

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

**IDAHO WOLF DEPREDATION CONTROL BOARD**  
**Minutes of November 22, 2022, Meeting**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chanel Tewalt, ISDA (Co-chair)  
Ed Schriever, Idaho Fish and Game (Co-chair)  
Richard Savage (telephone)  
Jerry Cloninger

**DEPARTMENT STAFF:** Alex Williamson, Idaho Legislative Services Office  
Tricia Hebdon, Idaho Fish and Game  
Katie Oelrich, Idaho Fish and Game  
Dallas Burkhalter, Office of Attorney General – ISDA  
Kelly Nielsen, ISDA  
Denise Lauerman, ISDA

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Jared Hedelius – USDA Wildlife Services, Idaho Office  
Donna Ralstan – USDA Wildlife Services, Idaho Office  
Justin Webb – Foundation for Wildlife Management (telephone)  
Patxi Larrocea-Phillips – Idaho Wool Growers Association  
Greg Jones – 6 Rivers Consulting  
Phil Davis – Rancher ADC District 2  
Joshua Uriarte – OSC  
Larry Craig – Self  
Brad Carlson – Capital Press  
Bailey Woolf – Idaho Sportsman

The meeting was called to order by Co-chair Schriever at 1:04 p.m. MT.

## **INTRODUCTIONS**

Board members, staff members, and others present introduced themselves.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES (ACTION ITEM)**

Co-chair Schriever made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2022, meeting. It was seconded by Jerry Cloninger. Motion carried.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT (3-minutes per person)**

Phil Davis spoke, stating his opinion of where we are at. He is bothered by loss of so many cattle. Wolves don't typically consume their kill, he stated myopathy with trauma = chase with bites. With the number of wolves in Idaho this is cause for concern. He appreciates the control management effort, but the results are little at best. Mr. Davis spoke of Larry Craig, that he had stated, "why should we fear consequences of the decisions we make." Mr. Davis stated that more collaring will be done this next year to identify the wolves causing depredation. He said that a big budget will be spent on this. He asked about an aerial program, hopeful that this will be in place this coming summer.

## **REVIEW OF REPORTS**

### **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Kelly Nielsen gave an overview of the FY2023 Financial Report. The Wolf Depredation Control Board receives funding from several different entities.

### **WILDLIFE SERVICES REPORT**

Jared Hedelius gave an overview of the quarterly Wildlife Services Report for FY2022. Wildlife Services has completed a total of 77 investigations for the last quarter dated July 1 – September 30, 2022, with 27 investigations that involved confirmed depredations, eight probable involved depredation, and 40 possible/unknown wolf depredations. Jared stated that for the same period last year, Wildlife Services completed 104 investigations in which 69 involved confirmed depredations, which indicates there were 42 less confirmed investigations this quarter. Jared discussed that the eight-year trend indicates reduced confirmed/probable depredation investigations; there can be an expectation this trend will continue to decline into fy2023. During this quarter there were no wolf related flights, they did not radio collar any wolves, and did not remove any wolves for the protection of wild ungulates. He also discussed the summary of employee hours worked.

Jerry Cloninger inquired about the number of possible/unknowns within the number of total investigations and Co-chair Schriever asked if typically, over ½ are confirmed or probable, while this quarter that number was possible/unknown. Jared stated that he doesn't have an answer; there was a reduction in complaints/investigations and there are many variables, which include carcasses that had sat too long decomposing, in the summer a carcass breaks down and in the winter a carcass is preserved. See attached report.

## **APPROVAL OF INVOICES (ACTION ITEMS)**

Jerry Cloninger made a motion to approve invoices for Wildlife Services and Foundation for Wildlife Management for payment as written. It was seconded by Co-chair Schriever. Motion carried.

Co-chair Schriever discussed that the wolves, as per the F4WM invoice, were harvested from a specific area within the state where conflicts occur.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Co-chair Tewalt discussed the IWDCB FY22 revenue and IWDCB FY22 expenditures (contracted and other), as well as the FY2023 Appropriation Intent Language, discussing use of funds to reimburse contractors for costs related to wolf collaring, monitoring, and control actions to the maximum extent possible. She stated that spending for Wildlife Services is historically lower than the target.

Discussion occurred regarding the IWDCB FY23 revenue and IWDCB FY23 discussion items indicating Wildlife Services ~\$400,000.

Co-chair Schriever stated that Idaho Fish and Game has a contract with Wildlife Services not to succeed. They have not come close to target, but that safety net is there just in case. If spending equals up to \$150,000 and \$112,500 between now and late April, with abnormal turn of conflicts than conceivably we couldn't pay or spend money that we don't have. Co-chair Tewalt stated that for collaring and the F4WM proposal, once the money is used, it is gone. Then next year they wouldn't be able to do it again.

Kelly Nielsen spoke of the history and trending, likely not in the position to run out of funding, however, if the proposal is more aggressive and will likely spend into the other funding. Co-chair Schriever offered if the amount was \$500,00 instead of \$400,00. Kelly Nielsen stated that the IWDCB could go through the supplemental process before the Governor's office and then the legislature to explain to them the need. Co-chair Tewalt stated that typically the invoice would not be \$500,000, but in April may have to make some tough decisions.

Co-chair brought up the potential collaring project and Katie Oelrich discussed the background and the IWDCB and IDFG contracts. Tricia Hebdon stated that the Chairman of the Board would be required to sign off. Co-chair asked Jared Hedelius if collars are helpful? Jared responded, "absolutely."

Katie Oelrich discussed the requirements; helicopter and fixed wing (spotter plane), capture crew, veterinarian, radio collars and data, as well as additional needs of logistics, schedule flex, drug safety, DEA licenses, etc.

### Two Options are proposed:

FY2023 – 20 grey wolves collared in chronic counties (southern Idaho) January 1<sup>st</sup> to beginning of April

#### Option 1:

- **USDA Wildlife Services**
  - WDCB already has an established contract with USDA Idaho WS for wolf work
  - ID WS will use the Montana WS wolf capture helicopter and crew
  - ID and MT WS are able to fully provide the four main components of wolf captures or have contracts with vendors in place to provide the services
  - IDFG will continue to help provide collars and facilitate logistics of the project as needed

- This option would not require DOP contracts
- Total cost of work for 6-days: \$54,000 – \$72,000

Option 2:

- Private Vendors from IDFG/WDCB price agreements\* (the WDCB will partner with IDFG to facilitate the capture and collaring of wolves)
  - WDCB will consider the four wolf capture components outline above when developing a capture operation and contracting vendors
  - IDFG will provide collars and facilitate the logistics of the project as needed
- Total cost for 6-days of work: \$100,000 - \$150,000 (depending on the vendor)

\* WDCB will need to work with DOP to develop standing flight and capture contracts per 2021-2022 direction

Jerry Cloninger stated that with the helicopter cost, it would be more for a private company because of the insurance, etc., also for the drug license and the DEA research license.

Co-chair Schriever stated that value is value, the objective is to get the animals collared. He said that Montana has an experienced capture crew, but would Idaho be their priority.

Jared Hedelius stated that Montana had promised they could work one week at a time for Idaho. Co-chair Schriever asked if ferry time was included, or if that was extra. Jared responded that ferry time is expected and rolled into the plan.

Co-chair Schriever stated that with the economy in Idaho and the ease of contracting, the same number of hours and no guarantee, maybe go with the Wildlife Services option. The WDCB should move quickly, could be adding more days to get 20 collared.

Co-chairs Tewalt and Schriever stated that the Foundation for Wildlife Management proposal that was offered at the last WDCB meeting should be heard now.

Justin Webb presented the F4WM proposal via the telephone.

Co-chair Schriever stated the big picture is in chronic livestock depredation with low harvest. Hunters and trappers moved to those units. If people were shifted to areas of conflicts, then harvest could occur only to chronic areas, not statewide.

Co-chair Tewalt discussed the 3:1 cost share plan, asked about thoughts for Option 1 and Option 2.

Co-chair Schriever made a motion for a Not to Exceed of \$85,000 with Wildlife Services for wolf capture and collar work. Not a number of days agreement, but a \$\$ agreement. It was seconded by Jerry Cloninger. Motion carried.

Co-chair Tewalt asked about the WDCB's thoughts on the F4WM proposal. Jerry Cloninger made a motion to accept an agreement of \$112,500 with the Foundation for Wildlife Management. It was seconded by Richard Savage.

Discussion after this motion:

Co-chair Schriever said he would support the motion using livestock funds and not general funds, Dallas Burkhalter stated that an amendment could be done. Jerry Cloninger made a sub-motion to add to limit the agreement to the general fund.

Discussion by Kelly Nielsen, who clarified the livestock fund and the general fund and stated that in his opinion the agreement would need to run through purchasing.

Co-chair Tewalt stated there was a substitute motion on the table. All aye. Motion carried.

Co-chair Tewalt spoke of the need to work on executing the agreement.

**ADJOURNMENT**

2:22 p.m.