put that money to work.

Co-chair Schriever continued by stating that there is a safety net. If Wildlife Services spends the total amount allocated in their service agreement, there is roughly \$200,000 of carryover money that can be used. Therefore, if the Board were to approve this plan, \$150,000 could be spent if Wildlife Services underspends and the money would be put to good use. If Wildlife Services spends the maximum amount in their agreement, then this program could use the carryover.

Using \$150,000, Co-chair Schriever then asked his employees what combination of services made sense and what was a reasonable number of animals that could be collared. With a conceptual work plan, around 25 wolves could be collared for the \$150,000.

The Idaho Wolf Depredation Control Board has no contracts in place and no mechanism in which to spend the money within this fiscal year. Idaho Fish and Game has both the contracts and mechanism to do a collaring program on short notice. Co-chair Schriever explained that there is a way in which the Board could utilize the Fish and Game mechanisms to facilitate this work. In order to do this, in November the Board will need to have the mechanism and vehicles in place, which can only be done through purchasing. The Board will not have the time to go through the usual and proper channels to create their own contracts and price agreements. The Board can piggyback initially with Fish and Game facilitating.

There is considerable work to be done to get this ready for sometime around February, which is the best time of the year to collar wolves. The Board will need to continue to flush out whether or not they want to move forward. If they do move forward, they will need to figure out how much collars cost, what the contracts cost. The Board will also need to decide where to collar wolves and they will need to be strategic about this. The Board could get recommendations from the Animal Damage Control Board, Wildlife Services, Fish and Game and other organizations.

Co-chair Schriever introduced Valerie Bollinger, the Administrator of the Division of Purchasing to explain how the Board could use the Fish and Game mechanism already in place. Valerie began by explaining the laws regulating purchasing. All state Boards are subject to the State Procurement Act, which outlines a competitive procurement process, which can take 4-8 months to get through the process.

Fish and Game has price agreements with individuals and companies that collar wolves. Piggybacking is fairly simple. The Board will need to ask permission to piggyback the Fish and Game contracts. The contractor is not required to use the same price point, but most do. The Board would then go to the contractor, get the approval and order off of the Fish and Game contract.

In the longer term, if the Board would like to have the same services, the next time Fish and Game goes through price agreements, both Fish and Game and the Board would enter into the same price agreement with the contractors. This will also eliminate administration time with one agreement serving both the Department and Board. If the Board would like different contracts, it would enter into a full-blown competitive agreement through the procurement process.

Co-chair Gould called for questions. Butch Suor commented that there have been no reports of the benefit of collaring. He feels that this still does not address the total population of wolves and believes it is aimed at livestock depredation and not ungulate depredation.

Co-chair Schriever thanked Valerie for the information presented. He then explained that this contract would be complementary, not a replacement for the Wildlife Services Contract. Wildlife Services does some collaring, but it is not strategic but opportunistic. If they get a chance to collar, they do. This contract would be a thoughtful and deliberate compliment to what Wildlife Services does.

Co-chair Schriever fuller explained that if this Board is going to contemplate a replacement for Wildlife Services, the Fish and Game contracts cannot do it. The Board would need to do an open procurement and fully understand what is contemplated. This is not what is being discussed at this time.

Co-chair Schriever made a motion to ask for permission to formally use the Fish and Game contracts and price agreements to help collar wolves. It was seconded by Richard Savage.

Butch Suor asked if this was just for research purposed and stated that he would like more reporting on the benefits of collaring and how it leads to a better mortality rate.

The motion passed unanimously.

Co-chair Schriever asked Valerie Bollinger what the Division of Purchasing needed from the Board to make the formal request.

Co-chair Gould wanted to remind the Board that this motion does not pre-suppose a decision, it just makes it possible to move forward if the Board chooses. She also asked that the collaring of wolves and location of collaring be based on science and not politics.

But Suor stated that we need a form for outside contractors.

Co-chair Schriever stated that he had been approached by a company that can do something similar to Wildlife Services and the Board can look at it. The Board needs to consider it an open and competitive model and there is a lengthy process to go through Purchasing.

The Board discussed having a meeting in November and then again in December. The Department of Agriculture will try to combine the two meetings, and just have one meeting if it is possible.

ADJOURNMENT

Co-chair Schriever adjourned the meeting at 10:44 AM MDT.