

July 6:

1. Amaroq

- a. Great presentations today.
- b. The following come from her shared notes:

Shared understanding of the data. What is known. Drawing connections from what is known to what that might mean?

The same is true with wolves—having a shared understanding of the data, what it means, if it means what we think it does or is something else going on we hadn't considered.

Bill Kemp, in his remarks, provided a perfect example, and I am going to work from that, to demonstrate this:

Bill said something to the effect of:

"In Idaho, they've lost the social license. I'd hate to see WA get to that stage. Hope WDFW can get ahead of this, where in Idaho the wolf got so large and they had so many problems."

I'd like to share some historical facts and data, so we all have the same baseline understanding.

First, some historical info:

In modern times there has never been a social license for acceptance of wolves in Idaho.

In 2001, the state legislature passed House Joint Memorial No 5, which states it is the official position of the state that "wolf recovery in Idaho be discontinued immediately and wolves be removed from the state by whatever means necessary."

In 2002, when Idaho finally adopted its state wolf plan after trying to get passed 10-20 different drafts, the Plan's executive summary notes that the sentiment expressed in HJM No. 5 remains the official position of the state of Idaho.

Second:

The newly-passed, extremely aggressive wolf hunting and trapping laws were argued by the bill's sponsors as being necessary due to wolves decimating Idaho's livestock industry and elk population.

Third, some data:

Regarding livestock, according to information provided by Idaho state sources;

In 2018 there were 113 confirmed wolf kills of livestock

In 2019, 156 confirmed wolf kills of livestock

In 2020, 84 confirmed wolf kills of livestock

So the 3-year average was 117 livestock confirmed killed by wolves per year.

Since Idaho has 2.73 million livestock, this means that the numbers of livestock killed by wolves were 0.004% of Idaho's livestock. Hardly a decimation of the industry.

I am aware of a study which indicated that there could be up to 8 times as many livestock lost as discovered, depending on the terrain. Even in those circumstances, this amounts to wolf-caused losses of 0.02 % of Idaho's livestock. Also, not a decimation of the industry.

https://www.wlj.net/top_headlines/wolf-depredations-down-for-fiscal-year-2020-in-idaho/article_29fe9d6c-a6a9-11ea-889c-b7a0640256df.html

As for wolf impacts on ungulates, most of Idaho's elk management units are at or above management objective and hunter harvests continue to be at all-time highs. From an August 2020 IDFG press release:

- Pop goals for bull elk are meeting or exceeding goals in 17 of 22 elk units; and meeting or exceeding pop goals for cow elk in 16 out of 22 elk units.
- IDFG stated, "We are in the second Golden Age of Idaho elk hunting."
- "The statewide elk harvest has exceeded 20,000 annually for the last six years, which has not happened since the all-time high harvests in 1988-1996."

<https://idfg.idaho.gov/press/2020-big-game-hunting-outlook>

In Conclusion:

From my knowledge of these facts, this data, and my observations over the years of who is in the Idaho state legislature, who is in the governor's seat, and who is on the state fish and game commission, and in light of the recent nationwide delisting of wolves that may have emboldened current Idaho state legislators -- the new extremely aggressive wolf hunting and trapping laws passed in Idaho and accompanying regulations to implement them are not in the least reflective of wolves having "lost a social license in Idaho" -- because it was never there to begin with. The blood-thirsty, counter to science and counter to the data assault on wolves which has occurred in Idaho this spring and summer is an artifact of many, many factors including who is in office and making the decision sat this moment in time.

2. Rachel
 - a. "Seconded" the good presentations today
 - b. Idaho is a horrible example to follow in how wildlife is managed/treated.
 - c. A little confused about the statement that wolves are problematic to ungulates. Wolves are important for maintaining ungulate health.
3. Samantha – About wolves and ungulates, there is research that shows wolves can detect disease within ungulates. Wolves help keep ungulates healthy.

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July 7:

1. David
 - a. Caitlin made a good point about making contact with people WAG members represent. Is there a way to include WAG member emails/#s on the roster for members of the public to contact them?
 - b. The Capital Press article today made a point that continues to bother him. He's troubled by the thought that a wolf may have had an incident with a cow today, and that wolf could be shot for something a different wolf may have done 10 mo. ago. He believes the reason for killing wolves is vengeance, not changing behavior. We should reexamine the rationale.
2. Rachel
 - a. She hopes the Dept. will consider ways for the public to attend/comment on future meetings virtually. That allows more transparency, outreach, and education.
 - b. She enjoyed hearing about predator investigations. When cattle are left out in an area, some will be attacked, and it's kind of amazing that more aren't attacked.
3. Chris – As a former science teacher, doing homework as members of the WAG would help the conversation. Do the background reading, look at the protocols and wolf plan to better inform the discussion.
4. Amaroq
 - a. There is a broad spectrum of who knows what and has experienced what. She would like to see the Dept. fill seats with the people that have the background information/knowledge about the plan, protocol, wolves, etc. The Dept. should develop and educational process for WAG members.
 - b. For example, about investigations, science matters, explaining why these investigations are done the way they are done. We need to be able to make a science-based judgement.
 - c. Endangered species status matters. The state has obligations to preserve endangered species. The agency has public trust obligations to all of us, not just frustrated people.
5. Lane
 - a. Reference a past in-person meeting in Moses Lake, a producer shared his experience with a wolf attack. He remembers the story was about losing 20 cows when a new alpha wolf moved into an area. Situations like that show that wolves were depredating cattle.
 - b. It's up to the rancher to let the state know ASAP (as soon as possible) to get to the depredation as soon as possible.
 - c. He's somewhat disappointed that WAG members didn't give much input about depredation investigations.
6. Tim
 - a. As a hunter, he doesn't appreciate what appears to be a political, repeated statement about how wolves cause ungulate decline. It shouldn't be an excuse for poor hunting skills. In his area, he sees more moose and elk now than before. We can't blame wolves for declines in ungulates.
 - b. There are many carnivores associated with ungulate-eating, let's not just point out wolves as the culprit.

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- c. For thousands of years wolves, carnivores, and ungulates lived together. What about the impact of cows on ungulates?
7. Zoe
- a. Reference post recovery planning and the need for a science-based conversation, the more we follow the biological science, the better the chance for long-term success. Science-based management is pivotal.
 - b. There's a daunting amount of peer-reviewed literature about wolves. She recommends the Dept. provide WAG members with a representative sample of research for member learning/discussion. She'd be happy to share information about her library.
8. Jana
- a. She would like to see information about her (Zoe's) library.
 - b. Regarding outreach, the Dept. should include members of the public and coach them about how they could help with outreach.
9. Ilene
- a. From her experience as a rancher, predators are opportunistic, and they'll take advantage of any situation unless there is known human presence. Such presence needs to be done immediately, not three day later.
 - b. Julia is the best thing that's happen to the Dept. Would like to talk to someone to get her a raise. Thank you to the staff as well.
10. Steph
- a. Thx for the informative presentations, and for Comm. Smith's encouragement to focus on outreach.
 - b. She supports public members encouraging science-based focus. Outreach and education needs to come from the Dept. and the WAG.
 - c. There doesn't seem to be cohesion within WAG about goals. She hopes that future WAG meetings can focus on the goals and agenda, and limit the side conversations.

Notes received via email after the meeting:

From Dave ...

- a. The recent applications for the WA Dept of Agricultural non lethal wolf grants to NGO's contained a new question that is also relevant to the current rule making process. It asked: "**Would the proposed actions be sustainable for producers long term without continued outside funding? When answering the question consider the capacity of producers with regard to cost,time available,training,ability to manage additional employees if necessary and if there is a trained and equipped workforce to hire.**" This also needs to be answered when considering any of the alternatives.
- b. There continues to be no representation on the WAG from NE WA producers or anyone who represents them directly. These the most affected people in the state. It seems there's a different standard for people from there to participate. This creates more conflict and undermines the credibility of the WAG and the Department.
- c. Sammie said that it took 2 1/2 years to get paid for her indirect loss claim. No WDFW staff addressed this. For producers this is a common theme which has continued to get

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worse. Why has this not been resolved? Why was the Damage Prevention cost shares for producers reduced to \$5000 from \$10,000? We certainly don't have half the number of wolves.