

MINUTES
Idaho Wolf Depredation Control Board
December 7, 2015

Celia Gould, Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:05 am. Those in attendance were: Sharon Keifer, Fish and Game; Brad Compton, Fish and Game; Brian Oakey, ISDA; Todd Grimm, Wildlife Services; Kirk Gustad, Wildlife Services; Donna Ralston, Wildlife Services; Carl Rey, Board member; Angela Kaufmann, ISDA; Kelly Nielsen, ISDA; Janis Perry, ISDA. Attending by phone were Board members Tony McDermott and Richard Savage.

Todd updated the Board on the Wolf Depredation Investigations and Control Actions of the Idaho Wildlife Services. The update through November 30, 2015 is attached. Wildlife Services conducted 84 depredation investigations related to wolf complaints from January 1, 2015 through November 30, 2015. Of those, about 70% involved confirmed depredations. This number was down from the same period in 2014. Based on their investigations, the minimum number of confirmed and probable livestock depredations due to wolves during the reporting period was: 5 cows killed, 27 calves killed, 125 sheep killed and 3 dogs killed. Most occurred on private land.

Wildlife Services removed 48 wolves during the reporting period and caught 3 in the act, for a total of 51 removed to protect livestock. Wildlife Services removed 21 wolves to protect big game herds. A total 28 wolves were removed via aerial control efforts in 46 flights that lasted a total of 181.9 hours.

The 18 Wildlife Services employees performed work with this Agreement for a total of \$411,664.35. They took 91,000 hours and drove approximately 120,000 miles while conducting wolf related duties during the reporting period.

Richard asked for the total amount spent so far to be repeated. Todd said \$411,664.35 and that currently they do not have any open/active investigations.

Kelly stated that \$122,500 was spent in Fiscal Year 2015. The state treasurer's office had a loss on investments for the year, so this is reported as negative interest for each of the funds. This amounted to a little over \$400 for the three funds. The deposits for FY2015 totaled \$105,300 which was just short of the goal of \$110,000. In FY2016 expenses related to activities in 2015 that have been paid are \$112,702; expenses related to activities in 2016 that have been paid equal \$204,621; for a total spent in FY2016 of \$317,323. Interest has rebounded and collections have been consistent. The cash remaining for 2016 is about \$500,000. The cattle industry funds have all been spent and \$113,000 remain in the Fish and Game account.

Tony asked how we get a negative interest. Kelly explained that the state treasurer's office had a loss, so all state funds took a hit. This reduced each fund more than the total interest each had earned for the year.

The Work Plan discussion started by Todd indicating that the Board is currently budgeted for a total of \$485,000 which leaves \$73,000 left to spend until June 30. This amount is close to what was spent on livestock losses. Todd asked the Board to increase the total to \$600,000. Donna indicated that in 2014, \$160,000 was spent from December 1 through June 30. Brad stated that Fish and Game has a separate contract for \$75,000 and they anticipate needing help again from Wildlife Services.

Carl asked how much additional the \$600,000 request would be. Todd stated \$115,000.

Celia explained that a Second Amendment of the Work Plan would not change anything except the IDFG portion of the Board's resources (which originally was \$129,606) and the total funds available for the project.

Carl asked Kelly what the balance would be at the time of the JFAC presentation since he felt what's not used, is lost. Kelly stated that not taking into account the deposits, the balance on February 8, would be about \$300,000.

Brad commented that if the Board were to approve, then functionally all the funds would be used.

Sharon moved that a Second Amendment of the Work Plan be approved with the IDFG portion of the Board's resources be \$141,000 and the total funds available for the project be increased to \$600,000. Carl seconded the motion and the motion carried. An estimated itemization of expenses as provided by Wildlife Serviced is as follows:

Salaries/Benefits	
Mileage/Vehicle & Travel Expenses	
Aerial Shooting	
Supplies/Equipment (Lure, bait, traps, etc.	
Subtotal of the Costs Identified Above	
Pooled Job Costs (Program Support 11% of Subtotal)	
Administrative Overhead (3% of the Subtotal)	
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR THE PROJECT	\$600,000.00

Brian explained that last year's presentation to JFAC for the Board generally went well considering it was the first time. The media was quite interested. He asked who might be willing to present this next legislative session which would be February 8, 2016. Carl, who did

last year's presentation, said the Committee wanted to know what the cost per wolf removed was. Last year it was \$6,700 and this year it is \$5,700. He suggested moving away from this and instead focusing on the cost of prevention. He stated that he would be in Mexico on February 8. Tony and Richard both indicated that they would be able to do the presentation. Celia suggested they discuss their respective schedules and make a decision. Sharon suggested that last year's presentation be sent out, so whoever does it would have something to go on. Brian will get back to Tony and Richard. Kelly will help prepare the presentation for whoever does deliver it.

Tony commented that he hunted for twenty days in zones 10 and 12 this fall from Lolo Pass to the Wilderness Gateway. He saw only three elk in that time. Local Fish and Game folks told him that only ten to twelve elk were killed. He said that there are five wolf packs in that area with 8-15 wolves each. He said they had been eating bear, deer, and rabbit. He also indicated that zones 7 and 9 had a similar situation. Brad offered to talk to him later about this offline.

Celia indicated that it is not easy to calculate how many hunters don't come to the state because of the wolf presence.

Carl said that after his presentation he was cornered by three media people. He suggested having a one page bulleted handout for the media. Celia suggested that it be part of the presentation. Sharon shared that she felt most people do not know the time spent on investigation and to get proof before wolves are killed. Carl stated that we need to remind folks that the Board is a "control" board that monitors and investigates.

Sharon suggested we define depredation. She stated that at a Fish and Game meeting in Hailey the attendees did not realize that statute does not deal with non-lethal methods of control. Also the Fish and Game is also focused on non lethal methods. Carl stressed that the goal is to control wolves; that the first alternative was not to kill. He felt that the strategic goal should be to educate. And to discuss how much money might have come into the state. Brad felt that balance was the key with "prevention" defined. Tony said that the Board should not deal with non-lethal means since lethal means is the control. He cited a paper Sharon had written which discussed the cost of cattle and ungulates lost as it related to non-resident hunter lost. Brad suggested that we remember that the Board is replacing federal funds that are not longer available. Kelly, Brian, Brad and Sharon will work on the presentation.

Brian questioned whether the Board wanted to meet to review the presentation. Celia suggested that the presentation be sent out first. Richard remembered that the Board met the day before the presentation last year for a trial run. However, this year the presentation is on a Monday, so the rehearsal will be on Friday, February 5.

Carl asked about the timing of the next Work Plan. Brian indicated that the current one runs through June 30, 2016. He suggested looking in April to review for FY 2017. We are working on a five-year cooperative agreement.

Celia asked what the statute says about officers. Angela reviewed the statute which indicates that the vice chairman (who is now Tony) and secretary/treasurer (who is now Carl) are appointed annually. Since this needs to be listed on an agenda, it will be handled at the next meeting. Appointed members, Tony and Richard, terms expire June 30, 2016. We agreed that if they are willing to be reappointed the governor should be asked this spring.

Minutes from the last meeting need to be reviewed at the next meeting, along with those from this meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10 am.