

DRAFT

Section 9. Special focus areas (SFAs) for recurrent conflict mitigation

Special focus areas (SFAs) for conflict mitigation are areas (e.g., geographic pack territories [regardless of pack name change], landmarks, allotments, pastures, etc.) where... SFAs may also be defined by specific locales within a pack territory where conflict with livestock is recurrent.

In these areas, WDFW will conduct a review of its conflict mitigation decisions within the SFA to determine the strengths and weaknesses of those decisions and to work with affected producers, associated landowners, and land management agencies to attempt to understand the cause of the conflict. WDFW staff will then develop in collaboration with affected livestock producers focus area conflict mitigation plans for additional or enhanced proactive non-lethal deterrents. These plans will seek creative alternatives to reduce or eliminate additional loss of livestock and attempt to break the need for repeated lethal removal of wolves in these areas. The intent is to begin developing these plans in collaboration with affected livestock producers and those implementing nonlethal deterrents after the grazing season is over and have the plans ready for implementation prior to the next grazing season.

These discussions might be associated with innovations in non-lethal tools, changes in how they are deployed, and/or priority for funding. Discussions may include an evaluation of local ungulate and predator abundance and management with an effort to draw connections between various management plans (elk herd plans, deer herd plans, Game Management Plan, and Wolf Plan).

The rationale for including this section in the protocol is as follows:

1. The shared goal is to minimize the repeated loss of livestock and wolves caused by wolf-livestock conflict.
2. Designating SFAs recognizes that repeated livestock loss and wolf removals are likely to cause significant hardship for producers and their animals, as well as their communities, wolf packs, the wolf advocate community, and WDFW staff.
3. The present application of lethal removal of wolves in SFAs is not having the intended effect of breaking patterns of depredation and reducing losses.
4. The protocol currently does not address this conundrum.
5. The intent of this section is to provide guidance to WDFW when these situations occur, and work toward possibilities that honor the shared goal of reducing loss of livestock and wolves.

Additional or enhanced non-lethal deterrents (e.g., [well-established methods](#) that may have not been previously attempted in the SFA or implemented effectively or [new ideas](#)) will be implemented for a sufficient amount of time to be effective. The tools discussed in the focus area mitigation plans will be implemented by WDFW and other entities that deploy nonlethal deterrents prior to livestock turnout with the assistance of the livestock producer after turnout. These actions must occur prior to the consideration of lethal removal in these areas. Lethal removal may be considered if other livestock producers in the same wolf pack area are experiencing wolf depredations and they have deployed appropriate deterrence measures a sufficient amount of time prior to wolf depredations. If these

Commented [SJB(1): Meets SFA Criteria

Full Pack removal comprising of multiple increments in prior year

- if recolonized the following year it's an SFA pack
 - if not recolonized, reevaluate the following year
- If SFA prior year, need to evaluate risk of wolves and livestock

Packs of 6 or more should be evaluated on risk
2 of the last 3 years of having lethal removal authorization
4 or more depredations in previous grazing season

Commented [SJB(2): What if we don't have opportunity to collaborate with livestock producer?

Producer needs to understand expectations and outcomes of that—proactively communicate.

Commented [SJB(3): The way this is stated drastically underestimates the time and resources needed to actually do this. The predator-prey project is over 1 million dollars and is a 5-year research project. We currently don't have population estimates for ungulates in most places statewide and in the NE we probably never will. There are currently no techniques to estimate abundance in treed environments. This is just unrealistic.

There would also be a need to draw connections with grazing management plans and stocking rates and how that affects ungulate abundance or presence.

Commented [SJB(4): An idea for wording: The shared goal is to minimize lethal removal of wolves by minimizing depredations of livestock.

deterrents fail to mitigate conflict and depredations continue, lethal removal may be authorized as written in sections 6 and 7 of the protocol. The lethal removal order should be implemented as expeditiously as possible in terms of preparation for the action and maintaining agency transparency given the available resources.

Commented [SJB(5): Move sentence to section 7 or keep in both places?

DRAFT