WOLF ADVISORY GROUP (WAG)
MEETING: SEPTEMBER 3, 2015

Facilitated by Human-Wildlife Conflict Collaboration (HWCC)
This photograph depicts the agenda for the second WAG meeting of 2015. The agenda was followed accordingly, until the last session of the day when a livestock producer/hunter WAG member asked if the group would be willing to work together on a tangible, crisis issue involving one producer that has potential benefits for all stakeholders. The group agreed to amend the agenda.
“KEY LEARNINGS” FROM ENVIRONMENTAL “FIELD TRIP”

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The ground rules WAG members developed for themselves at the May 2015 meeting were posted in the front of the room for the September meeting.
EXPLORING THE SPECTRUM OF HUMAN NEEDS

WAG and WDFW reviewed the “levels of conflict” model (See May 2015 notes) and connected the deeper levels of conflict – and its transformation – with the need to not only address substantive issues, but equally to reconcile relationships through a transformation process that addresses all three levels. WAG and WDFW then explored the unmet human needs that exist in all three levels: IDENTITY – how one see’s oneself or their group in relation to the rest of the world; RECOGNITION – respect, dignity, legitimacy, appreciation, acknowledgment, saving or regaining face; SECURITY – cultural, spiritual, social, economic, physical, emotional; CONNECTEDNESS – love and belonging; MEANING and PERSONAL FULFILLMENT – meaning in terms of place or context and an ability to reach one’s potential; FREEDOM – meaningful participation, voice, control. WAG and WDFW noted that all these human needs were at play in the conflict over wolves and that even when groups or individuals see an event or action differently, there is common ground across all parties in the unmet needs beneath that conflict.
Exploring these human needs in small groups allowed individuals to connect, understand and empathize with one another, share perspectives and identify points of commonality. After they met in small groups, they reported back their discussions to the large group.
WAG and WDFW brainstormed a list of topics for WAG to work on in the coming years. While initially the intent was for WAG to address policy-level advice/recommendations, there was also discussion as to whether WAG could work collaboratively on other projects and issues. WAG members were asked to take this list back to their constituents and stakeholder groups to determine if other topics should be included. WAG will have an opportunity at the next meeting to make additions and sequence these topics for future meetings.
After hearing from fellow WAG members about an urgent issue, WAG explored an opportunity to provide support to secure and ensure defensible, viable grazing for a livestock producer. WAG recognized the need for a partnership where mutual benefits were sought so that this effort was one that everyone could strongly defend. WAG noted that this effort would demonstrate the benefits internally and externally of working collaboratively across diverse groups toward concrete solutions. While success would have direct benefits to livestock producers and wolves, they also valued the effort for its ability to build trust and improve communications. Livestock producers acknowledged that wolves were only one of many factors negatively impacting the viability of livestock production. Environmentalists acknowledged that wolves were impacting producers and that while they voice support for livestock producers, this opportunity could tangibly put their words into action. The group also recognized that accurate communication was critical and that inflammatory or exaggerated messaging is harmful to all sides. WAG members and WDFW noted that this tangible effort could be replicated as a service for others, as well as inform future policy recommendations. By the conclusion of the meeting, all WAG members and WDFW staff expressed support to move forward together.
PUBLIC INPUT

Members of the public who were present were asked to give their comments or suggestions. Members of the public unanimously expressed appreciation for WAGs work at this meeting, for their respectful, courageous, collaborative engagement with one another on these issues. One commenter added that WAG’s efforts needed to be supported by WDFW. Another added appreciation for the efforts of livestock producers.