

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

IDAHO WOLF DEPREDATION CONTROL BOARD
Minutes of March 8, 2024, Meeting
Meeting was live streamed via Teams

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chanel Tewalt, ISDA (Co-chair)
Jim Fredericks, Idaho Fish and Game (Co-chair)
Richard Savage (via livestream)
Jerry Cloninger
Jon Goode (via livestream)

DEPARTMENT STAFF: Lloyd Knight – ISDA
Jon Rachael - IDFG
Katie Oelrich, Idaho Fish and Game – IDFG
Tricia Hebdon, Idaho Fish and Game – IDFG
Dallas Burkhalter, Office of Attorney General – ISDA
Marshall Toryanski, Office of Attorney General – ISDA
Kelly Nielsen – ISDA
Denise Lauerman – ISDA
Taylor Trudeau – ISDA (via livestream)
Riley Calhoun – ISDA (via livestream)

OTHERS PRESENT: Jared Hedelius – USDA Wildlife Services, Idaho Office
Dexton Lake – Idaho Farm Bureau
Dallas Gudgell – IWCN
Ella Driever – TREE Club
Gordon Wilkerson – Washington County Commissioner
Drew Wahlin – ICF
Roxanne Noble
Sasha Truax – TREE Club
Val Walker (via livestream)
Susan Dewar (via livestream)
Megan Smith (via livestream)
Karl Prokop (via livestream)
Pamela Williams (via livestream)
Terra Jackson (via livestream)
Greg Ledonne (via livestream)
Garrick Dutcher (via livestream)
Cameron Mulrony (via livestream)
Patxi Larrocea Phillips (via livestream)
Glenda Meyer (via livestream)
Stephen Capra (via livestream)
KB (via livestream)
Christian Nelson (via livestream)

Thomas Lindenmuth (via livestream)

The meeting was called to order by Co-chair Tewalt at 10:02 a.m. MT.

INTRODUCTIONS

Board members introduced themselves.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (ACTION ITEM)

Jon Goode, board member, stated there were two corrections in December's minutes to be approved. Jon Goode made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2023, meeting with corrections to be made. Seconded by Jerry Cloninger, board member. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Co-chair Tewalt stated that everyone will have three minutes to speak, with a 30-second warning. She went on to state that the Wolf Board is a financial group and does not grant or supersede authority. Any kind of board funding must go through all legal processes and permits. Idaho Law, the board does not set the law, but implements the law as set.

Sasha Truax – spoke about the need to allocate funds to non-lethal methods of control. She spoke about wolf history when wolves had to be reintroduced after near extinction in the state due to lethal methods of control. She commented on the Wood River Wolf Project which has only had to use lethal means of control once in the last 12 years, citing it as proof that non-lethal means of wolf control work.

Ella Driever – stated that wolves have been portrayed in our society as evil and bad. This creates the want of the public for lethal means of control. She spoke on how ecological murder affects other wildlife as well. Killing predators makes an over population of prey which negatively affects local resources and the local ecosystem. She spoke about how light and noise methods have been proven successful in scaring off wolves. She stated that there can be a balance between lethal and non-lethal means of control.

Co-chair Tewalt asked if anyone else wanted to speak. Seeing none, the public comment period ended. She thanked both speakers for their comments and stated that their comments are appreciated. Co-chair Fredericks thanked both speakers for their comments also.

REVIEW OF REPORTS

FINANCIAL REPORT

Kelly Nielsen gave an overview of the Tracking of Wolf Control Funds Financial Report, including the total budget, total expenses, total revenue, and the current cash balance for year to date FY2024. The Wolf Depredation Control Board receives funding from several different entities. Kelly also reviewed the current fiscal year to date State General Fund balance and expenses report for the Tracking of Wolf Control Funds.

WILDLIFE SERVICES REPORT

Jared Hedelius discussed the Quarter Report for October 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023.

The report included 18 depredation investigations related to wolf complaints, for 18 livestock producers in 7 counties during this reporting period.

Of those 18 investigations, 5 involved confirmed depredations, 1 involved probable depredations, 12 were possible/unknown wolf depredations, and 0 of the complaints were determined to be causes other than wolves.

During the same period last year, WS-Idaho conducted 32 wolf depredation investigations. These numbers indicate that during this quarter the total number of investigations dropped to 14 less investigations than the same time frame last year.

There were no wolf related flights done this quarter.

Co-chair Tewalt noted that predation numbers have been trending downward.

Jared stated that once a request is received from a livestock producer that a carcass has been found, it can be one, two, or several days old. The older it is the harder it is to see evidence of a predator attack. In the summer a carcass decomposes quickly, scavenging also takes place. Jared stated that it is a fine line between possible and unknown, the primary factor is physical evidence. For example, there may be wolf tracks, but it is unknown if the wolf killed the animal or if it just scavenged off the carcass.

IDAHO FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME REPORT

Katie Oelrich with IDFG spoke about wolf captures as of 03/07/2024. She stated that there were 11 collars at the beginning of winter. 8 new collars have been put out during the winter season. There are currently 13 active collars. Idaho Fish and Game Department is also aware of 2 wolves that have traveled from Montana into Idaho. January capture plans have been put on hold due to the weather. They are looking at a late winter/early spring reschedule. Other states have been having similar issues due to the weather. The Documented Wolf Mortality section of the handout reviews the mortality numbers as of 03/07/2024. There were 296 wolf mortalities, which is tracking lower than in the past. These numbers are estimated to be because of the large amount of snow from this winter season.

REVIEW OF INVOICES

APPROVAL OF INVOICES (ACTION ITEMS)

Co-Chair Tewalt asked for an overview of the invoices before the Board. Kelly Nielsen reviewed the charges and supporting documents. All charges tied out to appropriate documentations.

Kelly reviewed the clerical error from the last meeting on the Wildlife Services Invoice. Out of the credit that was due, \$1,365.47 was used on this invoice which totals \$28,815.48. Jon Goode, board member, pointed out that there is still a credit amount that is due. Kelly stated that the remaining amount will be used on a future invoice. Jared Hedelius from USDA said that he would email confirmation on the credit amount still owed to the Idaho Wolf Depredation Control Board.

Jon Goode, board member, made a motion to approve the invoice for payment from the USDA Wildlife Services if a credit still showed due for a future invoice. Seconded by Jerry Cloninger, board member. Motion carried.

The Idaho Fish and Game F4WM Invoice was reviewed by Kelly Nielsen. Jon Goode stated that there was a fuel order slip in the supporting documentation that doesn't count as part of the invoice. Idaho Fish and Game paid it prematurely and didn't wait for the official invoice from the fuel company. Tricia Hebdon with Idaho Fish and Game stated that they would remove that amount and resubmit their invoice to the board. Jon Goode, board member, made a motion to approve the invoice once corrected. Seconded by Jerry Cloninger, board member. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION – OTHER INVOICES

Co-chair Tewalt reviewed other invoices that are incoming. There are no action items to vote on yet. Just a formal warning that work is being done and the invoices are coming soon.

OTHER BUSINESS

Co-chair Fredericks reviewed wolf depredation bills that are currently going through Idaho legislation. He reviewed both HB592 and HB612. He stated that if HB612 passes as written, the Idaho Wolf Depredation Control Board will be granted the ability to determine compensation for loss claims dependent on funding. If HB592 passes as written, funds will be granted for loss claims for grizzly bear and wolf depredation, as well as for prevention measures.

Both Co-chair Tewalt and Co-chair Fredericks thanked the public for their participation in the meeting.

Co-chair Tewalt reviewed possible dates for the next meeting. Co-chair Fredericks suggested April 19, 2024, 10:00am-12:00pm MT. Board agreed on this date and time.

ADJOURNMENT

11:22am