

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

IDAHO WOLF DEPREDATION CONTROL BOARD
Minutes of June 27, 2025, Meeting
Meeting was live streamed via Teams

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chanel Tewalt, ISDA (Co-chair)
Tricia Hebdon, Idaho Fish and Game – IDFG (Acting Co-Chair for Jim Fredericks)
Richard Savage (via phone)
Jon Goode (via livestream)

DEPARTMENT STAFF: Lloyd Knight – ISDA
Cory Mosby - IDFG
Kelly Nielsen – ISDA
Dallas Burkhalter, Office of Attorney General – ISDA
Jason Meyers – ISDA

OTHERS PRESENT: Jared Hedelius – USDA Wildlife Services, Idaho Office
Rosanne Noble, IWCN
Lane Justus, WLA
Megan Smith, LWW
Dr. Krista Lyons, IWCN
Pamela Williams (via livestream)
Suzanne Asha Stone (via livestream)
Garrick Dutcher (via livestream)
Patxi Larrocea-Phillips (via livestream)
Pat Kelly-Fischer (via livestream)
Julie Tumblety (via livestream)

The meeting was called to order by Co-chair Tewalt at 1:03 p.m. MT.

INTRODUCTIONS

Board members and support staff introduced themselves.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES (ACTION ITEM)

No corrections requested on the January 31, 2025 meeting minutes. No corrections requested on the February 21, 2025 meeting minutes. Jon Goode, board member, motioned for both meeting minutes to be approved. Acting Co-chair Tricia Hebdon seconded the motion. None opposed. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Rosanne Noble – See attached public comment document for complete statement

Dr. Krista Lyons – Spoke on the positive impact of predators on environmental health. Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is on the rise and is a big problem for the environment. States like Idaho are at a higher risk for spill over. Peer reviewed studies show wolves and other predators can help with lowering populations of wildlife with CWD. Dr. Lyons ended by asking the board to consider CWD's impact on the state when considering this year's wolf harvest numbers.

REPORTS

Jared Hedelius gave a verbal report on fiscal year-to-date numbers. Wildlife Services has removed 17 wolves and collared 3 wolves. Wildlife Services has conducted around 80 investigations, with most of them being sheep. Most investigations are conducted in July and August, so this is just before the busy part of the year. Jon Goode, board member, asked about the myopathy and DNA sampling. Jared stated that so far, 3 DNA samples have been sent to the University of Florida, and they are expecting results back at any time. No myopathy samples have been collected yet.

Jared also stated that next year's contract needs to be signed if the board is going to continue with Wildlife Services. There are two different contracts, one for collaring and one for lethal efforts, and the contract amounts will not change from this year's.

Kelly Nielsen reviewed the fund and how the different sub-accounts interact with the process. He reviewed numbers for the fiscal year and reported on the fund balance.

Cory Mosby reviewed current year to date numbers on the IDFG handout, and next year's action plan for IDFG.

ACTION ITEMS

Co-chair Tewalt reviewed a budget framework for FY2026 that included the FY26 Wildlife Services contract, F4WM contract, and ISDA administrative costs.

The board reviewed the budget. Co-Chair Tewalt recommended increasing the DNA sampling being performed by Wildlife Services from the current number to twenty samples. This would add an additional \$12,000 cost not listed on the budget framework.

Jon Goode, board member, recommended a change on the second page of the Foundation for Wildlife Management contract to properly align with the board's fiscal year instead of May 2025 – June 2026.

Jon Goode, board member, motioned to make the FY2026 budget framework handout with the additional \$12,000 for DNA sampling and the change in dates to the F4WM contract the budget for FY2026. This would include approving all contracts listed in the budget framework. Richard Savage, board member, seconded the motion. None opposed. Motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

CONCLUSION

Co-chair Tewalt thanked the public for their attendance.

ADJOURNMENT

1:52 p.m. by Co-chair Tewalt – No definitive next meeting set

Good Afternoon,

I understand the anger a rancher feels when they find one of their livestock dead. I can understand that it's easy to blame wolves as they have a deadly reputation for various reasons, including fairy tales. Last year the confirmed wolf kills were 2 cattle and 29 sheep. These numbers are consistent with the national average for cattle wolf kills being less than 1%, while respiratory accounts for 24% and weather accounts for 10%. The sheep percentage is also less than 1%.

I'm curious as to the actual number of wolves in Idaho. A genetic based count method is currently used which has not been peer reviewed, thus the accuracy is unknown. The previous camera method had been determined inaccurate by peer review. Additionally Idaho wolf kills decreased in the past 3 years. Some hunters have stated it is more difficult to "find" wolves.

Fish and Game reports deer and moose herds are abundant while elk herds are near the all time high, although CWD is present.

The scenario is one in which cattle and sheep deaths by wolves is less than 1 percent. Cattle deaths are by other means or predators. There is an abundance of ungulates although CWD is present. Probable decrease in wolf population, due to lower wolf kills, hunter comments and inaccurate counting methods.

This scenario points to a prime opportunity for the use of nonlethal measures.

Ted Birdseye, Southern Oregon, has 200 head, 276 acre ranch, Rogue pack den is nearby which has had a liter in each of the past 5 years. He successfully uses a wavy dancer

In east central Idaho the Alderspring Ranch also uses nonlethal measures to manage wolves. They have had zero livestock loss due to wolves in the past 10 years. Additionally they have documented improvement in their overall ecosystems and the number of cattle the ranch can support has doubled.

Montana Blackfoot Challenge has been in existence for 20 years where there are 17 wolf packs, 60 grizzlies and there has been minimal livestock conflicts. The wolf population has remained stable.

Wood River Wolf project in Idaho has 18,000 sheep, 297,000 acres or 500 square miles. There were zero wolf kills.

Two success stories are in Idaho. Please consider visiting them or inviting them so that you can hear their story. Non lethal measures can be a win for all.....cattle are protected from wolves, robust wildlife herds continue. Wolves can detect CWD and help to eradicate this horrible disease and improve our ecosystems.

Thank you