

# NEVADA BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS

## Wildlife Damage Management Committee

Southern Region Office  
4747 Vegas Drive  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89108

March 18, 2010  
2:00 p.m.

### MINUTES

---

Those Committee members in attendance were:

Scott Raine – Committee Chairman  
Daryl Capurro – Commissioner  
Charles Howell - Commissioner  
Mike Laughlin – Member (*By Teleconference*)  
Grant Wallace – Commissioner (*By Teleconference*)  
Kevin C. Lansford – NDOW, Staff to Committee

Also in attendance were:

Adam Thomson – Wild West Predator Management Company  
Joe Bennett – USDA-APHIS-WS  
Glen Copeland – Washoe CABMW (*By Teleconference*)  
Michael Endman – Wild West Predator Management Company  
Mark Jensen – USDA – Wildlife Services (WS)  
Don Molde – Self

#### **Agenda Items #1 & #2 – Call to Order & Introductions – Chairman (Raine)**

Chairman Raine called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Chairman Raine asked all members to introduce themselves and their affiliations.

#### **Agenda Item #3 - Approval of Minutes from the November 24, 2009 Meeting – Chairman Raine – ACTION**

The Chairman asked the Committee if there were any changes to the minutes, there were none.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER CAPURRO TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS WRITTEN FOR THE NOVEMBER 24, 2009 MEETING, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HOWELL. THE MOTION WAS PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

---

#### **Agenda Item #4 – Commission Member Items – Chairman Raine – ACTION**

The Chairman asked for public comment for items not already listed on the agenda.

The Chairman noted in the minutes there was a request for the definition of what determines mountain lion as a big game species, and asked if this had been done. Commissioner Capurro stated that he had received that information.

#### **Agenda Item #5 – Public Comment** *(Please limit comments to 3 minutes)*

Don Molde – He donated a copy of the latest cougar book published by the people who have built the core of knowledge that currently exists.

Adam Thomson – A new business located in Southern Nevada but could be working statewide. They are looking to enhance the quality of performances and outcomes throughout the state as needed by the private farmer/rancher as well as the government entities that need other sources. Their company is hoping to provide a viable option to using Wildlife Services for predation management projects.

Kevin Lansford – Asked Mr. Thomson if their company was a registered business. Mr. Thomson stated he is in the process of obtaining county permits and licenses for Nevada. Commissioner Raine asked what specific work they perform. Mr. Thomson stated they work with anything related to coyote management, and others such as mountain lions, skunks and raccoons etc.

Kevin asked Wildlife Services to prepare a “half-time” update on current projects and to present this report to this Committee;

Joe Bennett gave an overview of some of the projects and a few pictures were provided to the Committee members as well. During the past few months Wildlife Services has hired two intermittent lion hunters that have been an asset to these projects. The following are some of the areas on the west side of the state that Kevin requested some control work be completed.

#### **West Side**

**Stillwaters** – Work began in February. A lion had been to the area and has passed through, Snares have been set and the area is being monitored right now.

**Mt. Tobin** – Some old lion sign has been found, but the lion has moved out of the area.

**Jacksons’s** – Conducted several sight inspections but have found no sign at all.

---

## East side

**Virgin Mtns./Gold Buttes** – Some sign that was 4 to 5 months old was all that was found.

**Moriah** - Have some collared sheep in the area and the Ely biologist noted there was noted lion predation. To date three adult toms have been removed.

**East Humboldts** – Where there has been a bighorn sheep die-off, two lions have moved into the area and are preying on these sheep. Our lion hunter removed a large older tom. Kevin stated that because of the sheep die-off many coyotes have moved into the area. The helicopter used for surveys was currently in Elko and it was proposed to use it to remove some of the coyotes, however Larry Gilbertson (Game Division Chief – formerly Eastern Region Supervising Game Biologist), felt that the remaining sheep in the area were already stressed and a helicopter removing coyotes could harm the animals further at this time.

**Delamars** – A bobcat killed a bighorn sheep ewe approximately a month ago, so the NDOW funded specialist was sent to the area and he removed an adult male bobcat and a couple of coyotes. There is a lion issue in the Delamars right now as we have received three mortality signals so two lion hunters have been sent to the area. Two signals are confirmed lion kills and the third is still being investigated.

Additional project updates are as follows:

**Project #18 – Unit 014** – In the past 12 months 121 coyotes and 7 lions have been removed. Joe was told by Kevin that a transplant maybe could be done in the unit in the future.

**Project #22** - Wildlife Services aerial program in Units 031, 114, 144, 145, 222, 231, 241 and the Kirch WMA. Some coyotes have already been removed from Kirch and further removal of ravens is planned in the spring. To date just over 400 coyotes have been removed in this project. Commissioner Raine asked if there was additional money left for the project. Joe stated that the project got a late start but he feels that the money will all be used to intensify their efforts to removed coyotes by helicopter in the fawning areas. Chairman Raine asked how much of the funding has been spent on the Delamars. Mark Jensen stated that not much has been spent yet. The seasonal have been paid with the money for the Delamars and we are very pleased with their work and they have all of their own equipment. Kevin stated that approximately \$10,000 of the emergency fund (originally \$20,000), for work done in the Humboldts, Gold Buttes and the Virgin Mountains. It will likely be all used.

**Project #21A –Raven removal** – Four or five new leks have been treated as well as Kirch

**WMA Overton Turkey** - No work accomplished, but will be available if NDOW requests some control work be done.

**Project #23 - Mason Valley Pheasant** – We have some funding there but haven't begun any work yet, but will soon.

Chairman Raine asked about the Wildlife Specialist position. Mark Jensen stated that this position has been a great asset to many of the projects. Kevin stated that when additional lion work is necessary and the emergency fund and the money allotted for the project have been exhausted, additional funding can be taken from this position account. Mark stated that the flexibility of this fund is quite beneficial in getting the job done easily.

Mike Laughlin asked if draw stations were being used during the aerial gunning of coyotes. Joe stated that yes draw stations have been used with the assistance of private landowners.

No further questions were asked so Joe presented and described pictures he had taken of several of the projects where control is being done.

Glen Copeland asked if there is any hunting on Mt. Moriah in the wilderness area. Joe said yes but no motorized vehicles are used.

Kevin stated as an overview that for the future flexibility is an important tool (Adaptive Management). He views the program as we move forward as ravens, lions and coyotes.

**Project 6A** – Primarily lion control work is done but we have added coyotes and bobcats. Maximum flexibility should be used in this area and \$15,000 has been allocated. Aerial costs are covered by Project #22 and the wildlife specialist is paid through his position funds. The project being expanded and or broadened was discussed. Personnel from Wildlife Services will get together and develop a strategy to expand the project both physically and monetarily. It is felt that this project, over time, is one of the more efficient and effective ones we have.

**Projects # 14, 15 and 17** – Nothing new to report on these projects.

**Project #18** – Granite Range – Lions have been removed. Kevin is currently working with other NDOW staff biologists to gather information and assess the situation on deer in the area. Kevin also thinks all projects should include multiple species. Information gathered during the five years of the project will be compared to the previous five years to determine potential project results. General consensus is that deer and bighorn sheep herds have expanded somewhat. One of the reasons this area could be used as a future ‘prescription,’ is these herds do not leave the area for winter and/or summer ranges and mingle with other animals in adjacent units who have not had any predator work performed in them.

Chairman Raine asked Mr. Copeland if he had received any information on this project as it is located in Washoe County. Mr. Copeland stated that he gets periodic reports from NDOW Biologist Chris Hampson who has responsibility for this hunt unit.

Commissioner Howell asked if there was any migration from California. Kevin stated that the deer in Unit in 015 is a highly migratory herd.

Kevin feels we should continue to this project for at least one more year to determine if the lion population will stabilize and the herd can sustain the predation or if this unit will be a perpetual

project. Have we reached any goals, more intense monitoring on this project would have been valuable.

Commissioner Raine asked to hear from Wildlife Services. Mark stated he agreed with Kevin's assessment, but until they get an analysis from NDOW they will then have some discussions.

**Project# 19** – This project absorbed into #22.

**Project #20** – Virginia Mountains – Lion work may be continued on an as needed basis. Kevin asked Wildlife Services if this project should be left as a 'stand alone', or move the \$5,000 somewhere we know there is a lion problem. There was a discussion with different scenarios suggested.

**Projects #21A & 21B** - Twenty-one A is for Sage Grouse protection. Twenty-one B is money that has been set aside for Raven removal to improve turkey nesting success on the Overton WMA. We have, through direct observation, that approximately 100% nesting loss when ravens were present, and good nesting success after control work was done.

**Project #21A** – Keeps expanding each year. More leks and more complexes have been treated, and Kevin would like to see those numbers increased for 2011. Wildlife Services will give us areas where there is a high density of ravens, and if there is an overlap on critical sage grouse areas they will do some control work.

Commissioner Raine stated that Project #21B should remain at the \$2,000 and at what level and Project #21A should increase funding. Kevin stated that will need to be expanded, dependent upon how many sites are added. Also, after this year we will know how much money was spent, and if it is all used the project funding can be expanded. Commissioner Raine asked how we measure success. Kevin stated that two research projects done by Pete Coates, found that certain densities ravens inhibited nesting success in sage grouse. Commissioner Raine asked if a copy of this research information could be e-mailed to the members of the Committee.

**Project #22** – Kevin stated that getting the contract in place, and having the helicopter back in Nevada will help as we get better at targeting fawning areas. This is one of the best things we have accomplished for the program this year. Mark stated that he appreciated the opportunity to switch their aerial program from the helicopter to the fixed-wing and the reverse as well.

**Project #23** - Pheasants – Currently Jack Spencer (Wildlife Services) is gathering equipment as is preparing to go to the Mason Valley WMA and begin some control work. Mark stated that they should have some results by June to determine if the project will be continued for another year.

**Wildlife Services Field Specialist Position** - Kevin stated that this has been discussed, but we need to determine if there are enough funds currently allocated for this position. The title will be changed from Position to Position-s.

**Project #24** – Brochures – Kevin provided the committee with draft brochures on coyotes and the predator program that are being designed and proofed by Aaron Meier. These brochures are an important part of keeping the public know what we are doing with the \$3.00 fee etc.

**Project #25** – Proposal for Area 16. Commissioner Raid asked how the matching fund request was progressing. Kevin stated that the request has been submitted to the USFWS, and he feels confident that the \$25,000 will be matched with federal funds. Commissioner Raine asked when we would receive the money. Kevin stated any day, and it will be for \$75,000/annually provided against the Committee’s \$25,000. Also we would like the project to run from 5 to 7 years with the first year will be used to gather baseline data, and the following years will be active an active predator control project.

**Agenda Item #7 – Discuss 2011 New Project Proposals and/or Changes to Ongoing Projects – Kevin C. Lansford – INFORMATIONAL**

Commissioner Raine stated that as result in the reduction of horses, due to BLM gathers, does it warrant a change to one of our projects in the area. This option was discussed and it was determined that we could go view the areas that have had horse reductions and possibly develop a new project.

Kevin stated that there are some options on where to spend money not yet allocated.

1. Area 15 – Lander County
2. Area 16 Study
3. Area 3 – Jacksons
4. Expanded Raven Projects

A short discussion followed regarding roll-over funding. Kevin explained that un-spent money was just added to the next years “new” money with no string attached.

Adam Thomson owns a company that is involved in predator management. Commissioner Raine stated that we have used outside vendors on occasion, but that it is very rare. Kevin stated that we have spent money on extra aerial hunting hours using a private company. The Committee discussed the possibly of using an additional private vendor to perform different projects, and the pros and cons were identified. Mr. Thomson answered many questions from the Committee members during the discussion.

Mr. Laughlin asked if Kevin had considered a new project in the Simpson Park Mountains. Kevin stated that the Area 15 proposal is still a viable project, but maybe not at the same monetary level.

The Committee discussed funding all of their current projects and adding the new and/or future proposals on top. Commissioner Capurro spoke about expanding Project #17, and to include some sage grouse work using heritage money to augment.

Chairman stated we should add all of the current projects and the new proposals. After we have a total cuts can be made to bring the program in line with the budget. Lengthy discussion on budgets and various funding avenues ensued. The final decision was to build a program for \$600,000 and know that \$400,000 will be funded leaving \$150,000 that will need to be cut.

It was decided to include in the new plan, Shawn's suggestions for sage grouse work in Humboldt County, current on-going projects, expanding raven control work in Areas 14 and 15, mule deer work in Area 15, alternative heritage project proposals, and all other "pie in the sky" proposals.

Mike Laughlin stated that this time of year is where you get the most "bang for the buck" when doing aerial coyote control work.

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER LAUGHLIN THAT ALL PREDATOR PROJECTS THAT GAVE BEEN APPROVED WHETHER RECENT OR NEW HAVE SOME KIND OF A FALL/SPRING AERIAL CENSUS DONE (SPEAKING OF DEER NOW) TO DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF FAWNS PER DOES RATIO FOR FALL AND SPRING**

Mr. Laughlin thinks this is very important and the committee should vote on it and approve it, and then send it to the full Commission for their vote. Then the Commission could request NDOW to carry out the aerial counts. This concept is the only way we can justify these projects.

Kevin mentioned that the budget PM does include some flight time on it, and money has been set aside for aerial surveys to include fall and spring counts.

**Agenda Item #8 – Assignments and Agenda Items for the Next Meeting – Chairman Raine – ACTION**

The Committee needs to provide all comments on the brochures be given to Kevin as soon as possible. Wildlife Services will also need to prepare another update.

**Agenda Item #9 – Establish Date, Time and Location of the Next Meeting – Chairman Raise – ACTION**

The next meeting will be held on May 7, 2010, at 2:00 p.m. in the Reno Office.

**Agenda Item #10 – Adjourn**

**IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED TO ADJOURN. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

---

Respectfully Submitted  
Dawn Carter  
April 2010

