

NEVADA BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS
Wildlife Damage Management Committee

Nevada Department of Wildlife
Conference Rooms A & B
1100 Valley Road
Reno, Nevada 89512

Also Via Teleconference at:

NDOW, Eastern Regional Office
60 Youth Center Road
Elko, Nevada 89801

NDOW, Ely Field Office
1218 N. Alpha Street
Ely, Nevada 89301

February 25, 2011
2:30 p.m.

DRAFT MINUTES

Those Committee members in attendance were:

Hank Vogler – Committee Chairman
Daryl Capurro – Commissioner
Charles Howell – Commissioner
Mike Simon – Member
Larry Gilbertson – NDOW, Acting Staff to Committee

Also in attendance were:

Joe Bennett – Wildlife Services
Mike Dobel – NDOW
Rex Flowers – Washoe CABMW
Chris Hampson – NDOW
Bill Taylor – Wildlife Services
Tony Wasley – NDOW

Agenda Items #1 & #2 – Call to Order & Introductions – Chairman Vogler

The meeting was called to order at 2:40 p.m., and the attendees were all accounted for.

Agenda Item #3 – Approval of Minutes from the August 13, 2010 Meeting – Chairman Vogler – ACTION

The Chairman asked for any changes or corrections for the minutes of the previous meeting, there were none.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER CAPURRO TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE AUGUST 13, 1020 MEETING AS WRITTEN, MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER HOWELL, THE MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.

Agenda Item #4 – Commission Member Items – Chairman Vogler

There were no Commission Member items.

Agenda Item #5 – Public Comment *(All Public Comments will be limited to 3 minutes)*

There were no public comments.

Agenda Item #6 – Discuss Predation Management Plan for FY 2011-2012 –Larry Gilbertson and Staff – INFORMATIONAL

Larry stated that this product is put together in late-summer and the staff person responsible for this program decided to move on, so it has taken longer to complete the plan. One of the advantages of completing the plan later was that the numbers are final (found on the last page) when in the past they were preliminary. The plan has now been available since last December.

Larry explained that the plan is a report on FY 2010 work that was performed on all of the various predator projects. A second part of the report is what we have planned to do in FY2011.

It was asked what our flexibility is in the plan? How difficult would it be to “fire up the helicopter” and remove coyotes. It would have been beneficial this year, due to snow conditions, to have had a contingency fund in place so that Wildlife Services could have gone in and removed coyotes depredating on deer herds. Larry stated that Project #22 gives us the most flexibility. This project is one where we consider a number of factors and we try to identify potential areas where we might want to go in and do what you were talking about. The areas identified for this year were: 1, 3, 6, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23 and 24. Beyond that, if a critical situation presents itself or is identified by our biologists, we can react and go to those areas if needed.

Commissioner Capurro asked if we had a deer study going on right now in Area #6? Tony stated that we have collared a few animals, but it is not really a study right now. Commissioner Capurro stated that he was told we were not doing any predator work there because of a study. Tony

stated that the study is being done in Area 10 where we have 80 collared deer. Part of this is being driven by the idea that we want data that is applicable to Nevada, to answer some criticism from the Commission, that we are using survivorship values from other states. This opportunity is allowing us to measure their survivorship on our own herds and use those values in our models to improve their accuracy. Part of the reasons for not doing predator work in Area 10 is if we were to go in and affect survivorship up or down as a result of those activities, then those values would not have applicability in years where predator control work was not done. Commissioner Capurro asked how long this study would be? Tony stated about 3 years. Commissioner Capurro further stated that we won't have any predator control over that period? Tony stated that it won't be above and beyond what is currently going on, as there is significant sport harvest happening and additional predator removal attendant to agricultural operations in the area. Tony stated if after the first two winters we find significant losses of the 80 deer we have collared, and with two years of baseline data that suggest predator caused mortalities are a significant source of mortality, then we have enough justification to begin a predator removal project. Larry stated there may also be some additional control with the low bighorn sheep population in the area.

Tony answered Chairman Vogler's question on flexibility stating that we tried to incorporate this into the Heritage proposals from Hunter's Alert and the Nevada Alliance for Wildlife in FY10 and FY11. Multiple areas were added to the Hunters Alert proposal which was originally for only Area 014 in FY10, so we added Areas 015, 035 in the event we had weather conditions that forced a lot of animals from California into Nevada. In the Nevada Alliance for Wildlife's proposal we added Areas 14, 15, and portions of Areas 7 & 10 to maximize our flexibility and to take advantage of weather conditions when they present themselves.

It was asked if there was a project going on in Area 7 right now? Tony responded that Wildlife Services (WS) has done some work in 074 and 076 near Contact in association with a burn in the area. We listed these areas in the Heritage proposal to give us some flexibility because the burn caused some winter concentrations in there as well. Larry stated he had received some recent information from Joe Bennett.

For the record Joe Bennett of Wildlife Services: We have been doing work relative to Project 22 with \$3 Fee dollars in Unit 222 and Unit 231 where we used the helicopter for 3 & ½ days and killed 101 coyotes and then came back a few days later and killed 50 more for a total of 151 all south of Ely. We have been working on the NV Alliance 4 Wildlife Heritage project in Unit 144, the Diamonds, where we killed 99 coyotes the first attempt and then 27 more and an additional 24 plus the previous take of 107 for a total of 257 coyotes removed from the Diamonds. We are headed up to Units 074 and 076 on Sunday for a week. We have worked on the Hunter's Alert Project in Unit 031 and killed 149 coyotes. The update for the bighorn protection project on Mt. Moriah is that we spent 3 weeks and removed one adult male lion and one older adult female lion. Our guys found a dead bighorn ewe. In the Meadow Valleys and Delamars we have a full-time specialist working there who has removed 2 lions and 50 coyotes in the Delamars. We are ready to start sage grouse work which is a Heritage Project and we contact NDOW biologists before any work being conducted. We have worked with Kari Huebner and she mentioned that their elk survey numbers were down so we are noting any elk observed with the GPS.

Commissioner Capurro asked if WS was ready to go with regard to materials for Raven Control. Joe responded Yes, everything is good to go, we're going to target badgers this year on the leks and nesting areas, and for ravens we are working with NDOW to try and get that permit. We are working with Shawn Espinosa to apply for a permit that will allow removal of up to 1,500 ravens. Through the Heritage project we have identified a number of new areas this year. We are going to treat three or four locations in White Pine County this year and we're going to treat Lander County, Humboldt County, and a couple more counties in the West. I think we are good to go and will be working in Clark County next week.

Commissioner Capurro said it sounds good and asked if they are having any problems getting the permit. Larry answered that Shawn is filling out the permit and working with the Fish and Wildlife Service to get that permit done.

Chairman Vogler stated that he is in a kind of a "migratory belt" that goes through his property and as an operator he does his best to stay in business and keep the sage grouse off of the endangered species list. Ravens have been taken out of the area but is limited once the quota has been reached. The Chairman asked who sets the quota, and we have large numbers of Ravens going through the area right next to the leks, so can we up the quota? Larry responded that he believes Joe is targeting some of those concentrations in the Ely area. The Chairman asked if we would intervene and ask the USFWS to revise the quota numbers. Commissioner Capurro commented that it has been a problem in the past and that is why he asked Joe if he was having trouble getting a permit this year and now he has found out that Shawn Espinosa is currently working with the USFWS to raise the quotas, and that the hang-up is with USF&WS not the Department.

Commissioner Howell asked Joe if the Committee will get a full update at the next Commission meeting as far as the plan and Heritage projects? Joe responded by saying, "Charlie, all you guys have to do is ask and we will be happy to provide that information – if you just make a call to Mark Jensen, we will be glad to put the information together." Commissioner Howell stated he would ask Commission Chairman Scott Raine to place this on the next agenda.

Commissioner Capurro asked if Project #25 had begun. Larry stated that NDOW had a recent conference call with USU and they hope to have a person in place to begin marking coyotes this summer and start the study. Tony has been in contact with the student to coordinate frequencies for radio collars on coyotes so we don't have conflicts with other radio-collared animals in the area. Tony further stated that he had a face-to-face meeting with the student last week and the study was discussed and he is currently conducting interviews for field techs who will be working with him this summer.

Commissioner Capurro asked Joe if there any additional control activities planned in the Delamars now? Joe stated he has eight trail cameras, a mountain lion call box, snares, and traps in that area. There was a foot of snow on Sunday, and a hunter in area found a dead deer. Those two female lions were working the area. My theory is as it warms up the sheep will be coming to water consistently and then we will be able to snare the lions that are working those sheep.

Commissioner Capurro stated he received an e-mail with pictures that had been taken with a trail camera, in Washington. The pictures showed eight lions with a “downed” cow, and this seemed to be a sort of pride. He asked Joe if he has seen this in Nevada. Joe stated he has studied those trail camera photographs, and was what he has saw was some adult females with two or three yearlings each. Getting pictures like this may not be because of more lions but because of more trail cameras. Joe further stated they are starting to see concentrations of deer on private ranches near alfalfa fields , and these animals have become vulnerable to lions. These smaller deer herds that are agricultural related are sometimes really “hammered” by lions.

Chairman Vogler questioned the budget totals found on the current Predator Plan and asked Larry for a clarification. Larry stated that we first put the 25,000 for the USU Coyote study under the projects that WS performs, but have now moved it to NDOW operating. When the figures were moved, the \$25,000 was inadvertently added in twice and that was one of the problems. Chairman Vogler stated that does not make up the difference between \$93,000 and \$148,000. Larry agreed that the math didn’t add up and so he corrected the table on the last page which is being sent out to committee members and is available on the Web. He stated expenditures are going to be lower this year anyway since the predator management staff position has been vacant for most of the year. Chairman Vogler asked where the funding for the position came from. Larry stated that the majority comes from the \$3.00 predator fee charged on all big game, and turkey applications, but the position will also be responsible for mountain lion management. The funding for the mountain lion portion will come from federal aid and some license dollars. Chairman Vogler asked if rather than paying a position from sportsmen’s dollars, why not have the local area biologists handle predator projects in their areas. Larry stated some of this money does go to the field personnel, especially this year with the staff position being vacant. Finally, Larry stated that Kevin reported that NDOW normally spends between \$90 to \$120,000 and then for this year we had to add on the \$25,000 for the USU coyote study. Chairman Vogler stated that the 93,000 we are spending on the position would buy a lot of helicopter time for more control work. Larry stated that we have to spend quite a bit of time in the coordination and reporting on this program and a staff position has to handle it.

Commissioner Howell asked about the amount of the grant for the USU study. Larry stated the \$25,000 was matched with federal PR dollars and the actual amount of the study will be \$100,000. Commissioner Howell asked if we could get federal match for projects that actually kill predators. Tony stated the USFWS is not willing to give money for the removal of predators, but will give it for the study and monitoring aspect of it. The Commissioner then asked if we could get matching funds for the position costs. Larry stated the only federal money for the position is for the lion management portion of the job.

Agenda Item #7 – Assignments and Agenda Items for the Next Meeting – Chairman Vogler – ACTION

Commissioner Howell offered to contact Chairman Raine and ask to be put on their Commission agenda to address where we are at as far as what’s been accomplished and how much money is left. Chairman Vogler stated asked for a motion.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HOWELL TO ASK CHAIRMAN RAINE TO PLACE ON THE NEXT COMMISSION AGENDA AN UPDATE ON THE WILDLIFE DAMAGE COMMITTEE'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND REMAINING FUNDS, AND THE STATUS OF STREMLER'S HERITAGE CONTRACT HOW HE IS DOING IN HIS AREA. COMMISSIONER CAPURRO SECONDED THEAND AMENDED THE MOTION, THE MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.

Agenda Item #8 – Establish Date, Time and Location of the Next Meeting – Chairman Vogler – ACTION

The next meeting is to be announced at a later date. Chairman Vogler would like to have an update at our board meeting.

Agenda Item #9 – Adjourn

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 3:31p.m.

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Respectfully Submitted

Dawn Carter

March 14, 2011

