

**ADMB Meeting
January 18, 2024**

Members Present: Doug Miyamoto (Co-Chair), Brian Nesvik (Co-Chair), Jared Zierenberg, Rodger Cox, Bob Harlan, Richard Ladwig, Tate Smith, Zeta Anderson, Jeff Boner, Brett Belden

Board Members Absent: Phil Osterli, Jennifer McConchie, Amanda Hulett, Tyler Abbot, Sharon O'Toole

WDA Staff: Jerald Johnson, J.D. Sater

Public in Attendance: None

Meeting called to order at 10:02 am

Doug entertained a motion to approve November 9th minutes. Roger moved, Tate seconded, Motion carried.

Jerry gave an update on the mandatory Special district training that is now required and he will be doing multiple zoom trainings for the county boards.

Doug gave a legislative update on the budget and informed the board that the Governor had presented a budget that added additional funding for predator control and the legislators wanted wildlife funding be included. Richard Ladwig asked questions on the G&F funding that was to be added, and this issue will be followed through the legislative process.

The County BLM predator reporting forms have been received and will be included with the USDA/WS, BLM work plan agreements.

Jared Zierenberg is the new State Director and he gave update on their program, and that they will be working with FWS on the Golden Eagle issue in the coming year.

Public Comments

No comments

Brett moved to adjourn, Roger Cox seconded. Meeting adjourned at 10:35 am.

**Animal Damage Management Board Meeting
Wednesday May 15, 2024 & Thursday, May 16, 2024
Natrona County Extension office
Casper, Wyoming**

Call to order at 8:05 a.m. by Co-Chair Brian Nesvik

Board Members Present:

Slade Franklin for Co-Chair Doug Miyamoto

Roger Cox

Sharon O'Toole

Brett Belden

Jared Zierenberg

Tyler Abbot FWS

Co-Chair Brian Nesvik

Bob Harlan

Zeta Anderson

Jeff Boner

Richard Ladwig

Phil Osterli USFS

Board Members Absent: Zeta Anderson – Jennifer McConchie BLM, **Urban Rep(Vacant)**

WDA Support Staff: Tracy Myers, Jerry Johnson, JD Sater, Slade Franklin, Dale Heggem

Public Attendees: Allison Crane, Jeremy Warner, Rob FWS

TJ Tavegie

Dave Hall

Pete Camino

Cat Urbigkit

Amy Hendrickson

Mike Barker, falconer

Michael Burrell

Brady Smith USDA

Scott Alls, assistant reg director USDA Wildlife Services

Roger Cox moved to approve minutes from the January meeting, Richard Ladwig seconded.

Motion carried.

Public Comment

Cat Urbigkit shared that she is very excited to have FWS migratory bird permit staff here, with the eagle depredation ranchers are seeing. The ranching community appreciates FWS rules and regulations, and the good ideas for compensatory mitigation. She also shared that ranchers appreciate being engaged in this conversation.

Overview of Funding

Jerry Johnson gave an update on the financials. He shared that the Board will consider renewing the contract with UW Vet lab for rabies testing; that the next meeting is June 20 at the Thyra Thomson building, Nov 14 meeting which will be a discussion with FWS and stakeholders for an eagle discussion; there will also be various meetings for the mandatory training for budget sheets. The Board discussed PMD funding \$3,920,000 general funding and \$800,000 for Predator control to mitigate listing of endangered species (Sage Grouse protection), \$150,000 for wolf control and \$36,000 and need to renew the \$20,000 contract for testing with University of Wyoming Vet Lab. They discussed leaving a little leeway to keep the contract at \$80,000 with WS, and also regarding adding to that \$80k. Brian's concern is the potential to have increased requests in the future, so this increase would help with that. The Board was asked to consider a higher number for that budget. Brett Belden motioned, Roger Cox seconded to increase the WS Wolf contract amount to \$100,000. There was then discussion of where the money would come from, and how it is used. Slade share that Doug supports the \$100k contract. This change left the Board with \$3,900,000 for general funding, with the rest being as discussed. With Jared Zierenberg (WS) abstention, motion carried.

FWS Eagle Discussion

Jeff Boner shared they have seen a bit of increase in depredation from crows/ravens, but significant damage from eagles. FWS has had key recommendation from the meeting held last Dec: First was to start conversation among key stakeholders for depredation and hold the dialogue to help FWS become more familiar with this issue, so FWS can do a better job responding and help producers understand FWS' perspective as well. Rob & Jeremy: Rob - discussed the number of eagle removal quota, as an increase to the quota was requested. Rob explained how the quota number is reached, to meet the preservation standards for eagles. Attendees talked about how long it takes to get a falconer to come take an eagle that is depredating. Bob shared his perspective on how the falconers communicate about this, and how it depends on where the falconers are, and whether it is a trap-and-relocate or trap-and-remove. It is also tough to catch the eagles that are actually doing the damage. Falconers offer their expertise on eagle management, which is helpful to the producers. Cat talked about the importance of having all the parties at the table when these discussions are held, so everyone can work together and think outside the box to help all sides. The lambing window vs when falconers can get in and trap, and the time it takes to get a depredation by eagle confirmed was also discussed. FWS is trying to find ways to protect eagles from being killed by things unrelated to ag production. Other FWS suggestions: timing of lambing, automatically issuing permits to ranchers who have documented depredation for two years in a row, prior to depredation in the current year. Part of the discussion included the idea of creating a research project involving netting, trapping and relocating eagles early in the season to give the ranchers an on-average 45-day window before the eagles return, allowing them some relief during lambing period. Jerry identified a potential funding source for this project.

Presentations

Goshen County: Dan Heilbrun and Brady Smith (WS)

Request: \$130,000

They have one person on the ground in the area for predator control. Seven WS employees worked in the county last year. Turkey vultures are an increasing nuisance species. The district would like to add a part time employee to help in busier times and with special projects. Thermal imaging will be a heavier focus this year. Very few losses in Goshen. Spring brought some staff changes, and they lost their Specialist. They would like to have two Specialists, as it is too hard to cover the County with one. They used to have two and it worked much better. Brady shared that aerial work is tough with the weather in Goshen County, so this second person would provide better coverage. He also said they want to know whether or not they have the Board's support. Dan said they are prepared to use reserves if they have to.

Johnson County: Pete Camino, Dave Hall, TJ Tavegie

Request: \$275,000

Rabies: \$15,000

Currently have two trappers, and two rabies mitigation trappers, private and WS aerial use. Mountain lions and bears are worse than in the past. Ravens have been a problem in the south end of the county and they have been working with WS on control efforts. Concerning rabies – they have one trapper in Kaycee and one in Buffalo. Buffalo had an influx of skunks this fall so they did work in the town rather than just working on the outskirts. Request is the same as it has been for the last three years. They have worked to be efficient over time with 4% in administrative costs, they use contract trappers, and about \$1700 in inventory. They make decisions on data that they have collected over the years. Losses were surveyed: last survey showed 669 sheep reported, 20-some calves, totaling several hundred thousand dollars. They are guessing about 25% of producers didn't respond, so they are guessing the financial loss is at least 25% higher. Survey is resulting in better relationships with especially new producers who are moving in.

Carbon County: Whitney Merrill, Ben Acres

Request: \$265,000

70% traditional work, 30% non-traditional, ravens, magpies, crows, skunks, feral cats, raccoons, disease surveillance. Carbon County has completed 7 wildlife projects and will be submitting a new project application. Three wolf sightings have livestock producers have concerns with the trend in Colorado and seeing more wolves along I-80. County wide antelope numbers are down. Difficulty getting plane due to weather and competition from other county boards. Losses surveyed: \$41,000 loss in livestock, \$8000 equip damage ravens \$14,000 structural damage by ravens. Additional \$20,000 requested would be for an intermittent trapper to help cover the County.

Sheridan County: Board: Cole Benton, Kellen Little, member-at-large Jerry Reid

Request: \$227,500

Rabies: \$20,000

They provided some population numbers in the county for eagles, pronghorn and mule deer shared by Game and Fish. For rabies mitigation they hired two trappers to remove skunks. Thirty-nine skunks were sent to the vet lab for testing and 21% came back positive for rabies. They have one trapper now. City of Sheridan is helping with funding. They are also asking the smaller towns to help with funding. Mule deer numbers up this year, antelope not as much. Some funding is used on advertising for rabies public awareness. Discussed the financial cost of rabies exposure. They built a website for public awareness as well, which will begin to include GPS coordinates of animals testing positive for rabies. An error was found on the application: they had planned to request \$30,000 for rabies, which got missed on the application.

Weston County: Carson Keeline, Ray Norris and Kassie Swartz (bookkeeper), and Brad Troftgruben, WS

Request: \$100,000

Coyote numbers are steady and small prey base is very limited. 95% traditional program, and the balance is non-traditional, raccoon, turkey vultures, very few skunks. Hard to get a plane when they need one. They want to increase aerial time this year. Last year they saw significant calf loss even with low coyote numbers. Some of this could have been mountain lion issues and they were seeing some black bears on cameras. They also saw more significant increase in eagle depredation of sheep and cattle both. Also seeing bald eagle depredation which is new. Asking for \$35,000 less than last year's request.

Lunch Break

Albany County: Joel Moody, WS, Brooke Willis

Request: \$235,621

Coyote numbers are up and losses have been steady, approximately \$45,000 loss to livestock and \$30,000 loss to ravens at lime plant and in the city. No current wildlife projects with Game and Fish. More producers have been added with agreements. Have had three golden eagles removed. Fixed wing competitive to get with fewer planes available. Working hard to keep cooperators happy with service as they depend upon the service provided. Wolves may become an issue due to Colorado's proximity and control. They are seeing more predation of calves this year than in the past. Brady shared they have been utilizing the FWS helicopter as well.

Campbell County: Kevin Geis, Board, Kenda Ford (bookkeeper)

Request: \$290,000

Rabies: \$10,500

Coyote numbers are steady, program working well and would like to continue as we are. They have three trappers who also do rabies work. They usually get some funding from the County

commissioners to help with skunk control to mitigate rabies. They have limited their trapper days to balance the budget. 41 skunks tested with 12 positive, two human contact cases. Crows and ravens are more of an issue. They use mainly private pilots so they have been ok getting aerial help. Raptor numbers (golden eagles mostly, some bald eagles) are steady to increasing; crows and raven populations seem to be increasing.

Park County: Regan Smith, Board and Mike Burrell, Monty Nicholson, WS

Request: \$225,000

Park County has two full time trappers. They are seeing wolf depredation earlier this year than normal. With more people on the landscape, predator management gets to be more challenging. They have been working on a Clarks Fork mule deer winter project that was not funded by ADMB but has been successful. Their proposed budget includes money for non-lethal trailers, and they are having issues with the solar panels. They will spend \$2500 each fiscal year to provide traps for the public with education on trapping to aid their mission. They utilize binoculars and thermal scopes to help control predators. Lower predation with wolves seen. First calf kill by a golden eagle was documented this year.

Big Horn County: Brandon O'Brien, specialist, Randall Jones, and Mike Burrell, WS

Request: \$238,000

Currently, they have two full time trappers. Livestock protection is primary focus on coyote. A little raven work has been done when time allows. They do have eagles and last year one rancher lost a dozen lambs to eagle predation, but did not see the same loss this year, not sure what's different. Density of people in the summer has increased, making it difficult to trap and snare. Corn growers in the County have shown interest in a bounty system to control the racoons. They are considering doing this with the producers matching what the County pays. This would be an additional \$2500 in funding they would request. Jerry reminded them that bounty funds cannot come from ADMB; it has to come from predator fees.

Uinta County: Steve Sims, Wade Larsen

Request: \$215,134

Uinta has chosen to use USDA/WS for their program and are in the process of working with the new trapper. Eagle problems are worse than in the past. Some trapping of eagles for relocation has occurred. They also use private contractors for aerial hunting. They are getting a good handle on coyotes. Wade shared the annual report for their Board.

Lincoln County: Jon Child, Steve Moyles, WS

Request: \$268,500

Work in Lincoln County is traditional work for livestock and wildlife protection, with 25 herds of sheep (27,500 head). Some work in the fall and winter in Sweetwater County for the protection of sheep of Lincoln County producers. Lincoln County is in migratory corridors for deer and antelope and these are in cattle and sheep wintering areas. Work relationships with Game and Fish, Forest Service, and private trappers and pilots is good. They have one WS specialist and two part time private contract trappers. They expected a good year, but coyotes are

same if not greater in numbers, and they are not sure why. Their helicopter expense has increased \$12,000, WS increased \$11,000, and their trappers received a raise. They are needing to replace some equipment. They are very short on their branding income. \$36,000 additional is needed to cover thermal binoculars, more trapper time, helicopter work. Concerning trees for beavers in the budget, Steve shared the expenses of that. He also shared losses are about the same overall, significantly less wolf damage. Still lots of ravens threatening lambs and sage grouse.

Break

Hot Springs County: Jack Baird, Josh Longwell, Board, Mike Burrell, WS

Request: \$384,000

Currently have two specialists, and a plane based in Worland. Majority of the work is in livestock protection. Owl Creek drainage is a challenge with wolf and bear influx. One board member has provided thermal scopes to the two specialists. The reason for an increased request is because they learned they can build up a reserve and wish to do that. Their goal is a 12-month reserve. Trends: coyote depredation has been lower; lions are the big problem; part of the county has diverse predators, including grizzly bears, black bears, mountain lions and wolves. Also, lots of bald eagles, golden eagles and ravens.

Washakie County: Rolly Redland, Kent Lamm, Board and Mike Burrell, WS

Request: \$250,000

They have two specialists. They also work on raccoon and skunk work as well. They have continued with deer project with coyote removal on south end of Bighorns. They have submitted another mule deer project in Washakie County for consideration. Some of their request is for thermal technology. Eagles and ravens are hard on gamebird populations, but when the landfills closed, the predatory bird numbers dropped.

Sweetwater County: Jim Burnett, Gary Zakotnik

Request: \$248,500

Sweetwater County has been wintering sheep, therefore not receiving much from predator fees. Currently have a couple contract part-time trappers. They currently run a spring program and a winter program to deal with the seasonal herds and to help wildlife in the area. A large area of public land and not much buy-in of private land/producers that winter their livestock in Sweetwater County. Their trapper is seeing more sage grouse skeletons in coyote dens than before which is concerning.

Crook County: Wade Dennis

Request: \$200,380

Currently have two full time private contract trappers that address traditional and non-traditional predator work. They are getting more people getting into the sheep business in the county. They also use two private contract pilots/gunners for aerial work. Preventative control in livestock and wildlife are their primary focus, but have had more calls for work in town. Their program will stay pretty much the same. Brand fee income should remain level. Slade clarified they would be able to do the same job with \$11,000 less of a request.

Fremont County: Rob Crofts, Tracy Frye WS & Mac Chrome WS, Ivan Laird, Tina Haddenham

Request: \$313,100

Seventy-two percent of county acreage is covered with agreements. 116 private landowner agreements in the county. They have 41 individuals inside the reservation also have agreements. They have a large population of cow calf operations. They also do some human health and safety. Wolf depredation has been pretty quiet as of late. They also do a seasonal bounty program. They asked for clarification about reported vs. verified. They believe the database is incorrect. They feel the eagle predation is not documented, but definitely have a problem.

Niobrara County: Arlene York, Kitson Boldon, Board

Request: \$180,000

Nothing has changed in the program. They have two trappers. They take care of the entire county and some across other county borders. Not many sheep in the county and seeing more losses by cattle producers. They have been spending down their surplus. Their trappers have never received a raise but are very dedicated to the county and the program. Only 4.4% of the budget goes to administration and they do not carry any inventory items. They have a balanced program with both aerial and ground work, however would like to have more availability on air time (fixed wing). Their trappers are year-round and provide all their own equipment, but are reimbursed for some ammo. Trends: They feel they are not doing a good job reporting losses, but are working on that. They didn't have luck hiring a part-time trapper, but they're looking for one that could work into full-time when the time comes. Their deer numbers are down, possibly because of 2022-23 winter.

Converse County: Casey Tillard, Curtis Maxwell

Request: \$284,464

They have 3 full time trappers and one part-time trapper and a bookkeeper. One of the largest sheep producing counties in the state. They estimate they lost 5,000 lambs last year. Hard to get WS aerial help due to BLM situation and other county demands. Trappers work hard and have been dealing with challenges managing coyotes in a lot of sheep flocks with limited rodent and rabbit populations. Ravens have not been a large problem since the Glenrock animal dump has been closed. They have some reported losses to eagles that continues to increase. Calf losses are increasing.

Natrona County: T.K. Atkinson, Board

Request: \$290,000

The plan is the same as in the past. Currently have 3 trappers. The projects include the Bates Hole project and another project in the north end of the county. They will be requesting continuation of these projects. Started a raven project with the dump, which has made a huge difference in Casper. They are considering a project to help keep predation in check for a sheep transplant project with the Wild Sheep Foundation. They always try to do the wildlife projects with or without the wildlife funding.

Meeting will reconvene at 8:00 am, Thursday, May 16, 2024. Meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Wednesday, May 16, 2024

Called to order at 8:03 a.m. by Co-Chair Brian Nesvik. A quorum was confirmed.

Public Comment on grant applications

Amy Hendrickson: She noted the increase in the quality of requests, which shows the Board is working hard. She also commended Jerry for helping bring the District Boards up to speed, and the commitment of Boards who make the drive to present and are well-prepared to present and ask questions. She posed the idea of having a meeting on the west side of state occasionally. She thanked the Board for their time. Brian asked if it would help to direct Boards as to what they should present on. Amy agreed this would be helpful.

Jerry introduced Zeta Anderson, the new Board member who wasn't in attendance yesterday.

Jerry Johnson presented the board has \$36,000 funds available for this year's rabies allocation and \$45,500 in requests from 3 counties Johnson, Sheridan and Campbell.

Jerry explained his thinking concerning his recommendations to the Board. The Board discussed transparency of District Boards, and their stewardship of funding. They also discussed the possibility of moving the Wildlife funding meeting to occur before this meeting each year, so the Boards know the amount of Wildlife money they're receiving prior to applying for ADMB money.

Jerry proposed giving \$38,000 for sage grouse money to every board except Goshen who would receive \$5000 because of the low population of sage grouse in that county. Bob motioned to follow Jerry's recommendation, per the spreadsheet, and lower the application requests accordingly, Roger seconded. Discussion also included adding \$27,750 sage grouse money to Carbon, Fremont, Natrona, and Sweetwater as they are large counties. The vote being unanimous, the motion carried.

The final recommendation for allocation by Jerry Johnson was presented, per the spreadsheet. Jeff motioned to accept Jerry's recommendations per the spreadsheet. Brett seconded. Discussion ensued. Slade made an amendment motion to move Campbell from \$308,000 down to \$305,000 reduction of \$3000, seconded by Jeff. With a unanimous vote, the amendment was approved. There was a motion by Bob to reduce Fremont by \$20,000, which was seconded by Sharon. With

one abstention, this amendment approved. Slade moved an amendment to reduce Niobrara by \$5000, which was seconded by Bob. With a unanimous vote, the amendment was approved. Slade made an amendment motion to increase Sheridan by \$10,000, which Jeff seconded. With a unanimous vote, the amendment was approved. Per the original motion and second, the vote to accept with the amended changes was unanimous, and the allocations were approved.

Rabies: \$36,000 to allocate.

Bob Harlan motioned to allocate \$12,500 to Sheridan county, \$10,500 to Campbell County, and \$12,500 to Johnson county. Roger Cox seconded, and with a unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Jerry pointed out that he will ask Districts to amend their applications if they are receiving more funding than requested. The Board also discussed the importance of consistency of Districts reporting the budget items. Jerry confirmed there will be a mandatory meeting for Districts in how to report their budgets, to provide this consistency. Bob suggested that the Board let the Districts know that them having a one-year reserve was part of the funding discussion this year.

Jerry Johnson presented funds available for this year’s allocations. \$3,920,000 general funding and \$800,000 for a total of \$4,720,00 is available for allocations.

The board discussed funding allocations.

PMD: \$4,720,000 to allocate.

Question called to vote on main motion to approve column. Motion carried.

The final allocation is shown below

<u>General funding</u>	<u>Sage grouse</u>
Albany \$197,621.00	\$38,000
Big Horn \$189,000.00	\$38,000
Campbell \$267,000.00	\$38,000
Carbon \$213,250.00	\$65,750
Converse \$246,464.00	\$38,000
Crook \$162,380.00	\$38,000
Fremont \$227,350.00	\$65,750
Goshen \$125,000.00	\$5,000
Hot Springs \$346,000.00	\$38,000
Johnson \$272,000.00	\$38,000
Lincoln \$230,500.00	\$38,000
Natrona \$246,250.00	\$65,750
Niobrara \$160,000.00	\$38,000
Park \$148,000.00	\$38,000
Sheridan \$214,500.00	\$38,000
Sweetwater \$197,750.00	\$65,750
Uinta \$177,134.00	\$38,000
Washakie \$187,000.00	\$38,000
Weston \$62,000.00	\$38,000

Total funds allocated: \$4,669,199.00

Motion to adjourn was made by Roger, seconded by Jeff. Meeting was adjourned at 10:54 am.

ADMB Meeting
Thursday, June 20th, 2024
8:00 AM
Thyra Thomson Building
Turntable room
444W. Collins dr.
Casper, WY 82604

Board Members in Attendance: Doug Miyamoto, Brian Nesvik, Richard Ladwig, Jared Zierenberg, Roger Cox, Bob Phillips, Sharon O'Toole, Bob Harlan, Brett Belden, Jeff Boner, Phil Osterli (USDA)

Board Members absent: Zeta Anderson, Tyler Abbot, Jennifer McConchie (BLM), Amanda Hulett

WDA Staff in Attendance: JD Sater, Slade Franklin, Tracy Myers, Jerry Johnson

Public in Attendance: None

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 AM by Co-Chairman, Doug Miyamoto.

Brian Nesvik moved to approve the minutes from May 15-16th, 2024. Roger Cox seconded. Jerry reported that he had made corrections to the meeting minutes. Brian amended his motion, and with a unanimous vote, the minutes were approved.

An update on wildlife service contract agreement was provided and board agreed to proceed. Jerry shared there is \$212,300 to allocate, with \$381,000 in requests.

Jerry reminded the Board that there was discussion at the May meeting to see if we can move this meeting so it happens before the May meeting in order to give Districts time to adjust their requests accordingly, but it was decided it was too difficult to do.

Jerry also shared about a possible research project involving the golden eagle predation issue and the possibility to work with FWS for this research project. He learned that for funding, there is some money built up that they would have to B11 to help fund the project. Jared shared that he and Jerry met to discuss possible projects, and told the group that research with golden eagles requires a permit, which can take time to obtain. Their meeting did not result in a decision on one project, but the next step is to visit with FWS to see how they can help. They also want to incorporate academia (CSU has already done research in WY, or Natl Wildlife Research Center), and Jared is speaking to his management about their thoughts. Funding was also discussed. Another result of Jared's meeting with Jerry is that during the November meeting, the successes of Falcon program will be discussed.

Jerry then asked the Board if they'd like to move forward with developing a research project. Doug asked what a research project would cost and where the funding would come from. Jerry responded that he has money in his budget to fund or partially fund the project. Jared shared that the scope of the project can be large or small, and that the Board would need to decide how much to B11 once a project and its scope are decided upon. The Board asked for clarification on the goal for the November meeting, and Jerry said it is to have a working group in place.

Project Proposals (w/ Updates)

Wyoming Stewardship Project, Educator Workshops 23-24 – Carolyn Jacobs

A brief overview was given on the stewardship project and educator workshops and the rebranding of the program to be called Wyo Wonders. This summer they are offering three workshops set up for educators in Evanston, Sundance, and Ten Sleep. She shared that they have more participants signed up this year than in previous years. The goal of the program is to introduce the curriculum and how to use it with students. Carolyn thanked the Board for their support of the program. At least one teacher in every county is using their materials, and their goal is to have 50%. Currently, the curriculum is being used in 165 classrooms across Wyoming.

Natrona County. Raven Removal – T.K. Atkinson along with Brian with G&F

A presentation was given on the raven issue in Natrona County. T.K. discussed the success of their program over the last several years, highlighting the Dump Project with ravens, and the animals that were saved with it. Brandon discussed the reduced populations of deer and sage grouse populations that are slowly improving, and that the raven control helps. Antelope populations look good this year in this area, except for the Bates Hole area. Coyote predation work helps increase deer and sage grouse numbers. Jared asked if funding was limited, what this group would focus on. Brandon responded that the North Natrona deer herd needs the most help. T.K. described the process of the Dump Project, and the improvement they've seen with the ravens gone.

Natrona County, Coyote Removal to Enhance Bates Hole Mule Deer Fawn Survival – T.K. Atkinson along with Brian Wilson G&F

A presentation was given on methods used to remove coyotes and control their populations. Please see notes above.

Natrona County, Coyote Removal to Enhance Stove Gulch, Big sulfur Mule Deer Fawn Survival – T.K. Atkinson and B. Harlan along with Brian Wilson G&F

A presentation was given on methods used to remove coyotes and control their populations. Please see notes above.

Converse County, Sand and Sage Cr. Mule Deer –Curtis Maxwell, Casey Tillard

A presentation was given on mule deer and the effects on the habitat in Converse County. Funding has allowed them to target coyotes in the right time-frame. Every year they see higher fawn numbers in this area. Jared mentioned it would be good for these results to be published so the public can see the work being done is having such positive impacts on wildlife. Bob asked if funding was short, how would that effect this project. The group shared that they may lose one part-time person and the aerial work he does, if they were to be under-funded.

Carbon County Coyote Removal to Enhance South Ferris Antelope Survival – Whitney Merrill, Phil Damm G&F, Brady Smith WS

A presentation was given on methods of coyote removal in Carbon County and how their removal affects South Ferris antelope. Whitney shared results of project, and that an additional year of funding would help both antelope and mule deer in the area. Explained what money was used for. Brady: shared that data supports that project is supporting the herd recovery.

Carbon County Coyote Removal to Enhance Baggs Mule Deer Fawn Survival – Whitney Merrill, Phil Damm G&F, Brady Smith WS

A presentation was given on coyote removal in Carbon County and how it has helped the Baggs mule deer fawn population. Phil shared success with current fawn population and sage grouse population. Winter loss was about 60% of deer population, prediction of this year is a large number of fawns, so this is a great year to be doing this work. Whitney mentioned support of producers in the area, shared details of how funding was used last year.

Carbon County Raven removal –*Whitney Merrill, Phil Damm G&F, Brady Smith WS*

A presentation was given on the Raven control project throughout Carbon County Whitney shared that this was their first year, focused on sage grouse lek survival rates. Brady said that one strategy was to focus on raven congregation during wintertime. Whitney shared how funding was used.

Niobrara Manville Lance Creek Project 2025 *Buttons York, Justin Merrill, Matt WS*

Matt shared that fawn ratios were very low this past year. Roger asked why this is being presented as a one-year project. Matt said their goal is to make this a long-term project, but we wanted to see how the first year goes. Button added that their Board sees this as a five-year plan internally. Button shared they have historically focused on trouble calls, but the deer populations have been steadily declining, so they now have to do some concentration on the predators. Brett asked if they would need to add additional staff. Buttons said they are looking for a part-time trapper. Bob asked if they are short-funded, how would they handle this. Buttons said they will target the area no matter what, but any additional funding would be helpful

Large Carnivore-Livestock Depredation Prevention and Control – *Clint Atkinson*

A presentation was given on patterns for grizzly bear and wolf depredation. Clint shared that this is their annual request and covers all trophy game species. The Board discussed how wolf predation is fluctuating. Brian shared the difference of how livestock predation and wildlife predation is tracked and managed.

Wyoming Game and Fish Non-lethal ear tags to deter grizzly bears and wolves in the Green River area Prevention and Control – Clint Atkinson

A presentation was given on using ear tags to reduce grizzly bear and wolf depredation. This is a new project with WGF, UW, and the Upper Green River Cattlemen's Assoc. This is a chance to take a more in-depth look at the efficacy of these ear tags. Clint showed historical impact by grizzlies and wolves in the Upper Green River Area. He discussed the difference between wolf and grizzly predation characteristics. He also discussed "Flashtags" as a new tool to reduce cost. The solar-powered flashing tag should deter a predator at night. He also shared initial research project issues and improvements being made to the design of both the tags and the research project for this year. Brian asked if there has been discussion of tagging both the calves and yearlings. Clint said they are focused on calves right now.

Fremont County Sweetwater Rocks Mule Deer Project – *Tracy Fry and Mac Crome*

A presentation was given on the Sweetwater Rocks mule deer project. Tracy shared historical data of the first and second year of collared deer populations, and how they've increased the second year. With the difference in winters, it's hard to confirm the reason for the increased population, and which type of predator is responsible for every kill. When asked if they are short-funded, will they continue this project, Tracy confirmed they would continue, regardless.

Lincoln County Mule Deer Predator Control – *John Child*

A presentation was given on the mule deer predator control project. Mule deer population is still below the WGFD objectives. Multiple factors have contributed to this low number. John shared that mule deer populations in their area for the winter ranges, and discussed how the bad winters along with coyote predation has devastated the mule deer populations. When asked if they are short-funded, will they continue, John said they'll use whatever they can to continue this project.

Johnson County Sage Grouse and Mule Deer project – *Peter John Camino*

A presentation was given on predator control to help Sage Grouse and Mule Deer herds. Peter John provided maps of their concentration area, and explained the maps. He also explained their request and how the money would be used, to make sure they are most effectively using their funding. When questioned if they are under-funded, will they continue the project, Peter John confirmed that they have been doing this since 2015, so they will continue the project regardless.

Washakie County Coyote Removal on Mule Deer Fawning Grounds to Protect Basin Mule Deer Herd – Mike Burrell

A presentation was given on the mule deer fawning grounds in Washakie County. Tactics to control and remove coyotes in the area were discussed. Mike shared this is the fourth year of this project, and what they've learned in past years to improve their control moving forward. One thing they've learned is the timing of removal of coyotes and how that effects the success of the program. He also shared the success in the fawn-to-doe ratios since 2018. This project also helps antelope and sage grouse populations.

Wyoming Range Project -- Kevin Monteith

A presentation was given on the Wyoming Range Mule Deer Project. Kevin thanked the Board for their support over the years. He shared that this is a unique project due to all of the collaboration and that they are following single animals throughout their lives, and their offspring through adulthood. He showed fawn survival rates historically, and explained their goal in determining the relative causes for fawn deaths. They've seen the predator-caused mortality has maintained or increased.

Public Comment / Board Comment

No public comment.

Board comment: Jared shared that he spoke with Stewart Breck (USDA) more about the flashtags, and shared some information about the study with the group. The Board discussed how to fund the flashtag project, and how to handle funding for new projects.

Discussion and Determination of Grant Awards

Brian feels the Board should fully fund the Raven projects and the Wyoming Range project.

Ag in the Classroom can only be funded with WDA funds. A motion was made by Bob to fund this project for \$2500, Brian seconded, and with a unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Doug suggested that projects asking for \$5,000 or less be fully funded. After brief discussion, Doug moved to fully fund all applications requesting \$5000 and below. The motion as seconded by Brett. With a unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Bob motioned to fully fund the Large Carnivore project for \$25,000, Brett seconded, and with a unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Sharon moved to fund the Wyoming Range Mule Deer study for \$5000. With no second the motioned failed. Brett moved to fund this project for \$40,000, and Jared seconded. Discussion led to the spreadsheet being filled in with proportional cuts so the Board can see what that looks like. Brett withdrew his motion so the Board can move through the spreadsheet. Jared agreed.

Brian moved to approve funding the requests per column C on Jerry's spreadsheet, and Brett seconded. After some discussion, an amended motion was made by Doug to approve the adjusted column C, and the motion was seconded by Roger.

After a unanimous vote, the motion passed to approve the adjusted spreadsheet below:

New Projects	Requested	Approved
Large Carnivore-Livestock Depredation Prevention and Control	\$25,000	\$25,000
Natrona County Raven Removal	\$5,000	\$5,000
Coyote Removal to Enhance Bates Hole Mule Deer Fawn Survival	\$30,000	\$15,000
Coyote Removal to Enhance Red Wall & Big Sulfur Mule Deer Fawn Survival	\$30,000	\$15,000
Wyoming Stewardship Project, Educator Workshops	\$2,500	\$2,500
Fremont Co. Sweetwater rock mule deer project	\$30,000	\$15,000
Carbon CO. Coyote removal to enhance South Ferris Antelope survival	\$17,000	\$10,300
Carbon CO. Coyote removal to enhance Baggs mule deer fawn survival	\$15,000	\$10,000
Carbon County Raven removal project	\$4,000	\$4,000
Converse Co. sand and sage cr. mule deer project	\$20,000	\$15,000
Washakie county Mule Deer project 2023	\$10,000	\$6,000
Wyoming Range mule deer study 2023-28	\$40,000	\$34,500
Lincoln County Mule deer project	\$30,000	\$15,000
New Projects		
Johnson County Mule deer/Sage grouse 2024-25	\$52,500	\$20,000
WGFD Efficacy of nonlethal ear tags	\$50,000	\$10,000
Niobrara Manville Lance creek project 2025	\$20,000	\$10,000
	\$381,000	
Total Allocation		\$212,300.00

Bob motioned to require September 1 bank statements from all districts, which was seconded by Jeff. There was then discussion concerning the legality of this requirement. JD clarified that districts are required to submit financial documents according to the Rules, so this would be a legal request. This request would be in addition to what they are currently requested to provide. JD asked for clarification if this would be an eligibility requirement or a request. Brian said he feels it should be a request rather than a requirement, and it can be used in deliberations of allocation decision-making. The Board members agreed. With voting being unanimous, the motion carried to request Sept 1 bank statements from all districts.

Brian motioned to adjourn the meeting with Doug seconding, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm.

DRAFT

**Animal Damage Management Board Meeting
Thursday, Nov 14 -11:00 am
Natrona County Extension Office – 2011 Fairgrounds Rd, Casper WY
Topic: Updates and Golden Eagle Depredation**

Call to order—(Miyamoto)

The meeting was called to order by co-chairman, Doug Miyamoto, at 11:04 am.

Introduction of board, guests and public:

Board members in attendance: Doug Miyamoto (Co-Chair), Will Schultz (representing Angie Bruce – Co-Chair), Bob Harlan, Jared Zierenberg, Roger Cox, Jeff Boner, Zeta Anderson, Tyler Abbott

Board members absent: Angie Bruce, Sharon O’Toole, Brett Belden, Amanda Hulet, Richard Ladwig, Phil Osterli, Jennifer McConchie

WDA Staff in attendance: Slade Franklin, JD Sater, Tracy Myers

Public in attendance: Jason Reed, Mike Barker, Alison Crane, Doug Eckery, Gary Williams, Andrea Barbknect, John Auzqui, Kevin Geis, Amy Hendrickson, Brady Smith, Vance Broadbent, Peter John Camino, Cat Urbigit, JD Atkinson, Bryan Bedrosian

Approval of June Minutes

Doug suggested an amendment to the agenda, so that the group could have the Golden Eagle depredation discussion prior to the vote to approve funding for such project. Roger Cox made a motion to amend the order of the agenda as suggested. The motion was seconded by Zeta Anderson, and with no opposition, the order of the agenda was amended. Doug then asked the board to review the minutes of the June meeting for any corrections. After review, Roger moved to approve the minutes from the June 20th Board meeting as presented. Jeff Boner seconded the motion and with a unanimous vote, the minutes were approved.

Program updates: Wolf Compensation claims update

Doug directed the group’s attention to the Wolf Compensation claims updates provided to the board by Jerry Johnson prior to the meeting. He reviewed the claims and payments, noting that these numbers are on pace or below for the year.

Discussion to combine May and June allocation meetings

Doug reminded the group that at the June meeting, a discussion arose regarding the possibility of combining the May and June ADMB meetings. Slade explained after a review of the process,

there is no legal reason to not combine these meetings. He emphasized that if combined, both days would need to start at 8 am. After discussion among the group, it was suggested by Jeff Boner that if the meetings were combined, it would be best for everyone if the grant applications and research applications were presented and reviewed concurrently, district by district. The group agreed this makes the most sense.

Set dates for 2025 meetings

Doug reviewed Jerry's recommendations for meeting dates for 2025, to include January 21st via Zoom, May 14th-15th in Casper which is the combined meeting previously discussed, and November 12th via Zoom. Roger moved to approve these dates as presented, Zeta seconded, and with no further discussion and no opposition, the motion carried.

Golden Eagle depredation discussion

Tyler Abbott provided background on the past year with eagle depredation, and confirmed that in the past three to four years, depredation by eagles has continued to grow in Wyoming, and reiterated that the challenge is how to keep livestock safe. In April, the US Fish & Wildlife Service office received a list of five recommendations from the Wyoming Woolgrowers concerning how to engage in discussion to do better job in finding tools to deal with this problem. They included:

1. Engage in two-way conversations with all key stakeholders to include livestock producers, FWS, USDA-WS, and Wyoming Game & Fish about the producers' needs and governmental constraints.
2. Increasing the number of "take" opportunities to be greater than the "take" quota, to get closer to meeting the quota, if that quota can't be increased.
3. US Fish & Wildlife Service should automatically issue an eagle depredation permit to ranchers who document predation for two or more years prior, both bald and golden for relocation, and goldens for removal.
4. US Fish & Wildlife Service should allow eagles to be removed prior to lambing.
5. US Fish & Wildlife Service should work with USDA-Wildlife Services and USGS-BRD to fund research to evaluate non-lethal methods to reduce livestock predation by eagles.

Gary Williams, Chief of USFWS Migratory Bird Permit Office for the Mountain-Prairie Region, then walked the group through the requests and recommendations, and where we they stand today. Gary expanded on the timeline of history of this discussion, shared what the original answers were to the requests/recommendations from the producers, and gave updates which are a result of work done since the June meeting. Concerning Request 1, this was agreed upon and has been happening, so there is no update. Concerning Request 2, Tom Cooper, a USFWS Flyway representative, contacted the USFWS National Raptor Program to explore the possibility of a Wyoming-scale take assessment that might allow additional removal from the wild. Feedback from NRP is that based on the latest survey data, no additional eagles can be removed from the wild. Concerning increasing "take" opportunities to ensure all six eagles are removed each year, Gary shared the update that between 2019 and 2023, five or six eagles were removed each year. NWS are exploring with NFC, the possibility of amending the allocation procedure to include a time limit for falconers to begin trapping once they are drawn

for an eagle. Concerning Request 3, there are no updates. The Form 37, which requires a confirmed eagle predation, cannot be automatically issued. Hazing and harassing without a permit is allowed as long as nests aren't threatened or disturbed. He reminded the group that producers can apply for an eagle depredation permit authorizing trap and release/relocate using the Form 37 from the previous year. The question was raised if the six-eagle limit included trap-and-release or trap-and-relocate. Gary confirmed that there is no limit on trap-and-release or trap-and-relocate, and that the six-eagle limit is for eagles taken out of the breeding population. Concerning Request 4, there is no update on what was shared in May. Concerning Request 5, the update is that multiple funding streams have been identified to research non-lethal methods to protect livestock from eagle predation, and input on research ideas is being sought from livestock producers. The general consensus is that the governmental agencies need to work with producers to identify potential research topics so we aren't just researching to research. The goal of this process is to gather knowledge from producers to guide research work.

Doug Eckery, the Assistant Director of the National Wildlife Research Center, shared that their mission is to use scientific expertise to help mitigate human/wildlife conflicts, focusing on non-lethal, integrative approaches. Research is good, but they need to find new tools or methods to use in the pathway to implementation. He shared that his office is preparing to hire an avian predator biologist, and this new position would be supported through National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee (NWSAC). He confirmed there are knowledge gaps about depredation, for instance, how to better define a window of time when depredation happens. Another question is the impact of learned behavior of eagles. But his office really wants to listen first to learn the producers' priorities, and how the producers feel this research would be most impactful. He agreed that this research must have an applied end, not doing research just to research. Jared Zierenberg with USDA Wildlife Services clarified that the biologist would be funded by USDA NWRC. Doug confirmed this.

Jared shared the value of utilizing the producers' ideas of what might work and what won't. Another tool Jared acknowledged the value of is utilizing falconers to aid in reaching this goal. Mike gave some history of how falconers began helping with this situation. Jared asked if producers have any questions about the responses to woolgrowers. He also shared that there is no definite cost yet on research. Jared then asked producers what road blocks they have seen. Vance Broadbent shared that permit turnaround has been better, and thanked Gary for that. Other producers shared examples of when it is hard to monitor their herds to protect them from eagles. Issues with falconers not being able to come to ranches in a timely-enough manner were also discussed, and Mike shared the constraints of falconers, including that they may have jobs and other time commitments, along with the fact that they often travel and stay on their own dime. Also, assuring the falconer takes the offending eagle isn't always guaranteed; sometimes it's impossible to catch the right one. Vance asked if it is possible to find money to incentivize the falconers, so at least some of their expenses are covered; it might make it easier to get falconers to come to the ranch in a timelier manner if this was an option.

Gary asked the producers if they see less depredation when jackrabbit populations are higher. John Auzqui shared that in years when there are more rabbits, they see more predators and have higher livestock loss. He also said that the following year is even worse because the predators are stronger. Jared asked if falconers could do pre-work, such as negative reinforcement or relocation prior to the nesting season, and Gary confirmed that is an option.

Bryan Bedrosian, Conservation Director with the Teton Raptor Center, shared that he is excited to be involved with this process, and is sympathetic to the producers' concerns and losses. He shared some thoughts on studying things such as identifying the age of the offending eagles, and looking at prey remains at nesting sites to help confirm which eagles are an issue then tagging them. His center has tags with trackers that can alert when the bird flies into a certain area, such as a lambing location. He also suggested using hazing techniques, such as using an injured lamb to try to catch a problem bird. Jared asked Bryan if eagles have a negative experience with capture, does it deter the hunting, and Bryan said it usually does not. He also suggested establishing with producers the worst window of time for predation. Peter John Camino shared the scenario with the burn area after this year's fires, and the problem that predators will not have food because no prey stayed in the burn area, so he is expecting a slaughter of lambs this spring in that area. For him, the biggest problem is in the spring. Cat Urbigkit shared that she has had some success using scarecrows during lambing, but that she had to be continually changing the intimidating parts of the scarecrows because the eagles quickly get used to them. Cat also agreed with Vance to incentivize falconers. She likes the drone ideas as well, and is excited about NWRC's work and involvement, but reiterated that producers need tools immediately. The discussion then turned from the issue with lambing to Tommy Moore's situation where eagles were preying on adult sheep, replacement ewes, and how that potentially broadens the scope of research. Cat feels this research project needs to be flexible enough to help all producers in the state with different situations. Bob Harlan shared his views on the importance of helping antelope to thrive on his land, so that the eagles have other prey besides his lambs.

The topic of compensatory mitigation arose, and Gary shared that requiring copper ammunition by hunters could be approved in the near future as compensatory mitigation. He also shared that his office is currently reviewing SOPs for Form 37s, so this is a good time to ask these questions and propose changes. John asked if the birds could be captured and held until lambing was over, for instance, and Bryan responded that one can only legally hold a bird for 24 hours. Peter John talked about historic issues, that 10 years ago there wasn't an eagle problem, but that his feeling is that increasing the take limit isn't the solution. Bob shared a story of cattle being fed garlic, which helped keep flies away from the cattle, and Bryan likes Bob's idea of possibly researching with a treated carcass, feeding sheep something that makes them not taste good to the eagles. Alison Crane reminded the group how important it is to keep in mind the strict guidelines set by the USDA when considering research that includes feeding sheep something that might make them not palatable to eagles.

The next question that arose was if ranchers could be compensated for eagle predation like other livestock producers are compensated for wolf or grizzly predation. The livestock

indemnity program was brought up, and Brady shared that the only compensation is through the LIP program, and they will reimburse 75% of market value if at least 11% of the herd is lost, and producers are having mixed results with this.

Doug reminded the group that study design and deliverables need to be discussed before research funding can be discussed. He asked the board if they felt the group had enough information to draw up a good contract at this time. Jared suggested not voting on funding for a project, but rather to vote on intent by the board to pursue a research project on decreasing eagle predation. Doug also asked what barriers exist with Federal compensation for eagle predation, like predation by wolves and grizzlies. Tyler explained that we are observing a species conservation concern, and that he would take the eagle predation compensation idea back to his group. Jeff asked for clarification in regards to the six-eagle take limit. If the eagles are taken by falconers, they are not removed from the population. Gary explained that birds removed from the wild are removed from the breeding population, so with the aim to increase populations, these birds are removed in terms of breeding potential. Jared asked if young eagles are taken and eventually returned to the wild, can that be credited. Bryan asked if eagle falconers eventually release birds, and Mike explained that it is customary to release birds back eventually, but some die or are lost. Other falconers keep the birds indefinitely.

Doug shared that WDA could provide some funding for research if we find something we'd like to pursue, if the ADMB agrees it is a good idea. Tyler asked the board if his group can get on the agenda for the Jan 21st meeting. This would give them time to look at research opportunities and evaluate what applied research might be of value, and they may also be able to report out to what extent compensation for eagle predation is an option. The idea is for USFWS to hone in on a project to recommend. Tyler will also circle back with Doug between now and then about any barriers to the compensation plan idea.

There was then discussion of limiting the window between when falconers accept an offer to take an eagle and when they arrive on scene, and if that can be written into the award document. Doug also suggested creating a contract template to incentivize reimbursement of expenses to falconers in exchange for observational data to reduce eagle damage. He also asked if Mike could help create a data submission form so that the data falconers are providing is consistent and complete.

Doug encouraged board members and producers to send him ideas to keep in the queue for discussion.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Doug at 2:10 pm.