

Wolf Advisory Group – Special November 11, 2015 meeting to “walk-the-land”



Facilitated by the Human-Wildlife Conflict Collaboration, Francine Madden

WAG, WDFW and technical resource individuals explore current livestock protection practices, the realistic context, and potential improvements.



- Range rider w/ telemetry
 - tracks movement of wolves & sheep
 - horse + vehicle
 - coordinates w/ herder
 - plan + human presence for at night (=high risk)
 - look for wolf sign
 - Carcass management.
- Multiple tools, change often
- Maintain adaptable plan w/ option for ramping up in crisis
- Identify risk^{-weak spots.} + target it.
- Expectation: some loss just not catastrophic

- Need to consider not just next year but viability 5 years from now
- Barometer Reading - if not a history of big problems, that's a sign of good prevention.
- Openness / Receptivity to try tools
- Start before grazing season / before problems start.
- Willing to ramp up (eg. foxlights) at first sign of trouble.
 - poss. range rider addition
- As pack gets bigger, need for additional RR.

WAG, WDFW, the producer, and technical resource individuals discuss existing conditions, opportunities, realities, concerns, needs, and other considerations.



Both on the land and in a follow-up meeting, WAG, WDFW, the producer and technical resource individuals discuss existing conditions, opportunities, realities, concerns, needs, and other considerations.



- More packs, do you need more resources to protect? ^{livestock}
 - What's sustainable over long term + landscape?
 - Business model currently doesn't account for extensive RR/nonlethal
 - LP + conserv/enviro groups + legislature = sustainable funding framework
 - Range rider ^{fund (FEMA)}
 - What qualifies? * Maintain iterative
 - Amount of time ^{adaptive}
 - Quality ^{mgt @ end of season}
 - Location/operation dependent
 - Define actions in "ramp up"
- Agree on front end

Comfort and Concerns

- Define what is involved in "ramping up"?
- We can spend others' \$
- Teanaway already has depredations - #s question, timeline & when is "reset"?
- Relocation - will they get caught? do they ^{WDFWS} keep trying to relocate wolves even if sheep get off allotment during period of time of capture?
- What to do when wolves habituate to non-lethals?
- We're in it as long as we see results

In terms of developing a pilot "individual producer plan," the producer shares what they are comfortable with and where they have concerns that still need to be addressed.



The diverse group explores and discusses experiences from other places where wolves and livestock coexist and the opportunities and limitations of collar data, trapping, etc.



Issues / Concerns / Context

- Collar data - intermittent & overly relied on
 - manage expectations abt technology limitations
 - wolf location based on data point
 - uncollared wolf. 1 teen vs. multiple
 - + transition to delisting + no collar ??
 - camera trap as alternative
 - wood River No collar 4 yrs
 - stable pack = knowledge + predictability
 - New hybrid collar
- WDFW to do up front.
+ be consistent in message across staff

RANGE RIDER

- Quality varies
- hard to prove you prevented depredation
- behavior of cattle has impact
- benefits beyond preventing depredation
- ask RR what works etc

Ideas

- GPS marker cows - VHF \$100

Bells on cattle - helps RR find cattle

The group discussed range riders (RR).



CONSIDERATIONS/ISSUES

Public grazing - subsidized benefit, so added expense of non lethal should be expected (livestock producers said this)

Added benefits to cattle for having range rider (beyond preventing depredations) (livestock producer said this too)

- Range riding saves \$ in long run \Rightarrow healthy, protected cattle/livestock.
- Open range \Rightarrow constant/daily human presence/RR definition of \uparrow is different in different areas.

culture + ecology impact
perception of how LP should use open range
Supervision \longleftrightarrow No supervision
lots

- In Idaho, one technician works for all LPs in an area. Share resources, also w/ govt.

Additional considerations are discussed and explored.