

Wolf Advisory Group Meeting Notes
March 29, 2017
DoubleTree

WAG Members: Shawn Cantrell, Tim Coleman, Don Dashiell, Tom Davis, Dave Duncan, Diane Gallegos, Molly Linville, Dan Paul, Mark Pidgeon, Paula Swedeen, Nick Martinez, Dan McKinley

WDFW Staff: Donny Martorello, Candace Bennett, Ellen Heilhecker, Joey McCanna, Steve Pozzanghera, Trent Roussin, Stephanie Simek, Kevin Robinette, Robert Waddell, Bruce Botka, Kile Westerman, John Cotton, Joseph Bridges, John Cotton, Kile Westerman, Matthew Trendera

Third Party Neutral: Francine Madden

Welcome and Introductions

The third party neutral welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the agenda. She thanked department staff for all of the good work done over the past few weeks.

She started the meeting by outlining how everyone has world views and applies a filter to them. She encouraged everyone to expand that filter and acknowledge other filters that may be out there.

She called attention to the fact that in our polarized society, WAG members and department staff are doing wonderful work. It's important to keep that sense of hope. While a decision will be made at this meeting, everyone is involved for the long haul and will continue to make decisions well into the future.

Members checked in around the room, going over hopes and concerns regarding the meeting.

WDFW Update and Reflections

The department first went over the comments provided by the public during the morning listening session. Members of the public gave many comments related to wolf management in Washington State. These comments were read aloud for WAG members to consider during the rest of the meeting.

Department staff gave an update on the development of the protocol. Input has been given by a long list of folks, including WAG members, students, stakeholders, teachers, and other members of the public. In the arena of wolf-livestock conflict, everything we can do to further understand wolves and livestock will lead to fewer losses to depredation.

The core of the approach to try to prevent conflict before it starts. That will save more livestock and more wolves. The goal is to influence wolf behavior to have fewer depredations and improve wolf recovery. Everyone is adjusting to this large carnivore back on the landscape. It will take time.

One aspect of improved outreach involves the department's website rebuild. While we wait for the rebuild to complete, data on the current website will be updated and enhanced to provide more information. On top of this, providing monthly updates on wolf status will happen in the future. Executive management in the department is also pushing improved transparency throughout the agency. Avoiding misinformation is incredibly important. In the middle of an operation, avoiding misinformation is even more important. Highlight what's going well (positive stories).

Framing the protocol with introductory language explaining WDFW mission / wolf plan / human ingenuity / achievements / effort in implementing / values of endangered species / recovery / reduce loss of wolves and livestock.

One thing the department is thinking about is regular, word-of-mouth communication. Word of mouth communication must be considered, as it comes from everywhere.

Important to add photographs of the flipcharts to the WAG page along with the meeting notes.

Depredation investigations were discussed with a small department group. Staff looked at reports, training, and timelines. Reports were reviewed and compared to other states, and input was considered. Evaluated confirmed and probable. Staff does need a realistic timeline to get reports to the public. Reports were updated (content of report, etc.). Training was also reviewed for the who, what, where, and timing. Next steps are for the internal team to review, than it will be available to the public.

Accountability is something the department takes very seriously. Letting folks know what is consistently being done for various operations (documentation). The checklist and DPCA-L were reviewed, as well as status of contract range riders. Those not in a DPCA-L are still being tracked (by conflict specialists). Field staff continue to meet with producers and have that dialogue. It's good to know what the producer is doing. Discussing the summary paragraph on deterrence and the timing of what that's made public.

The trust aspect is incredibly important to the department, so making sure folks know what we're doing or thinking is paramount. Real time information to stakeholders is important as well.

Concern around the "real time" terminology. What does real time mean? Discussions are ongoing around that right now. The goal is to address that transparency and accountability piece in a realistic way.

Is there a need for a non-DPCA checklist? Understanding the culture of many producers, who may not want to enter a deal with a government agency, it would be a positive to have an informal agreement.

There is a huge value in quantifying this group of producers who aren't in contract. They aren't in formal contracts for various reasons (choice, don't need, etc.). The most important part of these is that the department is not forcing any action. These producers are doing it on their own and it is part of their plan, while the department helps. All of the work being done, from connections to nonlethal methods, out of contract is incredibly powerful. Helping people understand all that is in play in wolf management is another aspect of the communication and outreach piece. These actions are going on daily at a very high level.

Is there a way to bring what's actually going on more to light? What are these steps that are being taken? Informing the public on that could be very beneficial. To satisfy the other cultural side, it will need to be deeper than just quantifying.

That information could be included in the monthly update. This is the future and where we want to go.

Quantifying is important, but also qualifying those actions will be important. Some narrative that describes what they are will help with understanding and trust from the other side of the cultural issue.

One part of that as well is recognizing that one thing that is really good in one area won't be as good in other areas. Every operation is different. We do have to recognize as well that it has taken years to get to this point. Building trust has taken a long time. This is also linked to the communications piece, which is linked to everything done by the department. Those dots will be connected better than in the past.

Narrative is important on the producer side as well. Some of the things being done on the ground are being done because producers know they work, even if they are not included in the nonlethal protocol. Sometimes you come across something on accident that works really well. If folks are doing that and it's working, they should get credit for that.

That is what leads to continual improvement of what we're doing. If someone comes up with something that works, and someone else hears about it and tries it, that is good. That creativity is important.

The staff members in the field have not done a good job of developing that narrative of what we do. We need to improve on telling that story, and that is a goal of ours.

I'm concerned with all of the death threats during the last operation. There needs to be a balance between transparency and the death threats. Issues arise during lethal removal regarding safety. Is there a way for less transparency?

There is a bill in the senate right now that would limit certain information being released.

We all feel where that's coming from with the transparency aspect. One thing we can do is emit calmness and keep the temperature down. Cooler minds prevail. Calm messaging. As trust is gained and understanding earned, calm messaging can address that tension.

The issue is that the public does want to know about the operation. A shutdown of information increases the tension. Finding a balance is important. Documentation will help maintain the calm.

We can easily overburden the department, and if we aren't careful they could be too busy worrying about reporting information to do their jobs. Another part of this is that all of us on this WAG represent people, and it is our job to make sure that trust is there for WDFW.

There is nothing more important than personal safety. We are not going to put folks in a situation where they are afraid for their lives and the lives of their families.

Decisions on Deterrence Measures

WAG broke into small groups to discuss the approach to decisions on deterrence measures, followed by a large group discussion. Ideas the small groups considered included:

- How to ensure accountability while honoring integrity of livestock producers and WDFW/LP workload reality.
- Realities and expectations of (number/type/etc.) preventative or proactive deterrence measures. What if these are not met?
- Are expectations different if there's a history of depredations? When would you not do responsive deterrence (ramp up)?

The first point (bullet #1) asked if there was a way to make the public aware of the deterrence measures being done by livestock producers. One idea was to develop a spreadsheet for each pack. Each producer would have a check next to the deterrence measure being used. This would also better inform folks of everything in place before lethal action. This could be part of the monthly report or added to the WDFW website.

District 1 already has a spreadsheet built for the ~30 producers in the area. This could also just be provided once every year at turn out. A narrative would be better than a table, but that could include more work (concern for WDFW workload).

A broader approach could work as well (DPCA-L, checklist, etc. by pack). There is a difficulty in centralizing that information into one table or report if every conflict specialist in the state has a separate one. That data would need to be centralized somehow.

Comment: This becomes a huge workload for department staff really quick, when considered the amount of producers in the state. Could this be something largescale that is not necessarily done every year?

Comment: What folks want to know is if the depredation would be considered something in a pattern and count toward whatever the threshold might be for what we come up with. In this documentation, maybe it could be more focused on how the department knows what the producer did in order for the conditions of the protocol to be met. People are much more interested and concerned in how the conditions of the protocol were met.

Comment: This gets at the proactive versus responsive action. This would get that information out there, saying that before depredations occur, these are the things out there on the ground. Another thing to consider is that this isn't every producer on the landscape. This is large operations. Another thing to know is that this is anticipated, because funding doesn't come in until July 1. It's important to know that this is what we're anticipating, but it may look different depending on the situation. DPCA-L aren't with many of these producers because they aren't commercial producers.

Comment: Could you explain what you mean by that?

Comment: Yes. DPCA-Ls are for those operations that make over \$10,000 per year. This doesn't mean that we don't work with those smaller producers, but just that DPCA-Ls don't apply to them.

Comment: If you have the majority of the producers who are not eligible for DPCAs, the same practices might not be used, right? So that underscores why education is so important.

Comment: Yes. The point of the DPCAs is to help with that cost experienced by those producers. The DPCA doesn't necessarily drive the use of preventative measures. Just because a producer can't sign a DPCA doesn't mean we aren't meeting often and discussing nonlethal measures. Communication is still happening.

Comment: It's the same checklist used for every producer. They just might be using different tools on that checklist depending on their operation.

Comment: The environmentalist community hasn't necessarily been informed about what those informal agreements mean. Educating them on that and informing them what these mean is one aspect we can address.

Comment: I would hope we can look at that informal number as a success, as that is the future. People making adjustments on their own and finding out what the most effective things might be for their operation is a good thing.

Comment: We've talked a lot about relief for the environmental side, but we do need to address relief on the producer side as well. Who's footing the bill here?

Comment: I think that narrative aspect is going to benefit the producer side as well.

Comment: Our monthly reports are going to daylight that stuff and make it easily accessible.

Informal agreements can be called VIPMAP – Voluntary Independent Producers

Comment: The conflict specialists have relationships with these producers, and finding a way to capture that annually is a good thing. It can be powerful (monthly report inclusion?).

Comment: The deterrence plans are already there on a pack by pack basis. Could this informal plan with producers be on a pack by pack basis as well? The annual deterrence plans are really cool, and there is a lot of good information in them. Is this a slightly longer narrative that could also include what's going on with producers?

Group #2 looked at realities and expectations on deterrence measures and what if they aren't met. Clarifying and defining "sanitation" is the first step. Cleaning up someone else's mess (butchers, etc.). Is sanitation plus one a correct guide? There was discussion about having a minimum of two appropriate deterrence measures instead of sanitation plus one.

There was also an expectation that the measures actually work (change wolf behavior). Don't require items just to check a box. Translocation was also discussed, but not agreed upon.

Comment: I don't think sanitation is something to abandon. We discussed putting sanitation in appropriate context. There should be a good description of expectations and setting folks up so those expectations can be met.

Comment: Right. Sanitation is still considered, but would then be one of the two, rather than a required method. If it is an appropriate measure to implement, then it would still be included.

Comment: If folks are there regularly enough to find carcasses when they are there, sanitation is realistic. If not, it's not necessarily the best approach.

Comment: At some point, we also have to trust the conflict specialist. Conflict specialists aren't going to tell producers something just to "check a box." They are going to present the methods they feel would be most effective on that particular operation. That's a perfect example of where we need to trust the agency to do the right thing. We should all know that they're doing the best

they can. If sometime in the future there is reason to suspect that isn't the case, we can revisit it, but we have to trust the biologists to know what they're doing.

Comment: We were looking more on the expectation of effectiveness based on the expertise of the department staff.

Comment: There is an expectation that there is that dialogue between a producer and conflict specialists.

Group #3 looked whether expectations are different if there is a history of depredation.

If we think the deterrence measures are effective, then leaving them in place makes sense. If something changes, changing the deterrence approach makes sense. Responsive deterrence measures may not be needed if deterrence measures already on the ground are the most effective. If there is a history in the area, it might be effective to communicate with all producers on the landscape. There does need to be changing things out (animal husbandry).

In most situations, packs are around multiple producers. If the minimum of two measures are out on the landscape, and there is a depredation, and responsive measures are added, are those responsive measures then expected for the next year as well? For how long might those new measures be required? This is also communicated to all producers in the area.

Putting a fear of humans into wolves is a benefit.

*Reactive measures are now to be known as responsive measures.

Good husbandry practices are always good. Wolves may catch on a little more, but it's still a good measure.

Comment: It's easier to influence your herd's behavior than it is to influence wolves. You can change things on the landscape, and there is more opportunity for training herds than training wolves. Most producers are continually adapting.

Comment: We don't want to lock them into doing one thing when conditions change and they need to adapt.

Comment: Not to say that training livestock is easy, just that it's easier than training wolves.

Responsive deterrence measures are not necessarily expected forever. There would be a conversation with the conflict specialist to determine which measures are most effective. Sometimes you may not use a deterrence measure you have in hand so that it can be more impactful when you do use it.

We can't put too much on the shoulders of staff and livestock producers. It has to fit with reality and workload.

Definitions

WAG members broke into small groups again to discuss definitions. There were four groups for this discussion. Terms being defined were:

- Incremental
- "Pattern" / "Habit"
- Qualifying depredations / probables
- Proactively / appropriate sanitation

Comment: I hope that there is an understanding that we are working with definitions that need to be consistent within the Wolf Management Plan.

Comment: Yes. We are sticking with those terms as outlined in the Wolf Management Plan.

Comment: Is this where we can discuss whether or not we should include terms like probable at all?

Comment: Sticking to the Wolf Management Plan, probable is in there for compensation purposes.

The WAG members came back from the small groups and had a large group discussion.

Group #1 was incremental. Definition by small group: "After deterrence measures have not been successful and 'threshold – TBD' has been reached, AND we think that lethal removal may be an effective tool, we implement an incremental removal." An increment is a period of attempted removal followed by an evaluation period. The evaluation period is to see if you reached the goal, which is to modify or change pack behavior to minimize or prevent further depredations. Evaluation period needs to be defined.

Zero wolves removed can meet the goal. The goal is never full pack removal. Removal, if initiated, is always incremental. If zero wolves are removed, the lethal operation may not have reached the desired outcome, but the goal could still be reached.

Comment: To play Devil's advocate, what is then preventing an atmosphere where people accuse department of not trying?

Comment: Getting in a helicopter is the most dangerous thing a biologist does. It's not something anyone takes lightly.

Comment: People will demand a narrative from the department as well.

Comment: How does this resonate in those areas that are most likely to be affected?

Comment: If you announce that you are going to do wolf management to change behavior, after a pattern of bad behavior, then it should be okay. I don't need the details, or whether or not you failed. Just that wolf management is being done.

Comment: It will be up to the department and how they pre-message and post-message that. It could take a lot of work.

Comment: We wouldn't describe that as a success until we have moved into an evaluation period. It wouldn't be one and done. It would still require the evaluation period, which is where we would monitor wolf behavior.

Comment: That has to be for the pack. You can't just push it over to the neighbor and call it good.

Comment: Part of the process is attempt incremental removal, then an evaluation period, then if depredations occur again, the incremental removal continues.

Comment: Messaging as "active wolf management" could be a struggle. Without some certainty around that, it will be problematic.

Comment: If we use terms that others can see as ambiguous, that doesn't just affect the community. That affects all taxpayers in the state.

Ideas for incremental definition include:

- Phase 1: Incremental equals 1 or 2 wolves
- Phase 1: Incremental means 1 – 25% of estimated pack size
- Incremental may be different in areas with resource concern (first pack south of I-90)
- Phase 2: Incremental equaling 1 or more does not provide upper limit
 - Conservation community objects to an unknown quantity
 - 1 or more, not to exceed X?
- Also could be idea, in Phase 2, could be stated to be minimal, but sufficient to meet the goal

Comment: Speaking for myself, I feel comfortable with Phase 1 being 1 to 2 wolves, and next steps being minimal but sufficient

Comment: I think the term minimal or sufficient could leave the department open to legal trouble. I think you have to stay at some kind of numbers.

Comment: I like 1 or more because it supports the removal of every wolf that comes to that carcass. It gives flexibility and could lead to fewer wolves removed. That worked in the Blackfoot challenge.

Comment: I want to agree with that statement.

Comment: I think of the context of everything we can do on the proactive side in order to avoid getting to this step. Once we get here, what can we do to prevent going further? I was thinking flip this on its head. What if we do a heavier removal first, and do everything we can do to stop it on the first incremental. Then maybe you don't have that 2 or 3 or 4. What can we do to still leave this pack on the landscape?

Comment: Also, if we have to go back, that means we've lost more livestock. So we didn't minimize wolves and we didn't minimize livestock.

Comment: We have to know what we're basing this number on. Are we basing it on science or social acceptance?

Comment: The Bradley research is the foundation of this. There really isn't a whole lot of science to say what an appropriate number would be for incremental. We are always trying to remove the minimum amount of wolves as possible to change that behavior. The science is not clear on that.

Comment: I'm comfortable with letting the department determine that number, saying it's our number based on the current research.

Comment: The Blackfoot challenge is a great example for us to talk about in the future, but wolves are still a listed species in Washington, and we need to stay in that recovery mindset. I feel comfortable talking about a conservative first stage with the people I represent.

Comment: I would say we are plum recovered in northeast Washington, so something like the Blackfoot challenge would be acceptable there. I don't think we'll affect wolf recovery a bit.

Comment: I would disagree with that. I think if we're going to meet statewide recovery goals, we need a source of animals to disperse. They're in northeast because it's excellent wolf habitat. I also take issue with the Bradley study, because the reoccurrence of no removal was very similar to removal within seven days. As has been stated for this group, you can find science to support whatever argument you want to make when it comes to wolf recovery.

Comment: I believe the wolf plan allows us to go with this incremental approach. The wolf plan does speak heavily on minimizing the depredations. I think we have plenty of guidance to do what is said there. From a legal and scientific point of view, I think we can do this.

Comment: You hear us refer to the Bradley paper because that deals with wolf management. It also represents this huge body of gray literature from multiple states. Yes, people can pick your science, but this piece specifically looks at management and how management affects populations. If that management tool of removal happens within 14 days. This is part of the gray literature from other agencies.

Comment: My objective as a producer is to kill fewer wolves and also have my livelihood. We are kind of rehashing stuff when we need to get to the meaty bits. I hope we can get into trusting that if the department says they are going minimal, that that is what they are going to do. We have to stop locking ourselves into these boxes. Every scenario is going to be different from other scenarios.

Public Comment

First comment: I didn't see any reference in the draft protocol to when a producer has multiple years with conflict (same producer). Is there a ramp up that goes on there? It seems to me there should be some threshold for the rancher, because there certainly is for the wolves.

Second comment: The commenter read a letter for the WAG members (copies were provided to WAG members).

Third comment: How many wolf packs are there right now? (20 confirmed). Looking at the numbers, mortalities went way up in 2016. There were 14 known wolf mortalities, and we have a minimum of 115 wolves. Per the report, there were 15 cattle depredations. Per the USDA inventory of cattle for 2016, there are 1,150,000 head of cattle in the state. I feel like my culture is not being respected, as a Native American. I see no respect whatsoever. I traveled over 3 hours to get here. We seem to hit this wall every single year. It's not necessary to do lethal removal. The problem is that cattle are on public lands that have wolves near them. We would be able to avoid wasting hours of people's time. Why are you still allowing people to graze cattle on our public lands? There is a way to solve this. It's common sense.

Fourth comment: On the subject of culture, I hear what you're saying on the culture of rural communities. I grew up in rural Iowa. I get that piece. I want to make the point that everyone in this room has a culture. Let's be clear that wolves also have culture. Scientists tell us that wolves have culture. While we talk about how we can coexist, let's keep that out there also. Yesterday, we sent a letter from our organization and six others to the department, Donny, and the Director. I see movement on some things, but stalling on others. I will read some parts of the letter for you. The letter was read, highlighting different parts of wolf management (copies were provided to WAG members). There should be evening meetings instead of meetings during the day. We also believe these issues need to be discussed under SEPA. We really hope this protocol contains that site-specific aspect. We think that lethal control should not be triggered before more than 4 depredations in one season. Look to the seasons and how things change

over the season. Compare wolf depredations in Oregon and Washington. Many packs in both states have depredated, but then moved on without the issue becoming chronic. The department needs to be as transparent as possible.

Fifth comment: Stuff seems so conceptual that it's hard to comment with something meaningful. It seems very backwards, and deprives us of opportunity. I hope there is another opportunity to comment tomorrow before everything is finalized.

Sixth comment: I second that. It's really hard to know what to say when everything is still in discussion. I will be back tomorrow, and I hope that you all can get it done.

Seventh comment (same as person as comment three): I appreciate that there are some responsible livestock producers who do things the right way. I just know that, coming from a public standpoint, this was all over the media. I have 53,000 followers on Twitter, and there will be a huge public outrage if lethal removal is done. This is not the way you want to run a business. People will boycott beef. It would be to everybody's benefit to make sure livestock is not anywhere near the forest, and make sure all deterrents are used. Make sure all of those things are considered before going to lethal removal.

Meeting Adjourned

Wolf Advisory Group Meeting Notes
March 30, 2017
DoubleTree

WAG Members: Shawn Cantrell, Tim Coleman, Don Dashiell, Tom Davis, Dave Duncan, Diane Gallegos, Molly Linville, Dan Paul, Mark Pidgeon, Paula Swedeen, Nick Martinez, Dan McKinley

WDFW Staff: Donny Martorello, Candace Bennett, Ellen Heilhecker, Joey McCanna, Steve Pozzanghera, Trent Roussin, Stephanie Simek, Kevin Robinette, Robert Waddell, Bruce Botka, Kile Westerman, John Cotton, Joseph Bridges, John Cotton, Kile Westerman, Matthew Trendera

Third Party Neutral: Francine Madden

Welcome

The third party neutral welcomed everyone to the second day of the meeting.

Definitions

The WAG members continued with the discussion on definitions. Group #2 was "Pattern/Habit." Pattern was defined as a repetitive behavior in the draft protocol, and habit was defined as tendency that is hard to give up.

The discussion was around how pattern and habit are similar, and whether or not habit is even needed. When looking for pattern, you can watch cows and see if they are "amped up." Longer periods of time complicate the issue and make it harder to determine if patterns exist.

If wolves and livestock are in close proximity and there are no depredations, that is not a pattern. Examples of what is a pattern could be listed in the protocol.

If there is a depredation every couple months, it may be difficult to call that a pattern. Plus, it may be difficult to implement responsive methods. More than depredations contribute to a pattern.

Comment: I don't remember us saying depredation every couple months wouldn't be a pattern. I think it was more over 2 years.

Comment: Spatial context plays a role as well. There could a pattern in a situation when wolves and livestock are in close proximity and depredations occur, then they are not close and depredations stop, then they get close again and depredations continue.

Comment: Just by moving cows throughout the allotments, or if wolves start using a different location. The piece of overlap of livestock and wolves and what happens when they are close needs to be considered.

Comment: Somehow we have to get rid of numbers and let the active management take place. Numbers don't do any favors for either side.

Comment: I think biologists who do the research on this can help us learn what conditions create that pattern. You put enough pieces together, you are going to see things that occur in every depredation occurrence. Also, we don't want to bring the term "negative" into play when discussing patterns, because then positive patterns can never be discussed.

Comment: We did discuss some number scenarios that tried to take into account the short-term pattern. We tried to put some parameters on short-term chronic patterns. We were trying to take into account multi-year incidents that do not constitute a pattern, while other multi-year incidents may constitute a pattern.

Group #3 discussed qualifying depredations/probables. Candace did an analysis of all depredations since 2013. There was only one that did not include hemorrhaging. So a definition could be all of those other factors, and hemorrhaging, it can be confirmed. Without the hemorrhaging, it's probable. When the department says probable, it means 95 percent sure, not 51 percent.

Comment: If you can recall in the Wolf Management Plan, confirmed and probable are defined specifically. This is going kind of above and beyond that. We had a good group, with a lot of experience within and without the state, to help determine this definition. Probable and confirmed are up at the top, while every other definition is further down. I think we're at a level with confirmed where there's a way higher standard sometimes.

Comment: In the wolf plan, it says hemorrhaging does not have to be present to be confirmed. We are going above and beyond that to say that confirmed has to include hemorrhaging. Probable is everything except hemorrhaging. That report Candace did included 78 depredations, and every confirmed except one included the hemorrhaging. We were remarkably consistent.

Comment: And I only took what was in the reports at face value. In our reports now, we have narratives. Across different investigators, the reports were very consistent.

Comment: Can you talk about why there is not hemorrhaging?

Comment: And without that hemorrhaging, you can't prove the wolf killed the animal, right? They may have been at the carcass after the death.

Comment: That is correct.

Comment: Can you discuss other factors that allow you to answer a question about how you know it was a wolf and not something else?

Comment: It is bite marks, the location of the bite marks, tracks, signs of struggle, collars, bone status, scat, hair, and more. It's a whole scene investigation. The actual scene is analyzed as well. Not just the carcass. The animal is the last thing you examine. It's a crime scene. Is it a part of a pattern? The only thing missing in those probabilities was the hemorrhaging.

Candace read the definition from the wolf plan for reference.

Comment: It is also always at least two people doing the determination. Sometimes it's way more than that.

Comment: For the record, I'm not a fan of the word "probable." I think it's gray area, and I think it opens the door to stir the pot. I think what would help a lot is to put a bottom amount on that definition. If 91.7% is probable (without hemorrhaging), that needs to be the bottom. I think that would help a lot, because that really defines what you're talking about. It takes away the wondering part. It's everything but hemorrhaging. If hemorrhaging is there but something else is not, that's unconfirmed.

Comment: I'm not a fan of going down to tenths of a percent. I'm more a fan of the current investigation reports.

Comment: We also discussed how it's hard to have this by itself as well. It pairs with the patterns and other factors. There are a lot of factors there that are associated with the investigations. Twelve is kind of the target number.

Comment: It doesn't have to be a tenth of a percent, but I think there needs to be a bottom on probable. People are going to want that proof, as much as it can be. Having that value would be good.

Comment: Also defining what unknown is. Defining what is below probable is good as well. I also wanted to compliment the small team that worked on this, because it feels incredibly thorough and comprehensive.

The definitions of unconfirmed or unknown from the Wolf Management Plan were read.

Comment: The question did come up concerning what is our bottom line, but we ran out of time to discuss it.

Comment: I'm thinking from the WAG member perspective, we need to defend the actions done. People want more data, and they want something more concrete.

Comment: I think it's also helpful to know that of all 78 animals we looked at, we've only had nine probables. Five were last year.

Comment: In the past, when we've seen a pattern, is there a higher likelihood of probables there? It seems like, if there is a pattern, the likelihood of probables is higher.

Comment: I think it's important to know that the discussion on the hillside takes place, but we will not be swayed. This is a serious thing, and we stand our ground on our determination.

Comment: I feel very differently depending on why it is that we are dissecting probable. If we are doing this to more easily go to lethal, I feel very different than if we are talking probable for compensation purposes.

Comment: I don't see this as going towards lethal faster. Because they haven't in the past. That's what we've used in the field. We just want to make the right decision. The other stuff is out of our minds. We are wanting to make the best decision we can based on the evidence in the field.

Comment: I have a concern that it's actually hard on the wolves if we are not counting probable. Are the probables going to lead us to where the problem started small and maybe we could have addressed it, but the probables make it so we don't react fast enough and then we have a bigger problem. I worry that sometimes counting probables allows time to go on and allows the problem to escalate.

Comment: The issue of probable that is nagging me is the impact on the producer as far as compensation. Is it full value and half value with probable?

Comment: Half value of two, which is full value of one, and more than 100 acres.

Comment: I think it's important to remember the potential impact of under 100 acres on livestock producers. But it also says based on staff's judgement. I'm just concerned a little about financial impacts.

Comment: There was concern that if you don't count probables in the pattern, it could make the situation worse. There was the item we brought up last year saying responsive measures need to be on the ground for a specific amount of time to see if they worked. So if you counted probables, you could get to a contradiction in the protocol by avoiding that part where we're supposed to see if the responsive measures are working. We also have to consider if we had enough time for the responsives to work as well.

Comment: Then after the ramp up occurs, do you count the probables after the ramp up if the next one is probable?

Comment: That is definitely a discussion to be had.

Comment: The plan does talk about repeated depredations without saying confirmed or probable. That's why the draft document we put out is paired up with saying there has to be confirmed cases there. Also, from the department's perspective, we're thinking about it early in terms of it being a part of an existing pattern. It's not a different time or place, but it's being a part of what's going on.

Comment: In our mind, confirmed is going to the court and saying this was definitely murder, while probable is manslaughter. That's the difference.

Comment: So is the proposal right now is that a probable is everything except hemorrhaging?

Comment: Yes.

Comment: And that is what the department is comfortable with?

Comment: Yes. We have all of those factors are there to lead us toward confirmed, but that hemorrhaging is not there.

Comment: So more like, probable does not include hemorrhaging.

Comment: Yes.

Group #4 discussed Proactive and appropriate sanitation. We went after appropriate sanitation first. Sanitation is to reduce the attraction on the landscape and reduce the probability of livestock and wolves interacting. Basic requirements are removing carcasses (bury, incinerate, etc.). It was also ensuring producers are only responsible for their own livestock. If someone dumps carcasses on the land, the producer shouldn't have to be responsible for that. Ensuring pastures you are moving into are clear. When moving to one allotment to the next, if you are in close proximity to the previous allotment, make sure that area is clean as well. Producers are also not responsible for things such as wild animals dying on the ground. This is what WDFW is recommending, recognizing that there are other parameters depending on the landowner.

Comment: Why do we care about sanitation? So, when this first came up, the reason was because there was concern that if a carcass was on the landscape, wolves would prey on the carcass and then be attracted to livestock. Our research has suggested that isn't the case. Where we are at, as USFS, is that we think there is a need to do something with carcasses where there's a likelihood of bringing wolves into an area where livestock are going to be around. If that isn't the case, sanitation isn't as important.

Comment: I think that's what we were trying to capture here as well. Where the livestock are, that's where you need to worry about any attractant that will bring wolves in.

Comment: Where sanitation fits in the protocol and those private lands are places where sanitation is applicable, then I think in those areas where producers don't use it, I hope that's considered before going to lethal removal. Also, is it illegal to attract a nuisance intentionally?

Comment: Yes, but if they are using that attractant to hunt coyotes, for example, then it is not illegal.

Comment: Even so, I hope that's considered, and if that attracts wolves, those depredations then cannot count.

Comment: The whole regulating that producers aren't responsible for other carcasses seems ridiculous to me. It seems like common sense to me. If there are gut piles on my land that are attracting predators, I'm going to clean it up.

Comment: I think one thing is when you're talking about thousands of acres, you may not even know that the carcass is there.

Comment: And it does make a difference if it's private land or public land as well. Some lands are used a lot more than others, for example.

Comment: I think we're wasting time discussing sanitation when it's such a small part of a producer operation. It's not going to be the thing that bumps the department into management action.

Comment: I've heard different though. I've heard instances that cleaning up can prevent issues with wolves. I just need to acknowledge that where there are bone piles, that can attract wolves. I'm not saying it's everything or the be-all, end-all. However, if there isn't deliberate action there, it could be an issue, and I just want to make sure we acknowledge it as an action.

Comment: This is a year round situation and not just a summer grazing thing. In the context of that, it could be a different conversation.

Proactive management is defined in the draft protocol as deterrence measures are in place for a specific amount of time before depredations carry on. It should be that deterrence measures are in place prior to a confirmed depredation. This would eliminate the specific amount of time aspect.

Comment: I think that is right and I think it's difficult to define what specific amount of time.

Comment: And this is proactive management. We need to acknowledge that these things are on the landscape prior to an event. We should then be ready to monitor the situation and help beef up things if needed.

Comment: In some allotments, those things can't be there for a specific amount of time, and producers shouldn't be blamed for that.

Comment: We also discussed how a landscape littered with deterrence measures because animals could then be normalized to that landscape.

Comment: Also, sufficient time should be right when you put them out. So, the first day you put them out should be the best day, because research shows they work better earlier than later.

Comment: The exception, I think, where the proactive measure might not work immediately is sanitation. If there is a bone pit that has attracted wolves, fencing it off might not change that after the first day. There might be a lag time after that.

Comment: If the den site is close, the proactives may not work immediately as well.

Comment: It wouldn't be the immediacy in that case, it would be the other factors in that situation.

Comment: Is human presence something where you go out on this landscape and it should immediately have an effect?

Comment: That seems more responsive, but there would be some delay if a pattern is there. The idea of a range rider is herd management, and they should be able to sense that knowing the herd. That is the effectiveness of the range rider, because they can adjust in managing that herd.

Comment: I saw it proactively because it's happening before the depredation.

Comment: If that's the case, it would definitely be proactive. This year, we do have some money to help people get going. Hopefully funding will come through July 1 to help with that.

Comment: This is not about punishing a producer. This is about finding out, with an endangered species, if we have a problem or if we don't. And also, what works.

Comment: Proactively means the deterrence measures are in place prior to the confirmed wolf depredation. That's where that definition should end. All the other language just further complicates it.

Comment: I'm a little confused about range riding. I've heard a couple different definitions. One was that range riders influence how the cattle move, but others have said it's just human presence. Is it both of those things?

Comment: Yes is the short answer, but we are searching for folks who know livestock (experts) and know how to identify wolf scat and tracks. We want them to work with the producers.

Comment: I agree that range rider needs to be choked down to something that doesn't include herd management or forage evaluation. Range rider is a term formed by WDFW. The industry uses cowboy or producer. No one calls loggers lumberjacks, for example.

Comment: I wouldn't expect somebody who has just gone through the training to know all of those things about my herd. I think there's a bell curve we aren't discussing. We can't expect one person on the side of the bell curve to have the same skills as someone who has developed those skills over a lifetime. The less experienced is still valuable, but shouldn't be held to the same standard as the producer or a hired hand, for example.

Comment: We wanted range riders to work with the producer and the conflict specialist. In many cases, that person is the person on the ground for that producer. They should be able to notice a shift in the herd and be able to notify the producer that something may be going on. Our goal is to have the range rider help manage that livestock herd.

Comment: The only time the range rider is moving a herd is when he or she is working directly with the producer or the hired workers. Individual cows may be moved in the event they break out of a pasture or something like that.

Comment: I think the concern comes from what the definition means, and what the producers and others are doing to help the cows to the best of their abilities.

Comment: The contract that Conservation Northwest has with range riders we cost-share with the department, there is language in there to use collar data and other information in order to be as effective as possible.

Comment: Comparing that contract with the department's contract might be beneficial in the definition.

Comment: What's the range rider expectation? Are they there every day? Three or four times every week?

Comment: Maybe we need to clarify in the protocol that the producer or the hired hand is on the ground full time, and they should get consideration for that.

Comment: When we do our checklist, if the producer has a hired hand on the ground, or is doing the work, then we consider that to count as a proactive measure.

Comment: Does that need to be defined ahead of time? Because then you hear pushback from folks saying they weren't on the ground enough.

Comment: It's hard to define because it doesn't ever get talked about until after an action takes place. The producers appreciate that the department acknowledges that work going into the operations.

Lethal Considerations

The WAG members broke into small groups to discuss the following regarding lethal considerations:

- Probables count? If so, how?
- Do you/how do you honor a pattern in a protocol (variables, numbers, other)
- Time – how/when do you account for time in determining patterns/ingrained?

Group #1 discussed whether probables count and if so, how they count. The group went through a lot of different things to consider. The count should honor the goal, pattern, and fewer wolves and livestock deaths. Things considered for all options:

- Pack size
- History of depredation
- Deterrence measures met? (Yes)
- Timespan short (example: within 6 weeks of confirmed)
- Recovery area status (local)
 - If also with 1 confirmed kill
 - Part of known pattern

Policy ideas that arose from this include:

1. Within a year, having 4 depredations, with a minimum of 2 confirmed (at least 1 kill). Concern that this means going earlier 10 percent of the time).
2. With pack history (when lethal removal action was done the previous year), 2 depredations (1 confirmed kill)
 - After 1 confirmed, lethal is implemented, because technically they would have met confirmed kill the previous year.
3. With a pack with a history of depredations, but didn't reach the lethal removal action, it would be 3 depredations (1 confirmed kill)
 - Another suggestion was 2 depredations (1 confirmed kill)

These ideas include the goals, patterns, and no lethal direction we want to go.

Comment: With #1, I'm not understanding the 4 deprecations. Are you saying probables would only count with a total of 4, but 2 have to be confirmed?

Comment: 2 could be confirmed, and 2 could be probable. At least 1 has to be a kill. The 1 kill has to be confirmed.

Comment: On #2, this also includes having proactive deterrents out there as well?

Comment: Yes. Whatever we come up with, it's meeting those expectations.

Comment: If there's not a confirmed kill, even if there was the year before, we can't go to lethal removal.

Comment: I feel like, for some, that will feel like taking a step backwards based on last year's protocol.

Comment: I would agree with that. What if the deterrents on the ground prevent the death? I feel a confirmed deprecation, paired with the past history of the year before, is enough.

Comment: We also have to have deterrents that are a ramp up.

Comment: We've talked about confirmed deprecations. How often do confirmed injuries occur?

Comment: There have been 18 since 2013. Most of them still had that standard of the hemorrhaging. This being the line, it has to have that.

Comment: There are moving parts in the considerations that have not be finalized yet.

Comment: I want to push back on the "stepping back" from last year. I think everything we change here can be received as a roll back. Some folks will say counting probables is a roll back from last year.

Comment: That's fair, and is also true.

Comment: On #3, it would be difficult in some communities.

Comment: I think 3 is too high, if we want to avoid another Profanity situation.

Comment: This would move to lethal earlier because we're counting something that didn't count before. I really do want to see more definition on the space and time on the probables

related to the confirmed. If we went with that option, we are moving much earlier than previous protocols.

Comment: On this one, you have to have 3 depredations, of which 1 has to be confirmed.

Comment: That could be 3 or 4 confirmed over two years. If that is what we go with, it could be earlier.

Comment: It could also be 5 confirmed before we go to lethal management.

Comment: If you go on history, the probabilities are a small number. That is the reality.

Comment: If that is the reality, why can't we have that reality written in? Could we make it 1 probable, if that's what the reality says it will be?

Comment: I agree. We're looking like we're weighing probabilities very high, but really we are not.

Comment: You're looking at this as part of the pattern.

Comment: If it's such a small number, why are we putting so much energy into it? My community doesn't like 2 years instead of looking at every year. We have the safeguards with a compensation program. What is the urgency of counting probabilities?

Comment: It gets to the goal. The goal is to break that pattern of behavior.

Comment: You've all talked about these unique situations. It's important to try to come up with a protocol that has enough certainty, but also has the flexibility and adaptability to upset that pattern and minimize wolf deaths and livestock deaths.

Comment: One big piece for me is that when lethal is used as a tool, it is used in a way that prevents the most loss of life possible. This feels like it might give a better shot at fewer cows dead and fewer wolves dying.

Comment: The goal as it is in the plan says minimize depredations. It's not just recovery. To me, my marching orders go back to the wolf plan. That is my goal sitting here today. Minimize depredations. Everyone loses when we have situations like Profanity.

Group #2 discussed honoring patterns in a protocol. Considerations for patterns included variables, such as:

- Pack size
- Time

- Previous years/history
- Level of preventatives
- Risk to population
- Risk to livestock

All of these things need to be considered when determining patterns.

Rate of depredations is important when considering patterns. The rate is different than a background level. It's something we haven't seen in previous years. Is there a new rate and new level of predictability? Once the predictability is there, you are getting a pattern. If you have deterrence measures on the ground that should be working, but the pattern continues, that's when you have to consider other options.

One is not a pattern. Two is a little cloudy. Two could be a pattern. Three could be a pattern, but there is a recognition that sometimes there are three and then it stops. If you have three, and deterrence measures aren't changing behavior, review what has been tried. Do we see signs that behavior could change?

The decision to go to lethal is at least partly based on deterrence measures aren't working, the ramp up has been ineffective, and we see this super high risk factor. That might constitute a pattern, and may justify moving to action sooner.

We also wanted to make sure there is active intervention before these numbers are even reached. We did talk about having 4 depredations in a six month rolling window, rather than separating by year. You don't go back to zero when you hit that six months. We also realized that it doesn't capture when behavior is established in prior years. Will that escalate into a chronic pattern that may be difficult to stop even with lethal intervention?

Comment: When we have packs where everything is being done that could be done, I don't see much difference besides having more deliverables on a non-depredating pack.

Realizing that there may be multiple sets of factors involved, we put all of those down on the page. This includes:

- Number of depredations within a year (or rolling window)
 - Within current season
- Were there depredations the year before?
 - Two years ago?
 - Three years ago?
- Pack size
 - Bigger packs have higher risk of depredations
- What is the level of preventatives
 - High level would be consideration

- Are you at regional recovery goals?
 - Risk to population
- Multi-year set of depredations considered pattern?
 - What would constitute a pattern across multiple years?
 - Recognizing that a pattern seems to exist when wolves and livestock overlap
 - Do depredations resume when pack and livestock are in close proximity
 - May want to move quickly to address that pattern.
 - What wouldn't be a pattern, for example, is having a depredation at the end of the grazing season, then removing livestock, then putting them back on and they are there for a month or two months. After those months, another depredation occurs. That is not necessarily a pattern.

This chart was put up to explain the complexity. It made it easier for some to understand over saying something like, "We might go sooner if there's a pattern."

Comment: It's a way to think about different scenarios in a matrix format. It's a way to explain the decision-making process and all of the things you have to consider when making that decision.

Comment: Theoretically, you could have a pack killing one or two livestock every year. Is that a pack that would qualify for lethal action?

Comment: I think if you have all of those deterrence measures (gold standard plus even more), then I think so. If they are doing a halfway job, I might say no.

Comment: The one or two every year, if we go to lethal, does that meet our goal of changing behavior? I don't think it does. It's impossible to know which wolf, and so on.

Comment: I think we have to acknowledge that this is a hard question. It's really hard. Perhaps one more consideration is that there is the high level of preventatives on the ground, there's still two, and it looks like there's this high risk of depredations continuing.

Comment: That looks different to me than the other scenarios.

Comment: If it's acute and significant, I feel like we're going to see that. If a producer's quality of life is toast because of keeping up this high level, that's another thing and we need to consider that. If you do lethal after one or two (with history of one or two each year), does that just disrupt the pack and make it worse? I don't know.

Comment: We've talked about how hard it is to develop a policy that fits everything and we're kind of on a bell curve. The thing is, on the tail end of that bell curve we have some really important things.

Comment: I think it's clear that on one hand, everyone recognizes the unique factors of these situations, and at the same time we are striving to develop standards that are precise. It feels like that can set up a cycle of frustration. Every time we try to be precise, reality intervenes. Somehow the cycle needs to be interrupted. Maybe more generalized statements in the protocol with some kind of reference to things we considered for each point.

Comment: Maybe we have a clause in there that says something like we know situations will arise, and maybe that means calling an emergency meeting with the WAG to make a decision with the agency. We can't have a 90-day public comment period when those decisions need to be made within 1-3 days.

Comment: I like the idea of trying to capture that bell curve and then trying to catch those important details on the other end. A little push back on the meeting idea. That sets everyone up for some failure throughout the year. We talked about having a protocol that we can stick to and policy we can follow throughout the course of the year. Those check ins do not work for the agency.

Group #3 discussed time in determining patterns. One item that came up a lot was acute events. It seemed like we needed a shorter timeframe to respond to those events.

For some producers, the home isn't a long way away from the allotments. Like other groups, we gravitated to some options. These included:

- Keep existing (4 in one year, 6 in two years)
 - Add acute provision (3 in 30 days/2 months/3 months?)
- 3 depredations in 3 months (while livestock are on the landscape)
 - Taking out the time when livestock and wolves are not interacting
 - Producers off allotments
 - No interaction between pack and herd
- 4 depredations in 4-5 months
- Department will review history of having wolves on the landscape in Washington

Comment: Probably one in 100 producers have an allotment. Others just have landscape. Not all problems are on allotments.

Comment: I gravitate to the first option because it builds on what we already have. Adding the while the livestock are on the landscape piece to that could work. In one perspective, the 3 has a shorter time period, but from the other side, it is something sooner if it is within that shorter time period.

Comment: That only works if probables count.

Comment: With the 3 in 3 months, but not having those months be consecutive, is that a pattern? I think the 4 in 6 months might do that a little better, because those months are consecutive, and you don't have those situations where it's only capturing a part. You've got the rolling window, and the ability to capture a pattern is still there. You don't go back to zero at the end of the window. The 6 month rolling window would also capture the acute.

Comment: Capturing the acute is my main concern right now, and tightening up that window seems to be the main thing.

Comment: I like option #3 the best. It has no numbers, and it allows the department to use the best data available and go from there.

Comment: I have enough trust in the department to go to something like option #3. I still have a concern about whether the department can defend something like that. My favorite options are always to back Donny and back staff and see where it gets us. Provided we keep to the goal.

Comment: We don't have to haggle over numbers and whether probabilities count.

Comment: There is something appealing about saying the department can go figure it out. I do agree coming up with numbers is hard, but I also feel like it's punting a bit. My primary concern is the pressure that would put on the department. Without having something tangible that we can all agree to, I think that's just too much public pressure on the department.

Comment: I'm more willing to let the department take on that pressure.

Comment: I really appreciate what was just said, but when we had the internal dialogue on this, that's why we didn't fill in the blanks. It feels good to have the trust you have in us, but there are millions of other people out there, and they may not be ready for that uncertainty. If there is something to give the department, in narrative form, that describes something as far as a direction.

Comment: My first criteria would be to stay within the wolf plan.

Comment: I feel like we can get to a number that still gives us some flexibility. I think counting the probabilities allows that. I'm not comfortable with number 3 just because that data hasn't been reviewed yet. I think we have to come up with a number. I think down the line, we won't need that number, but right now I think we need it. I think it protects everyone, including the producers.

Comment: I don't think we are at a point yet where we can give that freedom to the department.

Comment: It's important to know that when that data is reviewed, that sample size is small. It would be helpful, but I don't want to hang our hats on it.

Comment: These little scenarios that keep getting brought up are also a small sample size. We keep getting hung up on these small events.

Comment: The problem with a number is that it is considered a trigger. If there's no number, it allows you to determine which actions you can take.

Comment: Comparing other models from states where there are completely different range situations. I would also like to put a vote into the rolling window. It's more adaptive and flexible at dealing with a pattern than the current standard.

Comment: This is a real opportunity to build trust in communities that have no trust in the department. And it could create long-term trust. If you can build trust with the producers in this system, that is a plus. That's a community where there isn't a lot of trust. That could be the biggest reason to give freedom to the department.

Comment: We definitely compare data with other places. We do that all the time. The problem there is that the answer does not jump off the page. If there was a dataset there that clearly defines what to do here, we wouldn't even be having this discussion right now. But the problems we are discussing right now will not be solved by that data.

Comment: We just aren't going to get a protocol that pleases everyone. If we get into the weeds, we are never going to develop an answer and we'll be stuck.

Comment: We are an advisory group, and I don't want us to be seen in a negative light.

Comment: On the issue of trust, based on the messages and correspondence I receive, the trust isn't there on either side. If we get over-descriptive, that isn't a way to build trust.

Comment: The other things discussed yesterday was that there would be increased transparency and better documentation throughout. If that is still in place, and all of those bases are covered, and we have a sense of the range the department would consider, do we still have opportunity to provide input as individual groups? When we honored our commitment to WAG by coming out in support of the protocol and the department last year, it was met with a lot of push back from our communities. I'm a little bit more comfortable if all of that transparency discussed yesterday is in place.

Comment: We are in a space right now where there isn't a lot of trust in the department. Those of us close to the department trust them now, but I can't say I did six years ago. But it's not there elsewhere. If the department had a say, do you want no numbers? Would you rather have something that flexible?

Comment: I think a range would be nice.

Comment: What kind of range are we looking at?

Comment: A range with some examples and some dialogue about the range is a place where we could operate. We would carry that pressure, but is the rest of society ready for that? It looks something like that matrix, and so many different factors would go into decisions. There are a handful of situations where two depredations would be move us to lethal action.

Comment: So how can we adjust the protocol to give you that flexibility? It seems to be going from simple to more complex.

Comment: There are so many factors involved that it's difficult to do.

The example of Smackout was given to explain a situation where different factors are in play.

Comment: The rolling window concerns me due to research I've been told about that says quicker action is a better way to stop that behavior sooner. If there's data for the window, then I am there, but until I see that I don't think I can support it.

Comment: The more we talk, the more I feel strongly about capturing acute cases.

Comment: We're talking about letting the department have a shot at this for six months, all the while with heavy transparency and thorough reports. After that, we can assess the situation and change things if changes are needed.

Comment: Keep in mind that we do have an internal team, and most of them are not here. I was hoping we'd get something from WAG that we can take back to that team. I do appreciate the confidence placed in the department, but I'm not sure we are there with the public yet. The review of data was put up there to address that acute provision.

Comment: One idea I think is to have some staff work on bringing this all together in a version like a matrix that takes everything into account so people have some certainty about how we make decisions, and then another group of staff handling what it looks like if that trust is given to the agency, developing a narrative about how we would treat case by case.

Comment: It would be a number range, but it would also give flexibility to use different variables and data. It would allow the department to flesh out what that looks like.

Comment: The acute pattern doesn't seem to be controversial to me. I don't think there's disagreement when you get a lot of depredations in a short amount of time. There should be action there. If we go to the "trust the department" model, and we're thinking about a range,

the clearest explanation we can come up with in how to make a distinction on when or when not to go to lethal action early. We've had packs where acute was there, but we've also had packs that will depredate once or twice and then be okay after that.

Comment: I just wanted to throw out a rolling six months, with four depredations in that six months, and acute considerations built in, could cover all the bases. I've heard from my community that the two year plan doesn't work for them.

Comment: I would like the department staff to look at all of these options and put together a draft statement for us over lunch. I don't need to see all of the checklist stuff. I was thinking you could combine all that and we could comment and give feedback that you can then take back with you. Use your judgement to combine these together and give us a statement that gives what you need. I personally feel like that is the best for producers, environmentalists, and everyone in between.

Lunch Break

Protocol Development

Donny expressed how proud he was of everyone in the room and presented what the department came up with over the lunch break.

They started with the acute, with 3 depredations in 30 days. The 30 days is a rolling window. Meeting expectations for 2 appropriate deterrence measures (agreed on by WDFW and the producer) and responsive deterrence measures. Depredation includes at least 1 confirmed kill and may include 1 probable. This is unless removal is a resource concern (management goals).

Chronic: 4 depredations in a rolling 10 month window. Meeting expectations for 2 appropriate deterrence measures (agreed on by WDFW and the producer) and meeting expectations for responsive deterrent measures. Depredations must include at least 1 confirmed kill and may include 1 probable. This is unless removal is a resource concern (management goal).

Comment: Given current status of populations, but assuming no federal restrictions when this goes into effect, would the areas south of I-90 be the resource concerns?

Comment: Yes, because those areas are below the recovery goals. So that would entail pulling the team together, discussing options, and covering every aspect before moving forward with any action.

Comment: You conveyed to me that you and staff were having conversations with USFS about coordination. To me that's an area where the department is paying attention and being sensitive to the public lands issue. Could you speak to that?

Comment: We have had those conversations in the past. Do we need to pick a date in time (we've talked about including USFS on a monthly update)? Checking in and outlining people we'd like to make contact with. This comes back to formalizing our communications piece outside the agency and with the forest service.

Comment: Did that include if you had den site locations early on?

Comment: Yes. We had the discussion about if we have sensitive information about wolves, we would share that with the Colville National Forest.

Comment: We are planning to do that in each of the forests with wolf packs this year. We are taking the exact same approach in the Umatilla and Okanogan.

Comment: Coverage and the use of human presence on allotment landscapes is a topic as well. Regular human presence and husbandry practices is a preferred deterrent. That is increasing and becoming more and more complete every year. There are still places where we need human presence. This is a planning state right now. We need to know our budget and our contract range rider situation. With that information, coverage is increasing every year, more folks are wanting to participate in DPCA-Ls, and more folks want range riders. There will be more coverage. We will still have holes, but more coverage will be there.

Comment: We want to focus on the quality, not quantity. The folks who know livestock are the ones bringing the most value.

Comment: We can't put that out firmly right now, but we are working on it and planning for it.

Comment: One additional piece that I think is implied already, but collar data will show if a rendezvous site has moved, for example. So sharing that data would help as well.

Comment: The big part there is us trying to be better about that communication. And that comes from both sides, as we are working as a team. We will talk throughout the summer, not just up to June.

Comment: That goes both ways. We talk about GPS data and all that. If people are out with livestock, they are probably going to notice that rendezvous site moving before we do. It takes about a week or so before you can really tell if the pack has moved. It's hard to tell right away. The communication both ways is critical.

Comment: How does this cover packs with history.

Comment: In the sense of the chronic piece, with the rolling window of 10 months. Say there's 2 in August, then you have 2 the next June. That would be covered under that rolling window.

Comment: The acute helps with that as well. Something that meets the Chronic outline could meet the Acute situation first. We also tried to incorporate pieces of everything we've heard from WAG members and the public. That diversity of opinion is how we got here. We've tried to incorporate all of it.

Comment: So these both lead to lethal?

Comment: Consideration, yes. We've talked over the last few months about all involved with that. Communications, discussions, patterns, etc.

Comment: We have to strive to do a better job of answering the questions, "Why?" There's a rationale behind these decisions, and we have to commit to getting that message out.

Comment: As we're talking about public assets being involved in this, as well as terrain issues. The timing issue is a factor. What we have now is 4 in 12. What you're saying is 4 in 10, as an improvement. It's difficult to go back and say this is better. Pack dispersal, pack changes, weather, prey bases, and more play roles from year to year.

Comment: I think we're looking at more of a pattern here though. We would see the pattern from when they left to when they are back on again. So if we see something in June, then nothing until the following June, that wouldn't qualify under the chronic piece.

Comment: We talked about acceptable losses. If you have 2 in September, then nothing, then something happens the following September, but they've been living on that same range all summer, that wouldn't really be a pattern. We're talking about leaving at the end of the grazing period after 2, then coming back and right away getting more. That could be the pattern and action may need to be taken.

Comment: At that stage, it's the goal statement. Change the behavior of wolves and minimizing depredations while promoting recovery.

Comment: I think this is a good step towards us wanting to put more trust in the department. This goes to the why. This doesn't say we're going to lethal. This says that after these steps, lethal is a tool in the toolbox. It may be the producers who have to trust the department when they say, "We can't call this a pattern." On the other side, it would have to be the environmentalists who trust the department when that pattern is there and the lethal tool is used.

Comment: And we always referred back to our goal while developing this too.

Comment: I don't think we should try to micromanage the department too much. I would prefer to just hand the department the goal, and offer support when we can. If mistakes are made, that happens. I do it every day. We'll just try not to do that again.

Comment: I agree, but I can think of exceptions already that might get you in trouble. A smaller operation wouldn't consider two cows every year an acceptable loss. It's pretty acute to that producer. Also, there's that part where you don't really know what you're missing until they don't show up. I'm not sure how you include those in. Maybe count them in the chronic. If you have two confirmed, then find that five more are missing in December.

Comment: We talked about this a lot amongst staff, and there's just no scenario where we are going to catch everything.

Comment: I agree.

Comment: I just wanted to say that if you feel micromanaged by this, then you should have chosen something different.

Comment: We highly value that stakeholder input, and this is our best attempt at putting that all together.

Comment: We are willing to work with everyone, but we want that sense of fairness, and are we doing what we can to be responsible? I'm amazed at what the department came up with, because I think it covers it.

Comment: Did you consider 2 months instead of 30 days? Sometimes it's harder to find the stuff that's going on. Do you have a finger on the pulse of what's going on?

Comment: We started at a much longer time. We looked at data from our investigations, and it didn't matter if it was 30 days or 3 months. It was the same. If it doesn't fit in the acute model, it fits in the chronic model.

Comment: And that is a rolling 30 days.

Comment: Yesterday there was a comment from the public asking for input before we make a final recommendation. Would that be something we want to pursue?

The third party neutral wanted to gauge the temperature of WAG members first on the topic. She went over the goals for wolf management, as well as the communications goals set out by the department. This includes the monthly reports, highlighting positive stories, and moving to weekly reports in the event of a lethal operation. Documentation is also a major part of this. Accountability, transparency, and timeliness all have emphasis.

A minimum of two appropriate deterrence measures on the ground (department works with the producer to determine best fits). The expectation is that those measures work. Sanitation isn't to tick a box, but to target preventing interaction between wolves and livestock. Producers

don't want to use certain measures right away, as it will limit the effect. An example is fox lights. The best day of fox lights is the first day they are on the ground. On the other hand, good husbandry practices have no shelf life.

The third party neutral did a review of the flipcharts that had been filled out throughout the meeting (see WAG webpage for these flipcharts). A lot of these definitions and practices came from stakeholder comments all across the state.

When can you not ramp up deterrence measures (responsive)? This is when everything that can be done is being done on the ground already.

Wolf and livestock behavior should be evaluated to determine a pattern. Not just wolf behavior.

Comment: We wanted to run the acute and chronic plans by WAG members, but we also want to run it by our internal wolf team as well.

WAG members went around the room to gauge reactions and perspectives on the proposed solution. While there was some feedback that some wordsmithing may need to be reworked, there was a general positive vibe.

Comment: We want small sidebars, and we want the department to have as much flexibility as possible to accomplish that main goal.

Comment: Numbers may still get us in trouble, but I think it's for staff to consider how best to use these ingredients to bake a really good cake for everyone.

Department staff said they appreciate the trust that has been built.

Comment: I think it shows that WAG is committed to addressing the pain of last year.

Comment: I feel really positive, and I don't think I could say that a few hours ago.

Comment: I'm hoping we can take this and use this for a few years.

Donny: I hope this is something we all feel like we have a piece of. We also have support from the Director and my boss as well. I just wanted everyone to know that.

The third party neutral called out a few items for thought, including:

- Timeline for this plan
- Defining extraordinary loss
- Defining evaluation period

Public Comment

First comment: The first question I have is about the acute and chronic. If you're saying three depredations, are we still considering what they did last year? Personally I wish we didn't have any numbers. When numbers are there, that's a trigger. Where does this start?

Second comment: I think there should be more on acceptable losses. I'm not totally satisfied with this.

Third comment: On the trust issue, some of the conservation community is seeing this through the lens of never wanting another Wedge, never wanting another Huckleberry, and never wanting another Profanity. Removing numbers and adding more discretion is problematic when looking through that lens. I hope no one takes that as targeted at any individual. It's more of a general comment. I'm heartened by the disclosure discussion and what is provided to the public. All the information people want to see is that information that is going up the chain of command to help with the determination. All that information should already be being passed around internally, so it shouldn't be too much of a burden on the department. I'm also heartened by the increased communication between the department and USFS. It also matters what is done with that information sharing. One thing I might have missed is in terms of 3 depredations in 30 days, is that depredations occurring or depredations discovered? I would echo that wordsmithing is very important. What does meeting expectations mean? With the addition of probables being counted, do guard dogs count on the probables? I will have more comments when there is an actual written document.

Fourth comment: With respect to using probables, I think using that is problematic. It really is a matter of intent. If we are going to talk about standards of law, the American justice system says no one is found guilty until found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. A standard of probable is a lesser civil standard. It's a lower standard for a reason. I think counting probables goes against the justice of America. On acute versus chronic, I hope it's apparent to everyone that you all worked really hard to come up with something. In the Oregon system, they have 4 and 6 months. That always takes the acute and chronic into account. There is going to be some micromanaging because of the trust issue.

Fifth comment: I appreciate all the hard work. The one thing I think never really gets addressed is public lands versus private lands. I think what really outrages the public is when wolves are killed with taxpayer dollars on public lands. I don't think it's quite as much outrage on private lands. I think that should be taken into account when dealing with lethal removal. Killing wolves on public land is always going to upset me and a lot of my friends.

Sixth comment: What will be included in a weekly report? I heard mention of a tally, but I think it's probably more than that. Is it circumstances, outcomes, and other items? Would love some clarification on that.

Seventh comment: I too am concerned about the public grazing aspect. We need to look at the allotments that are public land and come together on how those allotments need to change. If you can't have nonlethal deterrents in some areas, we need to look at taking those areas off grazing land. It doesn't make sense. I hope that will be happening in the future. I was hoping to hear today that USFS would be willing to look at that.

Eighth comment: I feel like all the bright kids have applied themselves really well to the problem, and I feel like the slow kid here. The thing that kept going through my mind today was that we should remove the conversation of how many can we kill? That is how it sounds after enough hours of it to me.

Ninth comment (same as #1): I had one more question. When would the paper draft part come out? When is this going to be available so we know what is going on? We are putting livestock out soon.

Tenth comment (same as #2): I am not clear on exactly how this ended up. I am looking forward to the document so I can look over it more carefully. It felt like it spun out of control here at the end. I'm not even sure on what some of the terms mean. What is a rolling window? The whole discussion always ends up on lethal. It's very depressing to hear that all the time. It doesn't really feel fair. Trust can never exist without fairness. Fairness is subjective, but it's real. And it never quite feels fair to me. Interestingly, I think some of the other views feel the same.

Eleventh comment: A lot of us have been talking about fairness. With our lives, with ranchers, we are out on the landscape and the lethal protocol is part of our lives. In order for this to work, there has to be a lethal piece and a nonlethal piece. The commitment from us is that we know that it has to be many different things. In the arena of the legislature right now, there are things that are focused on helping property owners in wolf situations. The message I would leave with you is that for us to be successful, those two aspects have to move at the same time. We know that people hold different values, and we know that both parts need to be there. How do we help ranchers cope? How do we help them know they are not alone? A lot of what we're looking at are nonlethal tools. I am committed that lethal and nonlethal both have to happen. Our commitment is very real. I and many in this room have suffered a lot of criticism for taking that stance, but we're committed to it. You are getting more and more people interested in knowing what they can do. I know it's hard for those outside looking in, and it takes time to build that, but they've been forced into this through no fault of their own, and I have seen tremendous change over the last few years. I will be honest, the lethal protocol is critical, but those nonlethal measures are critical as well. I just wanted you all to know that. I am super proud of what's gone on, and I am super proud of folks back home. There is a way through this, and I think we are finding it.

Further WAG comment

Comment: I just wanted to say that I don't feel like I've given approval to anything. I don't feel really great about this right now.

Comment: As far as us approving stuff, we are an advisory group. The department makes the policy.

Comment: I know we are all in a really hard spot. I am asking for the agency to hear if you can support the policy stuff. Absolutely we will get a draft together and you can look at the details and make sure it's just as you recalled it here. For those bigger policy items, we'd like to have WAG input on that.

Comment: I totally am comfortable with the concepts. I am a wordsmith, so you will get edits from me. Any edits from me will be consistent with these principles. And I felt that's how we approached it last year, and I felt that was a very productive process.

Comment: We take the feedback we receive very seriously. We consider each and every comment as we go through the development process.

The third party neutral said that we have sufficient consensus, with the recognition that wordsmithing is needed in the final draft.

USFS said that this is a definite improvement over 2016's protocol. Ultimately we will figure out if this is where we need to be. For now it is an improvement.

The 10-month timeline starts June 1 and looks back to last year. The 3 in 30 days includes both discovered and confirmed.

Meeting Adjourned