

WILDLIFE REHABILITATION ADVISORY GROUP

MEETING MINUTES – January 11, 2020

WDFW Staff:

Patricia Thompson

WRAG Members:

Jasmine Fletcher Glaze
Jennifer Teitzel
Sonnya Wilkins
Craig Moran
Alysha Evans
Alicia Bye

Jenny Schlieps
Suzanne West
Cindy Daly
Emily Meredith
Irene Holmes
Nicky Finch
Lynn Tompkins via Zoom

Welcome and Check-in

Hannah Anderson introduced herself as the new acting Wildlife Diversity Division Manager. Penny has moved on to a position outside the agency.

Tricia will send the Chair and Vice Chair roles and responsibilities from the Wildlife Diversity Advisory Committee to Sonnya and Jennifer T.

Agenda for January 11, 2020 meeting was reviewed and approved.

Minutes from November 20, 2019 meeting were reviewed and approved

Charter

WRAG Draft Charter was reviewed and amended; Charter is not ready for approval

See Amended Charter

Clarify What is Expected of This Group

What are most important issues and products?

Will review Discussion Needs Table and Charter

Some discussion topics:

- WWRA:
 - Require joining WWRA, but not require attending meetings?
- Does regulatory code control ethics, morals, and standards – by virtue of citing NWRA?
 - How can it be policed and enforced?
- A huge hole is in the veterinarian aspect of permitting and practice – help with training for **VORs**
 - Vet of Record mentorships – partner with a mentor in order to know what is expected
 - Currently a copy of the permittee letter is sent to VOR
 - Corrective letters are also copied to VOR
 - Missing piece - educate clinic staff on rules, procedures and expectations also.
 - How important is VOR relationship to our group?
 - VORs are regular vets not necessarily wildlife vets. How much wildlife training should the rehab VOR have?
- Tabled the working group section
 - To be determined what groups we need.

Work Plans

Discussion on constructing work plans, timelines, and scheduling meetings.

- Work plans should outline expected products and measurables
- Narrow the focus of priorities and products into something achievable
- Working Groups could do their own workplans – these groups address the major needs of the Department
- Should there be a workplan for the WRAG itself?
- Schedule future meetings at this meeting
- Clarification: Director makes ultimate decision.

Discussion/questions on WDFW

- What is the scope of the department – what is the role of WDFW in wildlife rehabilitation and what is not a WDFW role in wildlife rehabilitation.
 - WDFW is a regulatory agency responsible for permitting and making sure rules are followed and monitoring welfare of animals in care
 - WWRA is more responsible for encouraging networking and working with, educating, and outreaching veterinarians.
- What are the needs of wildlife rehabilitators and how can the department meet those needs?

Identified **priorities** on and from the **Discussion Needs table**

- **High priority** *Recruiting more wildlife rehabilitators*
 - Novice permits
 - Point person or group for recruiting
- *Education and Outreach to Veterinarians*
 - WWRA is working on outreach to vets and would rather that Trish work with WWRA directly when outreaching outside vets.
 - Reasons veterinarians do not want to touch wildlife are they are afraid of legal ramifications and do not know how to handle and treat wild animals.
- **High priority** *Keep VOR/PV education on our priority list (also see above under Some discussion topics)*
 - Vets want to help, and they try, but they don't know what they are doing regarding being a Principle Veterinarian –
 - WDFW is responsible for clarifying the role of VORs and the Legal roles and responsibilities for vets.
 - Sonnya propose mentorship situation where wildlife veterinarians that are willing to reach out to new VORs and let them know what their responsibilities and expectations are, as well as letting them know some basic laws because they could end up making mistakes.
 - Require rehabilitators to document face to face meetings with his/her VOR at least yearly; other proposal is quarterly.
- *Education and Outreach to the public*

More visible wildlife rehabilitation presence on the WDFW web page

WRAG members will draft a letter to WDFW Public Affairs web page to highlight rehab more

 - The document, "How to Be a Rehabilitator" needs to be more visible.
 - WWRA should be added as an educational resource
 - Make the department a go-to resource even though it is regulatory

WDFW is also an education resource for the public, not just regulatory

- **High priority** *Cervid Endorsement & Training*
 - WDFW training is currently required for the Cervid Endorsement
 - Need a Training Course Outline and the exam
- **Removed** *Assist Department* on improving public's perception and opinion of Dept.
 - However:
 - WRAG members are asked to present WDFW in a positive, neutral, or not negative, light.
 - WRAG members are encouraged to bring any issues or problems they or other rehabilitators have to the table. They may be presented privately to Tricia.
- **Enforcement**
 - Confidence has been lost in WDFW due to no legal ramifications – they need to enforce.
 - Tricia needs clarification on this; WDFW has denied and suspended permits but can do so only within the confines of the WACs.
 - WRAG to create a list of recommendations to enforcement.
 - Alysha comment – huge issue for permanent rehabbers is that there are no ramifications for the public that keep wildlife. Backup and clarification on what LE is able to do with their resources and time.

Inviting and adding WRAG members

- Existing members create rules for adding members to WRAG.
- Member description, rules, making recommendations, and the ground rules.

Lunch Break

Discussion on Nonnative species

- Eastern cottontail and raccoon are protected, furbearing game animals
 - A permit is required to take.
- Eastern grey squirrel and opossum are not classified and protected
 - Up to the discretion of the officer.
- It may take legislative action (RCW) to define prohibited species as in the Grant RCW or
- Suzanne suggested a WAC to make the taking of any live wildlife for any reason illegal

More Priorities

- Funding
 - U.S. Postage Conservation stamp example as fundraising for wildlife rehabilitation (Cynthia)
- Enforcement of wildlife rehabilitation rules, and enforcement officers prioritizing illegal wildlife rehabilitation higher
- A working group for endorsements instead of just Cervids
- Additional training for limited permits:
 - Large carnivore
 - Oiled wildlife
 - Raptors

Working Groups

- Choose consistency in phrases – confusion in titles of the “committees.”
 - Discussed and agreed to use “working group” as title for each committee.

Working Group break-out

Working Groups will report back at next meeting with Charters and work plans.

Working Groups:

- 1) Recruitment of New Rehabilitators & Path to Getting a Rehabilitation Permit for those already interested
 - Nicky
 - **Emily** CHAIR
 - Jenny
 - Cindy
 - Suzanne
 - Alicia
 - Jasmine
 - Irene
 - Alysha
 - Jennifer
- 2) Outreach and Public Education
 - Craig
 - Sonnya
 - **Jennifer** CHAIR
- 3) Endorsements and Training (Re-formed towards the end of the meeting; member names not captured)
 - **Alysha** CHAIR
 - Jasmine
 - Emily Meredith
 - Jenny S.
 - Alicia B.
 - Cindy D.
 - Suzanne W.
 - Irene H.