

Idaho Wolf Depredation Board

Organization and Regular Meeting

July 11, 2014

Boise, Idaho

Board members present: Virgil Moore, Celia Gould, Richard Savage, Tony McDermott, and Carl Rey.

Staff members from the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA), Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), Division of Financial Management (DFM), Governor's Office, and APHIS Wildlife Services (WS) were present, in addition to two guests.

Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Virgil Moore at 11:14 a.m. Director Moore introduced himself and indicated that he would serve as chair for the course of the meeting, but that he and Director Gould would alternate as meeting chairs. Director Celia Gould introduced herself, and relayed to the Board the work done by ISDA and IDFG staff to prepare for the meeting. All work was done strictly in preparation for the Board's review. Director Moore asked that all Board members and staff present give introductions, and those followed.

Chairman Moore gave a brief history of the collaboration between sportsman and the livestock community to address shortfalls in APHIS Wildlife Services' budget. Those efforts led to the legislation that created the Idaho Wolf Depredation Board (IWDB). Director Gould highlighted the role the Idaho Fish and Game Advisory Council played in the creation of the Board. She noted that the IDWB is different than some other bodies in that it will not compensate producers for losses. Instead the charge of the Board includes control efforts for specific depredation issues.

Chairman Moore asked David Fulkerson, DFM Deputy Administrator, to give his presentation to the Board.

Budget

David Fulkerson presented a review of the Board's account and fund balances. The summary can be reviewed in ATTACHMENT A. Mr. Fulkerson added that there are two IWDB accounts: one for contributions up to \$110,000 from IDFG and livestock contributions and then a rollover account for any monies beyond \$110,000. A series of questions from Board members followed. Funds in the IWDB account started accruing with the Governor's signing of the bill. Mr. Fulkerson explained that IDFG's match would occur July 1st or as practical. Mr. Rey asked if there was a cap on the amount that could be put in the rollover account. Mr. Fulkerson indicated that he would check. Mr. Fulkerson explained that the rollover account could supplement the Board's budget on years when other financial contributions were down. Director Gould asked about the contributions from wool assessments. Stan Boyd indicated that assessments take place quarterly, and Mr. Fulkerson said they probably wouldn't be matched by IDFG until next year.

Legal Presentation

Chairman Moore welcomed Kathleen Trever, Deputy Attorney General for IDFG, who gave a presentation addressing open meetings, ethics in government, and public records. See ATTACHMENT B for a copy of the presentation. Ms. Trever answered questions and provided the following additional information in her responses. Any information created or shared by Board members is public record.

She encouraged Board members to practice diligence in keeping state business in a separate computer folder. In regard to liability, Ms. Trever noted that there are specific protocols for insuring or defending people working in an official capacity for the State of Idaho.

Reimbursements

Chairman Moore directed that the Board would need to decide which agency would provide reimbursements. Brian Oakey reminded the group that the subaccount for the Board will help prevent running afoul of Pitman-Robertson requirements for IDFG funds. Director Gould indicated that ISDA has a 60-day policy for submitting requests for reimbursement. She explained that ISDA or DFM could provide legal services and that neither agency had a preference. She relayed to the group the relationship ISDA has with the Sheep and Goat Health Board for which ISDA provides fiscal and legal services. No indirect costs are charged to the Sheep and Goat Health Board, but ISDA does charge \$2000 to ensure that no other ISDA programs pay for Sheep Board costs. Kelly Nielsen indicated that ISDA would need a simple summary invoice with supporting receipts in order for ISDA to issue a reimbursement. There was brief discussion about following the Fish and Game Commission's direction for IDFG monies. Kelly Nielsen reiterated that the four subaccounts of the Board provide for greater tracking and transparency. Jeff Gould informed the group that the Commission had provided a letter regarding expenditure of IDFG funds. Mr. Nielsen indicated that the Board would be reimbursed at \$0.555 per mile and that ISDA would check mileage against common online mapping services. The Board may not be reimbursed for any out-of-state costs. Chairman Moore discussed the likely need for an additional Board meeting before the 2015 legislative session.

Mr. Gould asked that Board if funds could be used to cover projects retroactively. Chairman Moore and Director Gould expressed some concerns with retroactive funding. Chairman Moore called for a break and the group reconvened at 12:48 p.m.

APHIS Wildlife Services Presentation

Chairman Moore welcomed Todd Grimm, State Director for APHIS WS. Mr. Grimm provided a handout, which can be reviewed in ATTACHMENT C. Mr. Grimm reviewed what constitutes depredation and how incidents are investigated. APHIS WS reports depredation incidents to a wide group and then works with IDFG to obtain necessary control permits. WS has 19 full-time staff and three seasonal trappers. The agency's Idaho budget is down over \$500,000 in recent years. WS will need \$300,000 to \$350,000 this year in order to respond to livestock depredation reports alone. WS could also support IDFG during non-peak times of year, but that work would require more money. Idaho's first wolf hunt occurred in 2009, ceased in 2010 and hunts resumed in 2011. Seasonal employees have been efficient. Reports of coyote depredation have sometimes been a necessary lower priority due to limited staff addressing wolf depredation reports.

IDFG Presentation

Chairman Moore introduced Jeff Gould, IDFG Wildlife Bureau Chief, who reported on IDFG's work related to wolves. See documents in ATTACHMENT D. Wolf numbers peaked in 2011. Mr. Gould noted that IDFG wolf numbers are minimums only and that numbers are actually higher. Idaho has more packs but fewer numbers within each pack. Wolf harvests have decreased in the past couple years. May 2016 will mark the end of the wolf recovery period, and Idaho needs to have 15 breeding pairs (20 pairs are in the state currently). Director Moore asked about IDFG coordination with WS. Mr. Gould and Mr. Grimm have worked collaboratively. Mr. Gould explained federal dollars to IDFG for wolf management have dropped off.

Mr. McDermott asked if funds could be allocated to private groups working on wolf control efforts. He discussed significant drops in ungulate populations in the Panhandle region. He also discussed the corresponding loss of revenue in the communities supporting hunting activity in the region. The Foundation for Wildlife Management was organized in response to elk losses due to wolves. The group started with 5 members and has grown to 500, with membership on the rise. The Foundation has been endorsed by several organizations, including the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and others. The Foundation asked that Mr. McDermott discuss the organization with the IWDB and inquire about funding for private groups.

Elections

Chairman Moore asked Mr. McDermott to pose his question further down the agenda as the Board had elections as the next order of business. Chairman Moore informed the group that the positions of Vice Chair and Secretary-Treasurer were up for votes and that ISDA and IDFG staff would be available to help with the administrative functions tied to both roles. Mr. Rey moved that he serve as Secretary-Treasurer if Mr. McDermott served as Vice Chair. Mr. Savage seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Draft Guidelines for the Board

Director Moore asked that Brian Oakey discuss the draft guidelines. Mr. Oakey indicated that the guidelines were in draft form for the Board to amend, approve or reject. The guidelines are consistent with governing protocol for other boards and should be considered as a starting point. Mr. Rey asked if the document could be approved and then amended. Mr. Oakey indicated that was acceptable. Mr. Savage asked about conflicts of interest. Ms. Kaufmann said that typical conflicts involved incurring a benefit. Two important exceptions to conflicts of interest are pertinent to the IWDB: if a benefit is conferred to a class in which a board member participates (e.g., all sportsman or all livestock producers in a region) or to an interest in which a board member is part by virtue of trade. Director Gould asked if the Board could adopt a disclosure provision and allow members to still vote. Ms. Kaufmann indicated that would be an acceptable option. Mr. McDermott moved, and Mr. Savage seconded, that the Board accept the draft guidelines as written. There was brief discussion about considering the document again at the next meeting. The Board voted on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Fiscal and Legal Services

Chairman Moore moved discussion to the next item of business: choosing fiscal and legal services from ISDA, as provided in code, or DFM. Mr. Rey asked if one model was more efficient than another. A discussion amongst Board members and staff from ISDA and DFM followed. ISDA and DFM both indicated that either agency would be happy to provide services and that neither had a preference. Mr. Rey moved that the Board contract with ISDA, per statute, for accounting and legal services. Mr. Savage seconded the motion. Director Gould declared a conflict of interest as the Director of ISDA, and the motion passed unanimously.

Additional Business

Chairman Moore asked Ms. Kaufmann to address Mr. McDermott's question about private organizations receiving control monies. Legislative committee minutes were discussed. Director Gould moved that the Board ask ISDA and IDFG attorneys to research the possibility of appropriating IWDB monies to private organizations and give a report at the next Board meeting. Mr. Rey seconded the motion, which then passed unanimously.

Chairman Moore asked the Board about differences with agreements related to financial disbursements. Mr. Grimm informed the group that Wildlife Services and the Animal Damage Control Board have a five-

year master agreement in addition to an annual financial plan. Director Gould asked Mr. Grimm how quickly WS could have a plan prepared for the Board's review. Mr. Grimm indicated that a plan could be ready by early in the following week. Director Gould asked the Board about reviewing such a plan via a conference call also in the following week. Mr. Gould and Mr. Grimm indicated that they would collaborate on a potential plan that included WS assisting IDFG during winter control activities.

The Board discussed the current fund amount, and Director Gould asked Mr. Nielsen about sending monthly fund updates to the Board. Chairman Moore asked the Board, DFM and ISDA as to which group would make a budget request for the Board. Shelby Kerns indicated that she would look into the matter. The Board came back to Mr. Grimm's proposal. Director Gould moved that the Board ask Mr. Grimm to prepare a WS proposal. She noted that the Board could consider funding only half at this time. Mr. Rey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The Board collectively asked who would sign an approved agreement. Mr. Oakey indicated that signatory authority could be clarified in the guidelines. Several options were considered on the issue of signing authority. Chairman Moore asked Ms. Kaufmann to prepare some guideline language for the Board's consideration. The group paused for a break and reconvened at 3:16 p.m.

The Board agreed to the following language to be included in the Board's guidelines under Article 9, Section 6:

"The signatures of the co-chairs, or in the absence of a co-chair, one co-chair and the vice chair, shall be required to execute any and all contracts, memoranda of agreement or other agreements on behalf of the Board."

Mr. McDermott moved that the Board accept the language into the guidelines. Mr. Savage seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. Chairman Moore reminded the Board that one item needed attention during the conference call the following week. Mr. Rey moved that the Board consider and possibly approve WS' proposal at 9 a.m. MDT on Wednesday, July 16, 2014. Mr. Savage seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Chairman Moore adjourned the meeting at 3:27 p.m.