

**Wolf Advisory Group
October 21, 2020, Meeting Notes
Zoom Meeting**

WAG members: Caitlin Scarano, Samee Charriere, Tom Davis, Dave Duncan, Diane Gallegos, Jess Kayser, Jessica Kelley, Bill Kemp, Lynn Okita, Dan Paul, Lisa Stone, and Paula Swedeen

WDFW Commissioners: Molly Linville, Barbara Baker, Kim Thorburn

WDFW staff members: Julia Smith, Donny Martorello, Steve Pozzanghera, Joey McCanna, and Candace Bennett

Facilitator: Rob Geddis

Welcome and check-in

Rob welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the agenda for the day. Update and background from new member Caitlin Scarano.

Review the agenda and make any adjustments

Review the edits and documents crafted by the subcommittee on chronic conflict zones (CCZ). The meeting allowed time for members to ask questions and give recommendations on the proposals.

Comment

The reason we wanted this meeting was to discuss Section 9. To continue the discussion and see how to move forward with it. We're wanting to receive feedback from WAG members and then the subcommittee can review it and bring it back to you. We started this by sending everyone a list of three scenarios. All were different but still based on CCZ. The goal was for us as individuals to give honest feedback on how we would handle those five scenarios. That then gave the subgroup an idea of how everyone would respond. What it really came down to was commonalities. We have nine notes based on what we found.

1. Simply follow the protocol as it's written. This came up in lots of responses.
2. Implementation of case by case based on the actions of livestock producers. People felt like there were differences on how and if the producers are doing the right things. Examine ways to assist them.
3. Implement actions differently based on land status whether it's private or public.
4. Implement range riding on lands regardless of the cooperation of the producer.
5. Lethal control should not occur without adequate or reliable range riding.

6. Reach out to the public for assistance and creative ideas. The thought with this is, is there something we're missing? Does the general public have thoughts and bring them into the discussions more?
7. Reach out to members of the affected communities.
8. Implement enhanced planning cooperation meetings before and after each grazing season to plan for conflict mitigation.
9. Incorporate the ability to move livestock to alternate pastures when available and feasible.

Those were the common themes we found. I appreciate all the WAG members who did participate. It gives us a good starting point.

Comment

I am going to start by discussing the name change for the section. We recognize that there has been concern from producers regarding the name CCZ. From the producer perspective, it is perceived as a negative connotation and laying blame on producer allotments. Our final idea was enhanced resource areas or ERAs. We talked about enhance protection areas and deterrence zones. We're open to other suggestions. We want it to reflect that these are high priority areas. This is one of the reasons we have this in the protocol.

To go over the beginning part, we wanted to be as inclusive as we could on ERAs. We want it to be clear that even if a pack name changes it's still the same area. It could be a pasture, allotment, geographic pack territory where we've had non-lethal deterrents implemented but depredations still occur. And there's been lethal removal for two years. There are members and the public who think this section isn't necessary. We included some ideas on how it's important. Lethal removal of wolves is not breaking the patterns or reducing losses. I think that's something we have focused on. Lethal removal is not changing what's happening. The protocol does not address this conundrum. We want to give guidance to the department when these situations occur and work towards ideas that address our main concern of livestock and wolf losses.

We worked with some language that was already in the draft. We added some things and changed the wording. Of course, this is considered a draft, and we're looking for input and other details to flesh out this section. We're trying to include having meetings at the beginning of the grazing season to address the areas we're seeing chronic conflict. We could be discussing non-lethal tools and changes and how they're deployed and funding opportunities. There would be an effort to draw connections between the various management plans (ungulates and predators). The main idea is to put all of the heads together to figure out what are the causes and what we can do differently.

Response

We can open it up for feedback. Any thoughts?

Comment

My short answer would be yes. I appreciate the name change, moving away from chronic. I mentioned on our last call that this conversation was going to be harder than people thought. I really appreciate all of the work from the subcommittee and the time you took on this. For the farmers and producers, I represent, this is a political minefield. This whole issue of lethal removal. It is the elephant in the room and the letter from the governor did not help. We feel that it only elevated the political aspect of wolf management. This approach is troubling for us. In the areas where we have the most conflict, we take a time out and assess tools while we still have high levels of depredations. Other states are using science to manage wolves and are using lethal removal. With this section, it seems we would be going backward compared to our other western states. All of this makes me nervous regarding this language.

Comment

I want to also thank the subcommittee members for their work. I think the document is on the right track. It gets at the core of the issue. There's something there that I want to elaborate on, I want to respond to the previous comment though. I hear you. I think the perspective you articulated continues to highlight how differently we're looking at this. The subcommittee was careful to put language in there that wasn't helping or changing the behavior. That's one of the motivations here. It's not trying to pile on more non-lethals. If you're killing wolves every year and still having problems, you're not getting at it. It sounds like from your perspective, let's just keep killing them or more of them. Your reference to science-based management in other states could be a whole other discussion. The paper you shared was a 10-year study of the impacts of hunting seasons on livestock depredations. They found that it didn't have an effect. Essentially, increasing the total number of wolves killed over 10 years was not the thing that decreased depredations. They recommended adaptive management. Use lethal where it works and adapt and change non-lethal where it doesn't. The idea is that there are places where ranchers in certain valleys are saying it's not helping to kill wolves. In fact, they felt it was destabilizing things. They couldn't get to know the packs and they weren't able to make solutions to work with those packs. They didn't like killing wolves because it's a lot of work for them. Your comments make me see a disconnect about our understanding of science and values. On our side, we don't like to see wolves killed every year. That's why it's important for us to have that language in there.

Comment

I have two items I'd like to share just to clear up these two topics. When we're talking about any tool that we have whether it's non-lethal or lethal we must look at whether it works or not. What works for some may not work for others. Also, we had a discussion around the topic of whether lethal works or not. The way that lethal was implemented did not work. It didn't reach the level of what some would say to be successful. The way that lethal has been implemented hasn't had the desired effects.

Comment

Well, I have a lot of thoughts. I watched a webinar from Minnesota that looked at wolf issues and their depredations. They have a lot more wolves than us. I have some key notes I want to share. In Minnesota, there are roughly 2700 wolves. They did try implementing public hunting and it had minimal effects on depredations and the wolves are now relisted as endangered. They talked about the learned behavior of wolves. Lethal control has to happen immediately following the depredation. If it's a learned behavior they want to remove the wolf in the pack. They remove 180 wolves annually. But many areas are not having issues the following year. The lethal removal orders now take too long. Minnesota targets the ones that are getting those behavioral habits. We need to look at something along those lines.

Response

Thank you. What you mention seems broader than talking about CCZ but an overall policy change. Should this influence these areas?

Comment

I see where a lot of groups are now. I don't know how the wildlife folks are doing the lethal removals. The public perception might be better within an 18-day period rather than having it carry on. It may not relate to this page but is something we need to think about.

Comment

Let me share what I think I'm hearing. Sounds like members are still wrestling with if this section needs to be in the protocol or not. Are some folks are having a hard time with this section in the protocol?

Comment

I think that's it. Looking at the third bullet, in the draft, where it says, "the lethal removal of wolves is not having the intended effects" and based on someone else's comments, we would think it should say the present application of lethal removal is not working. The focus is too narrow here. Is it that lethal doesn't work, or it's not been implemented appropriately? This seems, from our perspective, that this language is implying it. I think that gets at the heart of the issue.

Response

The issue is bigger than just this topic. It's a narrow focus that's not a part of the bigger picture.

Comment

There's no agreement on how lethal removal should be implemented in the field. With this document, we're taking one position and moving forward where these other issues are not resolved. You're asking us to take a position on something we don't agree with.

Comment

I know that this is a tough issue for folks. We in the subcommittee struggled with working through this. It is a draft and it is supposed to change and evolve. I want to make sure that WAG doesn't forget some of the areas of commonality in the protocol. When referencing the protocol, Washington's protocol does say that periods of lethal removal are generally two weeks and should be as swift as possible. I agree, it's not always carried out that way. I think there's room to talk about the application of lethal removal. I don't know if WAG is on different pages on how it should be carried out. The protocol already states the timeline. I wonder if there's a point of commonality.

Comment

This is my response to the statement that lethal removal hasn't had the desired effects. I guarantee that after 24 depredations that as soon as the Wedge Pack was removed the cattle were back and acting like cows again. I suspect there will not be chronic conflict in the Wedge territory again. There are plenty of wolves.

Comment

I want to go back to some of the earlier comments. The challenge with changing the title of the section is that by putting a positive spin on it, it takes away from the fact that these are areas with chronic conflict. It's year after year of this. My organization is strongly in favor of having language that addresses this. Year after year when this happens, we need to have different results. With the Wedge Pack, after the pattern was broken, you didn't see conflict because the pack wasn't there. If you change the name it could still be an issue because we're dealing with chronic conflict areas.

Comment

I want to make sure we stay focused on the goal. With that said, the one thing I did make note of here, is how lethal removal is implemented. It takes so long that once the criteria are met which is usually in a week's time frame, these issues can't be addressed without everybody on board. One of the other comments was just saying to address the timeframe and criteria and then see how it is implemented and working. What's crossing your mind with the chronic conflict areas? They are chronic areas. Help us see what we missed in this document.

Response

I am supportive of us all looking at better implementation of the protocol that we have on the lethal side. And to see if, once criteria is met, how to act more expeditiously. Sometimes I do think if you end up having a bad year that it can contribute to the creation of a chronic conflict zone. I'm okay with having that as part of these discussions. I don't want to lose sight of the non-lethal side. In thinking about the Profanity, OPT, and Kettle Range wolves, most of those wolves were eliminated. It's hard to know if the OPT pack was a remnant from a prior pack or not. The department directly killed 7 of the 12 pack members. Then there were additional wolves who were known not to survive. That pack got decimated.

Then there was a problem in 2017, and that's why conflict may have to do with the landscape and place. One Sherman wolf was removed in 2017 and stopped the depredations for the season. Then a new pack formed in 2018 and the depredations started again. None of these issues to me, have to do with killing wolves fast enough. It may look like the issue stops but there are other variables that we don't understand yet. It's worth looking at what we have done correctly. We have situations where unpredictable things happen. Did we ever really do a big analysis of why we think that happened and what we might do differently? That's the intent here. I don't want to lose sight of that. There is good language that gets at that in the draft. I think what's so hard for all of us and other stakeholders is that these are emergent problems. Each year we think it's getting taken care of but then you have something that happens three years in a row. I don't understand what's threatening about the idea of stating the intent that everyone involved in chronic situations should be committing to looking at the issues to resolve this in a year. I truly do not understand why it's a problem to have a commitment for everyone to get together and look at what we learned. Maybe in retrospect, we figure out what's going on here and how to make it better for everyone. I genuinely want to understand how that's oppressive or a step back.

Response

I want to echo some of the things you just said. I think it's important to focus on non-lethal measures and if they were accurately implemented. I know there have been cases in certain packs where it was unclear if range riders were meeting expectations. We need to talk about ways in which we can improve management in the ERAs by doing other things, like improving range riding by having different or more folks involved. One commonality is that there are people who feel range riding should be required on public lands. I think we should explore these options and how we're implementing them.

Comment

I have similar comments. To me, having the discipline to sit down after a tough grazing season and to look at lessons learned is very important. One way you can make that happen is by highlighting it in the protocol. I find it is an area I am challenged within my own work. Making yourself stop to evaluate and look at the lessons learned is hard to do but it is critical. I think it's important that it's highlighted. Whoever is involved in an area should have those discussions and will give rise to some creative options that are durable solutions that we're looking for.

Comment

Lethal removal may be considered if other livestock producers are experiencing depredations. It's restricting the use of lethal with new parameters. In chronic areas, we don't feel this is a good management tool or approach that we could wrap our arms around. The question is how its implemented. Now, the last meeting we had in Spokane; we spent a day talking about the social media aspect of this. I get micro-focused on what our folks think about this. I want to maintain a climate where our farmers and ranchers can stay in business.

Every time a wolf is lethally removed there is a different reaction depending on your views. Any restrictions on lethal removal in the areas where we are having those problems are hard to swallow. I'm not absolutely no, but we're concerned about restricting the use of lethal in areas. We don't want to lose that tool because the general public is rising up and saying enough.

Comment

I'm asking this as a genuine question, how is lethal effective or not?

Comment

I have two questions. I'm wondering as we go off into broad discussion, if it might be helpful for each critique, we have to connect to something in the document. Make it actionable. I think there was language about "if there's chronic conflict in an area that one producer is experiencing but not others" are there areas where there is just conflict with one producer?

Comment

If members have a concern about a specific passage, can you please share?

Comment

Please tell us exactly what parts you can't live with. The product is intended to evolve and change. If you can tie your concerns to the language, you're having issues with please let us know.

Comment

When you come back be prepared to share your specific thoughts and adjustments to this document.

Break

Comment

I think there were two places I heard feedback on the language already. One of our members talked about the title and ideas missing from the title. The idea we're talking about where there's a chronic problem missing from renaming this section. As I repeat what I think I heard please correct me if I'm wrong. At the bottom of the proposed language, the reference to lethal removal may come across as limiting that tool. Where else in this document do you have recommended changes or things you can't live with?

Response

I'm not sure I understand the second sentence looking at ERAs.

Response

When reviewing the document this morning I did see the word conflict in there. I'm not sure we need or want that in there.

Comment

Let's flag it as a word to clarify.

Response

I'm still not sure the sentence needs to be there. We already defined the ERAs as areas and such so I'm not sure why it needs to be there.

Comment

It talks about a specific locale in pack territory. The first sentence says that it's a geographic pack territory and to recognize that the average pack territory in Washington is roughly 300 square miles. The conflict usually does not span the whole territory so that sentence is to give flexibility in the definition of what the area is.

Response

I'm going to look at bullet one on that list. Our shared goal is to minimize the repeated loss of livestock and wolves. Someone had expressed the concern here to limit lethal. The intent here is to not use lethal control every year. The whole impetus is that there is so much social upset on both sides where wolves are depredating on livestock every year. There is stress from the pro-wolf and wolf advocate side. There is stress on department staff to kill wolves in the same spot every year. The whole idea of section 9 is to reduce the use of lethal control. Someone has asked the question about why we are saying different things. I think if we go back to one of our foundational science papers, they had time periods when you do lethal and how long it is until you get repeated depredation. If you were successful with a partial or full pack removal you had a longer period of time, that to me is when lethal is successful. When you interrupt or change a pack behavior so new wolves coming in would not depredate. Yes, we would be limiting the use of lethal. I don't think it is saying that lethal is getting taken off the table but the whole idea is for us to not use lethal as often. The flip side is also not having wolves depredate as often. It's a shared risk strategy where we're reducing the risk to everybody. I want us all to understand the intent of this section. If we all don't agree on this then we will have a problem. The intent is to reduce the use of lethal control.

Comment

This is a tough subject. I don't know if there are real answers to it. I think we're trying to micromanage the problem without knowing the cause. There are different areas of concern that are going to have different causes. I think Section 9 should be about the livestock producers, department, range riders, everyone involved getting together to find lessons learned and do a better job in these areas and still stay within the wolf plan and protocol. I'm really opposed to this document setting any policy. I think this document is trying to set policy without really looking at cause and effect. I'm opposed to setting policy that puts more responsibility on livestock producers. I think they should stay in cooperation with the department but overall it is the department's responsibility to manage predators and wildlife.

This section has been troubling me from the beginning. I like what this said about getting people to work together and define the cause and trying to have a goal of killing fewer wolves and fewer cattle depredated on. I think the whole thing is wrong-minded the way it's written currently.

Comment

When you shared your ideas, I look at the paragraph under the list that sounds like the idea is getting people together to learn the cause and analyze the cause before determining actions. We need to learn the cause first. Do you have recommended word changes?

Response

I'm just going to sit here and listen. There's a lot of pushback on my side about this section. We can't be setting any policy here with Section 9.

Comment

I need clarification about not being in agreement regarding limiting the use of lethal. I'm concerned that you read that as to limit lethal. That is not the intent of that language. It is the intent to acknowledge that we want losses to stop of wolf and cattle.

Response

From your perspective, if you had to kill a wolf or two in a pack every year that meets the intent of that statement?

Response

Sure, to say that it limits lethal isn't though. If that's what others are reading into it then it needs to change. That's not what the intent is. It's really hard to hear you say that we should limit or remove lethal. To take away the most effective tool, that just doesn't work.

Response

I think there is a misunderstanding. I think from the community I represent, the problem from our perspective is killing wolves in the same place every year. The wolf part of it is not using lethal control on an annual basis. I wasn't saying that we cannot use lethal control, the entire goal of this section is to get it a place where you don't have to. I wanted us all to be clear that we don't want to see it happen every year. If there are some results and people diagnose the problem, have a different approach, look at how lethal is deployed then the entire goal from my perspective is to not have to use the tool of lethal every year. If you are, then from our perspective it's not working.

Comment

We have the shared goal of less animals dying. I don't think we need this section. I think we need to do all of these things before there is a problem. If this problem occurs, what are we going to do differently? I gave everyone an opportunity to share what we would do differently. There is no magic tool, we're going to have predators so we're going to have conflict.

Response

I do think there are other things that can be done.

Comment

I will say that I agree with what you've said. The intent of this is that the folks that are most intimately involved and know the pack and producers all come together and make that a matter of practice to see what the lessons learned are going forward. We know that the conflict creates a social drain on everyone involved. You can't shoot your way out of a problem with wolves. With the bringing of the minds together that know what's happening on the ground and being flexible and making it an intentional evaluation that needs to happen to meet the goal of bullet one.

Comment

We don't know what the solutions are, and no one is able to answer what the tools are. I want to take us back to why we wanted to call it ERA rather than CCZ. I hope a wildlife conflict specialist will help me out here. We don't start every grazing season with all non-lethal tools deployed. Non-lethal tools are deployed by operations and levels of risk. We wouldn't start a grazing season with fladry deployed if there wasn't a wolf pack or indicators around. They are placed strategically. Our resources are limited. Personnel is limited. Range riders are limited. All the tools that have worked may not be available. 85% of the wolf packs are not involved in the conflicts so these are localized issues. Here's an area where we have had a conflict for this period of time. Enhanced resources mean that maybe we are starting the grazing season with the tools deployed (such as FoxLights, fladry, range riders, and/or communications with the Forest Service). Our resources do need to be deployed strategically. We can predict that there may be more conflict and loss based on history and previous years' conflict. If anyone can speak to this more directly, I think it might be better to look at why it's an ERA.

Comment

I think the other part that has to do with field staff is that if we're calling this an ERA there's an acknowledgment. We do try to have some sort of idea of what worked last year and what didn't work. I agree with you because resources, staff time, and range riders, amongst other things are not always readily available. We do try to put our heads together with what that looks like. Some of the things listed here are not new. It's just an acknowledgment of what's missing or could be improved. Questions like, "Is this an opportunity to try a pilot project or bring focus to a specific area?" could be investigated. Being able to identify these areas is a collaboration of external interests

and this helps with funding as well and will allow us to prioritize these issues not just by WDFW but also non-profits.

Comment

This conversation has been helpful to clarify the different sides we're coming from. I wrote down a couple of summary points. Let's start by saying we're talking about 15% of the wolves in Washington that are depredating. The department has told us that removing wolves will not have a long-term impact on recovery efforts. Someone said having to remove wolves every year isn't working. I simply don't agree. From our perspective, we believe lethal is a tool that is there when it is necessary. To say that you have to use it every year doesn't mean it's working isn't true. To me, this comes down to, optics. It is representing the beliefs and opinions of the different groups we represent. Many folks will have different versions of that. That doesn't mean that lethal isn't working, it means people respond to its use differently. That may be more crucial to this conversation. Clearly, we have different populations than other states that have been used as a comparison in this conversation.

Comment

As a member of the subcommittee, I feel that we were taking lethal off the table. I looked at this based on the social significance of wolves in the state and the governor's letter. We really needed to look at other alternatives because we didn't have a choice. The section we wrote (paragraph one in Section 9) was pretty self-explanatory, as we all recognized something different needs to be done. The public and the governor were saying something different needs to happen. We were trying to think creatively and outside of the box, not just resorting to lethal. One way of doing that is by saying "hey we all meet before and after the season to improve the overall management".

Comment

From the beginning, I have supported lethal as a tool for the management of wolves when needed. If you look at some of these states that are killing wolves at a high percentage, it's not producing the results they were going for regarding lower depredations. We have to acknowledge that wolves are different biologically and ecologically than other carnivores. We may need to take a different approach. We're not taking lethal off the table; at the core, we're trying to prevent depredations which results in the loss of wolves.

Comment

I have a couple of thoughts. Following up, specifically looking at the paragraphs below. Nice job at characterizing the intent of that section with the emphasis on additional tools or enhanced tools. We've heard repeatedly that lethal management is a part of wolf management. I don't think we're arguing about lethal management. In an ERA where the postseason/preseason discussions are happening or where there are additional or enhanced tools that can be brought to bare prior to the start of the season, with resources and additional nonlethal deterrents utilized and depredations that occur in an

ERA in that season, under this scenario that lethal removal would be appropriate at that time? That's the question. I want to come back to the portion of the paragraph that talks about the evaluations of ungulate and predator abundance. What do you envision as an actionable item for the department? What's that really saying for on-ground efforts and what's that asking?

Response

The intention of the subcommittee was to never take lethal off the table. Part of the idea in the rename was to take the tools we have if there hasn't been a new improved tool and take all of that and throw them at these areas. Concentrate on what we have before we take lethal action. The intention was never to take lethal completely off the table.

Response

I agree. I think that what we haven't mentioned, is the issue of working with producers who may not be on board with enhancing their non-lethals. I am not sure how we are dealing with that specifically in this section but it's part of this. We do need to do everything possible to add an extra layer of protection in these areas. That's why in the last paragraph we said that non-lethal deterrents will be implemented. That's what's different here. For producers who don't want to get on board with that, I'm not sure how we're dealing with that.

Comment

As I read through this, I never thought lethal was off the table. I think you have a big change here, expectations that there will be meetings with the department to brainstorm better and effective ideas before moving to lethal but not off the table.

Comment

Subcommittee members correct me if I'm wrong but one of the common values that came out from those scenarios was the issue that was mentioned, that what if we are working so hard to prevent these situations that we get folks to come to the table then we do the work different. That was a common value that was shared so the subcommittee attempted to capture that with this language. That was my understanding.

Comment

I think we're placing a lot of emphasis on trying to resolve the issues of wolves that are hard-wired to depredate on cattle. This whole section concerns me, I think we need to work harder to make sure they don't become hard-wired. One example is that we have a pack of wolves out of Dayton, they're not even listed as a pack. The owner has a large cattle operation and was down a bunch of calves last year. The department hasn't been out there. The wolves are getting close to becoming hard-wired and becoming a problem. I think we're placing too much emphasis on trying to resolve the issues in these hard-wired wolves. No one can stop them once they have started.

Comment

Back to my previous question, relative to the last sentence of the paragraph immediately following the 1-5 section, I don't have any idea what the expectation of the department might be regarding the interconnected ungulate or predator management plans. What is the actionable item from the department here?

Response

If I remember, the reason we put that there was to look at other things that could be causing repeated conflicts and depredations on livestock. We weren't sure if anyone was looking at how the deer or elk herds have been doing in those areas and the effects of that. We added it so that we could have all the knowledge. It's an effort to include more department staff to explain the rationale for livestock depredation issues.

Response

From the standpoint of the potential looking at wildlife interactions and how that could explain an ERA. From what you have explained we're looking at the context of the cause not necessarily an action for the department.

Comment

Can you mark that sentence as needing clarification?

Response

Yes.

Comment

I think understanding the ungulate and predator populations will give you a better understanding of what's happening on the ground. It's too late but having that understanding will help the discussions. Having that understanding of what's happening gives a better understanding of how and what tools can be implemented. Maybe there are other implications with that section. All cows, wolves, bears, animals, and humans are going to eat if they're hungry.

Comment

Does anyone have a quick answer regarding the wolf pack previously mentioned in Dayton?

Response

So, we are working with a producer in the Blue Mountains area and this producer has reached out to the department. The department's conflict specialist has been working with the producer on multiple occasions. FoxLights and salting areas have been deployed. The producer is signed up in a data-sharing agreement and we can see what's going on live out there. We have been working with a producer out there. This producer did have losses last year. There was a depredation but not enough evidence to confirm it was a wolf. We've been working with the producer for several months.

Comment

The fact that this is a confirmed pack, that we have on the map is another point that someone was concerned about.

Comment

I want to check-in with subcommittee members and see if there are specific pieces that need to be adjusted?

Response

I think that it does seem like folks are having a hard time with this section. These five bullets in front of you were put there to lay out a premise. You don't have to agree with your whole heart, but can you live with it? Does it make sense? I heard the word policy thrown around and these documents are guidance from you to the department, not policy. If these bullets don't make sense or aren't agreed upon, then we get nowhere. We should make sure these bullets are accepted by everyone. All the subcommittee tried to do was make this shared framework with this section.

Comment

Does anyone have specific ideas or thoughts on the five bullets referenced?

Response

We took conflict out of the paragraph above the points. This is about conflict and I wonder if there's a way to insert that into one of the bullet points?

Comment

Just talking next steps, thank you all for participating and sharing input thus far. We have captured some ideas. I'll soon be doing intakes for our November meetings. How do we best include and move this topic forward? I really appreciate all the work the subcommittee has done. Before I close the subject, are there any other comments?

Comment

I guess bullet number five, looking at the intent of the section is to provide guidance. I'm not seeing that in here. My question is, is this guidance for more range riders, and what are the enhanced non-lethals? I guess I'm not seeing what the guidance is right now.

Comment

So, my response to that question is that we don't know what that looks like. The idea is we have people coming together to assess those things. What tools we could use, tools we have used, and research ideas. The whole idea is that we're problem-solving together. It's the whole evaluation piece that must be frustrating for department staff since you can't just check the standard boxes off. I don't think you can answer that without an evaluation period.

Comment

I agree. We never want CCZ to emerge but sometimes they do and when they do it means that collectively there hasn't been a good enough understanding of the situation or gaps or things that have been tried. The guidance to the department is to participate in a type of discussion that hasn't happened yet. Department staff tell me if you've done something in the same room at the same time with producers, range riders, conflict specialists, and whoever the land manager is involved and have a special structured session that's designed for everybody to contribute what they know or see like what has been learned from year one to year two, to year three? These are what we've noticed and know about landscapes and given all of that what haven't we tried. This boils down to chronic conflict areas where things that have been tried before but haven't worked. Before just accepting you have to kill wolves and thinking that's an okay use of resources, the whole idea is to gather people together and problem solve. Like what was said, we don't know what you're not going to see. We're not telling you what to do. None of us are going to know what the emergent patterns are going to be. That's why we can't and shouldn't be specific. The guidance is an attempt to problem-solve.

Comment

I would like to build on what has been said. It seems to me, that what might be helpful is a post grazing season meeting that the public can listen in on that talks about lessons learned and documents new ideas, then do a pre-season meeting also available to the public so we can talk about these ERAs. Where do we think we need to spend more money or have more people on the ground? I think these conversations happen in the department but then the public doesn't see it. We get into the grazing season but then we move to lethal and people are left with the impressions that other things weren't considered. I think daylighting the process could really lead to minimizing the armed chair quarterbacking, that we see when it is time to approve the move to lethal. People need to know that everything was thrown at it before it was too late. I think this section and the ERA I'm in support of. As mentioned earlier, taking into account if anyone else in the public has ideas. This is clearly not a species we can manage status quo. These Zoom meetings aren't perfect, but they seem to allow more frequent meetings and people to attend. The objective is the long-term recovery of wolves in Washington. We are leading that and accomplishing that goal. You are accomplishing that goal. I appreciate your hard work on that.

Comment

I think there will always be angst around this issue. Nobody understands how much work goes into these decisions. There's a lot of people on the ground doing work to prevent these things. I would like folks to be able to see it themselves. I know having meetings available to the public makes some hesitant to participate. I wonder if producers would be hesitant to participate in these meetings and putting themselves in the limelight. We haven't addressed the question of have we ever had everyone together to talk about these things? What if folks just refuse? That's where the department looks for guidance if we aren't able to get cooperation.

Check-out with everyone. Meeting adjourned.