

**Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners
Wildlife Damage Management Committee**

Approved Minutes

**Nevada Department of Wildlife
1100 Valley Road
Reno, NV 89512
Thursday, March 19, 2015 / 4:00 p.m.**

Committee Members Present

Chairman – Commissioner Chad Bliss
Commissioner Karen Layne
Commissioner Pete Mori
Commissioner Brad Johnston
Committee member Tom Cassinelli

Public in Attendance

Don Molde	Fred Voltz
Rex Flowers	Mike Reese
Joel Blakeslee	Mark Jensen
Gerald Lent	Daryl Capurro

1. Call to Order – Chairman Bliss

The meeting was called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 4:00 p.m. by Chairman Bliss, followed by roll call.

2. Approval of Agenda – Chairman Bliss - For Possible Action

The Committee will review the agenda and may take action to approve the agenda. The Committee may remove items from the agenda, combine items for consideration or take items out of order.

No Committee comments.

Public comment: None

Commissioner Johnston: Move to approve the agenda as presented.

Second by Commissioner Mori.

Vote: 5-0 – passes unanimously

3. *Approval of Minutes (May 9, 2014) – Chairman Bliss – For Possible Action

No Committee comments.

Public Comment: None

Commissioner Layne: Move to approve the minutes as presented.

Second by Commissioner Mori.

Vote 5-0 – passes unanimously

4. ***Report of FY 2016 Predator Management Plan – Predator Management Staff Specialist Pat Jackson – For Possible Action**

The Committee will discuss the development of a report detailing the draft FY 2016 predator management plan. The Committee may take action to provide direction to staff or establish findings or recommendations to present to the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners.

Brian Wakeling: Presented the Predator Fee Overview, direction of Policy 23, targeted distribution of funds & restrictions, as well as Predator Fee Finances (see attached PowerPoint).

Pat Jackson: Went over changes to the Predator Projects since the last Commission meeting. Discussed the numbering of projects and noted that there wouldn't be any more sub projects due to the reporting problems. One project one plan, whether it is funded or not we will just go on to the next number.

We have the 75/25 split where 75% of the funding is to go to lethal removal and 25% to other endeavors. I would like to propose the concept on certain projects, actually instead of saying this is a lethal project or this is a non-lethal project, consider half/half and put it in both categories. Situations where that would be is where we were doing some sort of research on a lethal tool, i.e. trapping, or if we are doing a preliminary findings to understand predator populations before we implement lethal removal. The common denominator amongst the vast majority of the projects that I went over, we had a very good handle on the prey populations, but we had little to no understanding of the predator populations. So, I can't go back and make any inference on what did or did not happen to those predator populations. I will never advocate that we will be able to do that with every predator project but I think there will be quite a bit of merit to do that with some predator projects so we can understand our successes and failures and how we can improve. We tried to break the project types down into 3 different parts; implementation (on the ground stuff that doesn't necessarily warrant collecting data beforehand to understand the effectiveness of the project), experimental management (where we are trying to do something on the ground to have an effect but also can go back and make inference later), and then experimentation (something where we are just trying to understand what is going on).

Pat continued through the PowerPoint with projects that are recommended for continuation.

Project 21: Greater Sage-grouse Protection (Raven Removal)

Changed from \$58,000 to \$78,000

I put this out to Wildlife Services and in creating the initial draft they pointed out that on average it costs around \$58,000 to reach our 2500 permit for the raven take. We also wanted to have a monitoring component to this and Joe Bennett pointed out to put in for the lethal component and so we bumped that up to \$78,000.

Commissioner Johnston: I have a question not specifically directed at this project, but with raven removal in general. It seems to me in the Predator Management Plan we need to somehow have a plan or projects, whatever is needed in place to get the raven removal permit greater than the 2500. How do we go about that? I was listening at the meeting at the Legislature on that issue. We need to be able to show certain things but I am not certain what those things are to the Federal Government to get the permit at a higher number. I would like to somehow start working that in to this Predator Management Plan if we can.

Pat Jackson: I don't disagree with that. I think that we have a lot of ravens. I can tell you this is the first year that I have gone through the permitting process. I see merit to increasing that but I don't know how much say we have in being able to do so.

Brian Wakeling: I am not sure I can answer that question at this point either. It is something that we can certainly pursue with the Fish and Wildlife Service and investigate what it would take and what parameters they would look for.

Commission Johnston: I feel like when we are looking at raven projects and the money being spent and the catch is 2500 ravens, how can we go about raising that cap given the number of ravens that are being reported.

Pat Jackson: I will add that I think there are also merits to understanding the non-lethal strategies and I may be entirely incorrect, but I would imagine that the Fish and Wildlife Service to increase the lethal side of the permit would also want to see increases in efforts for non-lethal. That maybe entirely incorrect but I would imagine that that would be the case.

Jack Robb: We are doing that study in the Virginia Mountains with Pete Coates and part of the outcome that we want out of that is to determine whether we can show a movement in the success of the birds in the Virginia Mountains. While doing that the cost per bird is pretty high because we are going out there when there is not a whole lot of birds other places and go and cost per bird is low because there is a lot to choose from. So, that is part of the reason we are doing the Virginia Mountain one that we are in the middle of. So, we can prove by science that it does have an effect. I have had multiple conversations with Ted Koch and I am going to meet with him again next week to go over this. I keep asking Ted how do we get that number up. It has been reported, and the question was brought up at the Legislature in the past few weeks, how Idaho got their number up. So, we contacted the state of Idaho and asked what was going on. They have gone about removal a little bit different. They have sent guys out with shotguns and then had to convert to rifles. They are trying all kinds of things that are not very effective up there. We asked them if they got their cap up and they said no it is at 4000. So, there is a bunch of words out there that Idaho has increased their cap but they are still not to where we are. We say we are at 2500. It is 2500 for the Department of Wildlife and 2500 for the Ag industry. So that is 5000 total for the state of Nevada and Idaho is 4000 for the whole state. We are working on that, trying to get that up and trying to figure out ways to get there. The science with Pete Coates is one of the ways we get there.

Chairman Bliss: Is the 4000 in Idaho split with Ag and Wildlife as well?

Jack Robb: I wasn't the one who had the conversation. Their cap is 4000.

Subproject 21-02: Raven Removal and Greater Sage-Grouse Nest Success
No recommended changes.

Project 22: Mule Deer-Game enhancement
No recommended changes.

Subproject 22-01: Mountain Lion Removal to Protect California Bighorn Sheep
No recommendations for changes.

Commissioner Layne: I know we talked about this in the last meeting, particularly with respects to Wildlife Services. I think Wildlife Services concern at that time was how we go about doing this. In other words, do we just go in there and go after every mountain lion. Is it all mountain lions or is just some and trying to concentrate on those mountain lions that are going after the sheep. We have talked about that at great length at the last meeting that we had on this issue with Wildlife Services about how we do that. Do you feel like we are trying to approach this issue in terms of this particular project?

Pat Jackson: I think with predators and mountain lions in particular there is proactive and reactive management. The proactive would be just removing lions in an area and reactive would be if we had a collared individual bighorn, mule or whatever and we go in and try to remove the offending individual. Right now I would say this is somewhat of a buffer project where we literally have drawn a polygon around the area and they are just having Wildlife Services remove animals in that area. I think that certainly has merit. I think that in order to understand the situation that is going on and to try to just remove the offending individuals, it may or may not be a more efficient endeavor but it is certainly more expensive. To pay a Wildlife Services specialist to go in and snare lions and to go in and survey lions it is generally approximately the same cost.

Commissioner Layne: I guess my concern is that this discussion took place because some of the projects that we had did not appear to be successful and we were trying to talk about how to make these projects more successful. I guess that is my only concern. We have had this ongoing discussion about how we were going to do this with a new committee and new staff. I just don't want us to go back to square one when we already spent all this time on this issue. That is my only concern. My sense is that if we think it is going to be more effective by spending a little bit more money then maybe that is what need to do. As opposed to just going out there and killing everything in sight. I don't want to repeat the mistakes of the past.

Chairman Bliss: I agree with the way that the project is set up myself. You are trying to protect the sheep in a certain area and mountain lions move in and out. So a lion that you may be studying today may be gone tomorrow or one that was somewhere else will show up the following day. I don't think it is a this lion will kill sheep and this lion won't. It is if this lion has opportunity or not. They are opportunist and so I agree with this approach. If you go the other route, I don't know if you would ever really get to the point that you are looking for.

Committee member Cassinelli: I agree like you. This is a little different situation than in an established herd. This herd we are trying to get to come back. It is already in trouble. I think you have to consider all lions as being a threat to this herd until we get to that point where it recovers.

Commissioner Johnston: Is there a goal with respect to this project as to how many lions you would like to remove?

Pat Jackson: I think this project's success or failure is more judged by the bighorn sheep population.

Subproject 22-14 changed to subproject 22-16: Coyote Den Density Effects on Mule Deer Fauns and Other Wildlife Species.

This was going to occur in the Diamonds. We have since learned that some private coyote control has been conducted and due to wanting to work in an area that hasn't seen profession coyote removal and also in an area where we have some baseline coyote data we are recommending move this from the Diamonds to the Monitors.

Chairman Bliss: There was a study done in there 5 years prior. Reading back through that information it seems pretty similar to what you are trying to do in the first stages of this project, as far as your den densities, collected scat, etc. I am wondering if you don't already have your baseline data off of the 5 year previous study in there to justify the lethal removal already.

Pat Jackson: I don't have den densities with the Monitors.

Chairman Bliss: You might not have all of them but if you read back through here, there was 20 of them that you classified.

Pat Jackson: One of those was in the Monitors. The other 19 were outside.

Chairman Bliss: My concern based on that project, with me assuming that I haven't heard what we actually got from that project. We can get to that after this. We will continue down this road, but to me we did 5 years' worth of work in that area and it seems that we did a lot of science in there already.

Subproject 22-074: Mountain Lion Removal and Diet Analysis for the Protection of Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep

No recommended changes.

Commissioner Layne: We talked a lot about this in the last meeting with Wildlife Services in terms of some of the issues. I hope that if nothing more that we better define what it is that we are trying to accomplish. For example; you talk about removing mountain lions within close proximity of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep to increase sheep numbers. I think again what would be nice to know is what the sheep numbers you are looking for are and how many lions you are proposing to remove. It is a pretty broad goal. I would like to see more specifics in terms of the bighorn sheep numbers.

Project 25: Coyote Diet and Habitat Selection

Original objectives have been met and the original proposal was to collect some more micro habitat data. I have decided it is no longer necessary so we recommend discontinuing this after August 6, 2015.

Project 32: Mountain Lion, Black Bear, and Mule Deer Interactions

No recommended changes since last meeting.

Commissioner Johnston: So, we are going to study mountain lion takes down a deer in an area where there is black bear, the black bear comes in and eats the rest of the deer so to speak. We are going to try to find out if that increases predation on deer or what are we trying to find out?

Pat Jackson: I am not the principal investigator on this project, but I believe that is a good summary at least from the management aspect. What you just described does happen, but how often does it happen and do mountain lions disperse out of the area, do mountain lions consume more deer, do mountain lions prey switch and eat something else or is it a combination of something in between. If you look at Carl Lackey's paper, quite a bit of Nevada used to be bear habitat. I believe unless something drastically changes we are going to see bears in more of Nevada and as we see that we are going to see more bears competing with more mountain lions and mountain lions arguably consume more deer than anything else so what is going to happen. In a couple of mountain ranges we can learn something to extrapolate that across the rest of the state and understand what we do or don't need to do.

Commissioner Johnston: So, I guess once we get the answers to the questions or have a better understanding then we would know if the bears are dispersing the lions and maybe that is a good thing. If they are not and the mountain lions are taking more, then we need to go into that area with control of lions and/or bears.

Pat Jackson: We want to understand what is going on so then we can make informed decisions.

Chairman Bliss: Reading back, this is the 3rd year of this project?

Pat Jackson: It is a continuation of Dr. Anderson's Ph.D. work and I don't know the year that she started. We have had collared lions in this area for a while. I think Carl Lackey has been working with bears, although it is kind of two projects that have come together. That sounds about right.

Chairman Bliss: I looked at it and in FY14 we had \$15,000 that was spent out of the \$3 money and \$45,000 match. Then last year it was approved at \$25,000 and had matching funds up to \$320,000 through various other organizations. Then this year we are looking at \$40,000 out of the \$3 money and then \$120,000 just with PR (Pittman Robertson) and reading back through the past projects it says that there was 15 bears captured and 15 mountain lions captured early on. Then in this project in front of us today it says to capture 18 black bears, 18 mountain lions and 60 mule deer. My question to you is, how many of these bears and lions have been captured? Did we spend all of that \$320,000 that was matching fund dollars or even the \$3 money? Where is that project sitting right now currently?

Pat Jackson: There is a lot to that. This project was never approved for \$3 match. So the Pittman Robertson money never existed. I would say that the \$320,000 from Safari Club International and a few other funding sources may have been overly optimistic. One of those proposals was not accepted. Those funding sources were never available. I don't know the number of mountain lions that have been collared, again I am not the principal investigator, Dr. Anderson can answer that and then Carl would be better to answer how many bears. There is some overlap on what he does with urban bears and the bears of that area and how many collars he has out.

Chairman Bliss: I thought that last year this project was approved with \$3 money.

Pat Jackson: It was approved for \$3 Predator Fee but the proposal was never submitted to my understanding for Pittman Robertson money.

Brian Wakeling: My understanding is that some of the money was expended to acquire some of the radio collars for this particular project. But I don't believe any of those collars were ever implemented.

Pat Jackson: I know a couple collars have been put on mountain lions in the past months, I don't know the number. I believe those were bought with \$3 Predator Fee money. No deer have been collared. The deer are not coming from the \$3 Predator Fee, that is big game and plans have been made for those to be deployed this year.

Chairman Bliss: Maybe it would be nice to be a little bit more up to speed to where we are actually sitting with this projects as we fund them forward and what money is left in the project that would be carried over from year to year. I look at this now and it says to collar 15 bears and 15 lions in past years and now we are going to do 18 more plus the deer. A tremendous amount of money has already been spent on the project and I think it is only fair that we know exactly how much money has been expended out which projects. If in the project we approved the \$25,000 or the \$15,000 and it has PR match, why wasn't the PR match utilized?

Pat Jackson: The PR match was never submitted for in my understanding.

Brian Wakeling: In this particular project, we are playing a little bit of catch up still. Pat is new, he has been here since November just for the benefit of everybody. But the direction that the prior predator biologist had taken this, he had never received direction to try to obtain that 3-1 federal match for this particular project. So, it had never been included in any of our Fish and Wildlife Service grants. It was not denied but we did not actually go forward and make that request. This project because of the nature of the project is an experimentation project it is eligible for that and it is our intent to pursue that this year.

Chairman Bliss: I understand that both of you are new with this and it is kind of unfair to me to talk about things that happened in the past without you guys having the proper time to catch up with it. But, it is frustrating to all of us here, we have a lot of clean up to do of things that has happened or that needs to be taken in a different direction. Hopefully, by being able to come up and do the background work on this and say this is where we are sitting on these projects and this is what we need. If there was money left over you might not need the \$40,000 out of here right now. If that PR dollar match was utilized we could be using this \$3 million on a different project all together. Hopefully we can get to that point in the future.

Commissioner Layne: I would agree with you. That has been a certain level of frustration for all of us, is that we don't have a good handle on what is happening particularly with the continuation projects in terms of where are we, what is happening and how much money has been spent.

Commissioner Mori: It seems this project got approved and since that time there were a lot of uncertainties as to what happened and what direction we were going and what direction we should have gone. What are your thoughts on this project? You guys are going to be the ones moving from here forward. Is this a worthwhile project or since not a lot has been done is this something that we should look at scrapping?

Pat Jackson: This project has 3 parts. The deer component I would say that Cody Schroeder is in charge of. The black bear component really is more of Carl Lackey's thing. For the mountain lion stuff that is really with the Wildlife Conservation Society and Dr. Anderson and Beckman. I believe this is a sound project and it has a lot of moving parts. Due to changing positions and changing funding sources and uncertainty in funding and different have had different responsibilities. It has also been frustrating on my part to understand who is in charge of what. For instance, on any of these other projects I manage the collars and I understand when they go out and when. I don't know the brands of the collars. I don't know how many have or haven't been deployed because I have to keep in touch with those people. Frankly, I think it is their job to keep in touch with me and update that. That relationship hasn't necessarily been put into place. I have some work to do to reel in these folks but I do believe this is a sound project and I do believe Nevada is going to see more and more black bears. I think this project has a lot of merit and I fully support it.

Brian Wakeling: As Pat pointed out early on. If we do see expansion of bears in Nevada, it certainly seems likely, it seems to be the thing that is kind of occurring in some other states. If that is to occur, if this project comes off in the way that we envision, this will be valuable information to help us forecast whether or not we want to even consider trying to do something to keep any expansion from occurring or if we can make an inference that it is not going to have a huge impact on our other species. That to me is going to be the value of this particular project.

Chairman Bliss: You said that you have to reel some of this stuff in and you don't know when those collars are going out. That is obvious because you're just starting. I would say that any moneys expended out of this \$3 million account that you be 100% on top of it. Where it is going, how it is being spent, when that stuff is going out. I am not putting that just on you but the people that are working on these projects need to report that to you so that you have these answers. So you know exactly what is happening all the time. Anything that is tied to the \$3 million predator money should be 100% through you.

Pat Jackson: I agree with that. The mountain lion component, the Wildlife Conservation Society has had their own funds and have worked on their own, so in the last few months they have done things like a telemetry flight, paying the data on collars that have been out. I understand those charges and I have approved them, but they just got \$20,000 that is theirs and they tell me what they did with it. That

money is used in the exact same fashion as the Predator Fee so in a reporting aspect it is kind of a grey area to understand what happened and what went where. I would say that strives have been made. Certainly, it is apparent that I don't understand fully what is going on with this project but as far as the \$3 fee that has been spent since I have been here, I can speak to that and it hasn't been that much. It has really been a telemetry flight and the data collection on a series of collars. Research that I have done prior, I understand that a lot of the collars have been bought and are in hand and about to be deployed or are currently being deployed. Besides Cody Schroeder, I very rarely see Carl or Allison.

Brian Wakeling: Kind of a broader challenge that we have had to deal with just trying to account with how funds are expended out of the predator fee. We can track every individual expenditure that comes out of that particular account. Our accounting system allows us to do that very well. But, it is extremely difficult to identify which project it was spent on. We have been working with our Fiscal Services to improve our ability to be able to track those to the project level. That has been something that has been a challenge since I got here. I presented the status report this last year and as I was trying to look at the expenditures that occurred during prior years I was unable to assign with any great deal of accuracy the exact proportion that had been spent on any particular project. I had to look at it from a lump approach. Pat has been working with our Fiscal Services to try to get that reporting nailed down so we are going to be far better at that as well

Pat Jackson: Right now all of this projects fall under category 12 if we do the work. If Wildlife Services conducts the work it falls under category 11. All of these projects just go under category 12. If we want to understand what is going on we have to go back and figure out which expense went to what. We are now going to have another sub category. But that won't happen until the next fiscal year.

Project 35: Using Genetic Testing to Identify Origin of Red Fox

Instead of exclusively from the \$3 Predator Fee, this is applicable for PR money. So, \$2,500 would come from the \$3 fee and \$7,500 from PR money.

Commissioner Johnston: I hate to keep asking the same question, but the same question keeps popping up which is okay we do this study, we find out that it is a red fox and we figure out through genetic testing where its origin was. Then what?

Pat Jackson: So, there is the native Sierra Nevada red fox, which is the species of concern and then there is the European red fox, which is not a species of concern and is arguably an invasive species. It is larger, more aggressive and tends to reside at lower elevations. Assuming we find that it is European red fox, we would like to change the classification to an unprotected animal like a coyote so they can be managed differently.

Commissioner Layne: You had some samples that were to be tested from last year. Do you know what they indicated?

Pat Jackson: I know that they have the samples and due to some complications it is just in the past few weeks that they received the funding so they have not analyzed those samples.

Commissioner Mori: It seems to me that we have been since we have approved this project we have been behind. We have had a trapper or trappers collect the samples before the project even got approved. So the samples are sitting there, but there is no money to pay for them. Now there is money, what we are looking at here is for allocation of more money. Is that to collect more samples or is that to pay for the testing of the samples that are already taken. Are we going to be collecting more and more samples?

Pat Jackson: It is to pay for more analysis. It is not to collect more samples.

Chairman Bliss: Commissioner Mori is right. There were 60 something samples collected. We approved \$10,000 last year through this \$3 money to have those samples tested. From what you are saying they have not been tested yet to your understanding. Then through Heritage we approved \$10,000 to fund a student to collect more samples. So that person has samples collected.

Pat Jackson: He has been conducting hair, snare and scat sample collection.

Chairman Bliss: Those samples are being sent off to the same type lab. Do they have all of those samples together right now?

Pat Jackson: I would only assume so.

Chairman Bliss: So, the \$10,000 that we had approved last year and the \$10,000 from this year, is it going to cost \$20,000 to test these samples. I don't know how many samples you have, 70 something.

Pat Jackson: I believe it was \$76 a sample and it penciled out to \$10,000 to analyze the samples.

Chairman Bliss: Do you foresee another project coming out of Heritage to collect more samples or do we have enough samples now that once they are tested that we can make a decision?

Pat Jackson: From a conversation I had with Russell, I believe this was the last year they were going to submit a Heritage proposal. I believe it is the end but I would want to double check with Russell.

Chairman Bliss: If they submit a project to collect more samples then we are going to have to come back with another \$10,000 somewhere to get those samples tested. What I am trying to get at is if we have enough samples already in place and this pays for the rest of the samples then we are done. We should have enough samples that we could make a decision.

Pat Jackson: I would agree with that rationale.

FY2016 Newly Proposed Projects

Project 36: Determining Fate of Accidentally Captured Mountain Lions

No changes from last meeting. PR money will be used

Commissioner Layne: I like this project. We like these kind of projects because it gives us the ability to research efforts involved in this. I want to make sure I understand this. What you said here is that so let's say that a trapper traps a mountain lion instead of a bobcat. So then, they are going to contact someone with NDOW and then someone is going to come out there with medical expertise to make a determination of whether or not that mountain lion, because of the injuries that were sustained by the trap set, will make a decision whether the mountain lion should be released or euthanized. You are going to take pictures and everything. Then if the animal is released you are going to put a collar on that mountain lion and you are going to track that mountain lion to see long term survival rates, is that correct?

Pat Jackson: The part you explained about NDOW personnel; that already happens. So, when a trapper accidentally traps a mountain lion they face two options, either they release it himself or they contact an NDOW employee who will come out and assist him. Some of our game biologists do that and a lot of our game wardens do that. They probably release more mountain lions than anything else. We already have NDOW personnel releasing mountain lions. So that part already happens. The amount proposed

for this project we hope to buy 10 collars. The challenge of this project if it were to be approved is having the collars in the right place at the right time because we cannot predict where mountain lions would be captured. I would say a large portion of animals captured would be released because we would not want to restrain them longer, potentially exacerbating injuries. What we propose is to collar a subset of those. In talking with Mike McCusker and some of the game wardens, what we would like to look at if this did or did not work and then working with Peri our vet come up with the pictures to distribute to the game wardens the decision matrix, it does or doesn't have this injury so I should euthanize it or let it go based on what we have learned from animals captured in the past.

Commissioner Johnston: So, if I am clear. We are going to use \$3 predator money to create a decision matrix as to what we are going to do when a mountain lion is incidentally trapped?

Pat Jackson: We are going to understand whether we should euthanize that lion or let it go and then we would also like to understand what happens to mountain lions once they are injured. As I mentioned in that proposal and having conversation with Dr. Anderson, a sizeable percentage of her study population died from what she found to be injuries related to traps that she did not inflict herself. It is quite a large number and it is thought that problem is potentially isolated because it occurred in an area closer to Reno. So, what happened near Reno most likely doesn't happen around the rest of the state but we would like to understand that.

Commissioner Layne: Isn't the bigger issue though, is what you said here is that it may be changing the trap type possibly so you are not catching these mountain lions when you are trapping bobcat.

Pat Jackson: Another thing we would like to look at with this project are trap types, trap sets and trap locations to try to minimize capturing mountain lions.

Brian Wakeling: I see this as being a project that is likely to have multifaceted benefits. We work with national work groups such as the Association of Fish and Wildlife agencies and Western Association of Fish and Wildlife agencies. We have several working groups that we have the opportunity to participate on, not the least of which and may very well fit into this is a working group sits on. It helps identify things like best management practices when we are engaged in various activities. We have kind of talked about several of the different benefits that we could get from this particular project. If we were to go forth with it, certainly it would help us do a better job of determining whether or not we got an animal that is going to be able to be released with higher probability of survival. We are not talking about rehabilitating any of the animals. What we are talking about is making a decision if this animal is going to be able to make it on its own or is this animal is going to be one that is likely to get into trouble because it is unlikely to be able to make a living in the wild. Another benefit that we are likely to achieve by this is being able to detect is a particular device associated with a higher likelihood of injury than another. One of the other aspects that we have talked with the trapping association to some degree, we don't have a formal agreement or anything, but what we would really like to pursue with them is, are there particular sets that are more likely to capture a mountain lion than another. All of those things taken together can help us do a better job of identifying when an animal can be released. It will help us identify the best management practices that we can recommend that could further the responsible trapping and things of that nature.

Commissioner Mori: It seems that we have some type of a system already in place. When the trappers capture a mountain lion they contact a biologist or a game warden, this process is already taking place. I would like to have weigh in from the trapping community to find out what type of hardships or if any or what changes this would do to the way they do business I think that is critical to whether this could be something that is workable or not.

Pat Jackson: I would like trapper input. I did make the assumption that since in some situations trappers are already waiting on NDOW personnel, if that NDOW personnel already had the collar that there wouldn't be any extra time or hardship added to what they had already waited on. Regardless, if the project existed or not they would not be waiting any more or less in that situation.

Project 37: Big Game Protection – Mountain Lions

Pat Jackson: We would like to have money available to remove animals, really at a moment's notice. An example of this, we have been recently doing project 22-074 and Wildlife Services was successful in moving 2 adult males in that area. Unfortunately, the day after they left we had a collared ram die and NDOW didn't know about this mortality for a few days and then by the time we did it was too late for Wildlife Services to respond because they had other commitments. In a situation like that it would extremely beneficial to have a list of houndsmen on call around the state to respond.

Project 38: Big Game Protection – Coyotes

Pat Jackson: Same concept, just with coyotes instead.

Project 39: Predator Education

Pat Jackson: I believe this would \$1,500 out of the \$3 predator fee and then another \$4,500 from PR money. This would primarily go to helping distribute the urban bear educational video produced by Washoe County.

Commissioner Layne: We have talked about this at length in the past about the issue and I notice that you talk about 75/25. We had a big discussion on the Commission last year, where we talked about the predator plan at that time and I don't remember that being the number. One of the issues that we talked about was the fact that we are also looking at these dollars as research and education as a part of this fund. We have actually had a proposal in the legislature this year to set up this advisory group that would add additional funds for the purposes of not necessarily education, but letting people know about "Hug a Hunter", I think that was the title of it. My concern on the predator education is that it would be nice to see some education projects and it is a minimal amount of money but I wish that we would go beyond just the bear issue, particularly in southern Nevada so we could try to convince people not to feed coyotes. I would like to see this educational effort extend just beyond what is here. I recognize the point, is that do we use this money for education, I would point out that there are 3 facets, predator control, research, and education. My concern is there is not a lot of money being spent on the education portion of that. If it is not here we need to work elsewhere. Couldn't Pittman Robertson be used for those funds?

Pat Jackson: I think I got you going for the wrong reasons. There is the 3 to 1 or 75/25 split both in the proposed lethal to non-lethal but also in Pittman Robertson availability. We do intend to submit a proposal and use Pittman Robertson funds on this project. So, \$1,500 would be \$3 predator fee and then \$4,500 with Pittman Robertson money.

Commissioner Layne: But this is your only education project in the plan.

Pat Jackson: Yes.

Chairman Bliss: For the troubles that we are having with the bears in the coming into town, there has been some education stuff put out in the past, where does that funding come from?

Pat Jackson: I do know that Washoe County paid for the production of this video and my understanding is that they do not have money to distribute it. So, it seemed like low hanging fruit to have a lot of impact with low dollars.

Chairman Bliss: How about with NDOW though, where does the money come from NDOW to deal with these town bears? What I am trying to get at is, could we utilize the \$1,500 out of that account instead of this \$3 predator account and still be able to match funds with Pittman Robertson and still get the project done?

Brian Wakeling: In other words, if I am understanding you, are there other state funds that would be available that we could use in lieu of the predator fee? And the answer is yes. There certainly is other dollars available. But, because it is an educational component the state dollars associated with it would probably be through the Conservation Education Division.

Commissioner Johnston: When I read through this project, there is the second component, which is an educational campaign to reduce urban black bear complaints and raven densities. When I look at the statue I think that is a type of educational outreach for management of predatory wildlife. When I see the one on distributing a video and how to reduce problematic urban bears I am not so certain it falls under the same category. I am not saying it isn't worthwhile. I understand it is a worthwhile project to alleviate problematic urban bears. When I look at this statute about education and predatory management I think there is a distinct difference between the second educational component of this project and the first.

Brian Wakeling: Essentially we are proposing using sportsmen's dollars for an urban situation. It actually does bring up an important point. The Pittman Robertson act does have some strings attached to our ability to deal with nuisance situations is why we can't expand the proposed purposes. Our thoughts on this and the genesis of the project is primarily based on the feedback that the Commission gave us at their last meeting when we presented this and pointed out. There is a lot of perceptions about what the money should be used for but the statute is actually written rather broadly and having listened to several legislators recently I understand their intent may have differed from what was actually written. The whole educational component of it does tend to be somewhat controversial. I think your point about using this for an urban situation maybe on the mark and trying to use the money for an educational component that was well intended. I think it is possible that we may well be able to distribute this without using the predator fee but the other component that is written into the project that Pat didn't mention too much about, probably fits much better with the intent of the legislation.

Project 40: Coyote Removal to complement Multi-faceted Management in Eureka County

Pat Jackson: So, BLM is conducting a feral horse round-up, pinion juniper is being removed on private properties, both private and Wildlife Services have removed coyotes either in 2013-2014 or prior years. So, this is now being proposed to compliment work that Eureka County has also funded.

Chairman Bliss: The County has really stepped up to the plate there and did a lot of PJ work. The PJ work that was done is in prime sage-grouse habitat. It actually opened up the corridors between where some of the leks were and then to where the birds travel and raise their young up higher on the mountain. I have actually witnessed some of the birds utilizing that country now that it has been opened up. There were several feral horses that were removed. The range is starting to look better. Even though we have been in somewhat of a drought situation we have had quite a bit of fall rain in the Diamonds and the feed was doing pretty good. A lot of that is working fairly well. With policy 23 and the Eureka County commissioners and Natural Resource Advisory Board guy, they really studied Policy 23 and they wanted to implement and help out with that policy. They actually went out on their own and hired a private contractor to remove some coyotes during denning time. A lot of it is where this PJ

work was done. That basically all went away and now we are coming back with \$20,000 to try to do some aerial work, which in my mind we are not going to get much done for \$20,000. It could be a waste because you wouldn't get the result that you were intending on trying to get. We have worked with the area biologist. We have had several conversation with him, Jake Tibbetts and myself. He said, "Bottom line, my deer are still in trouble." In 2008-2009 the mule deer fawn numbers were really low. Wildlife Services came in and removed several coyotes from high elevation. If you look at the numbers it was a success. It brought the fawning numbers into the high 30's-40's. They have been stable along there but we are having trouble with them coming back from the winter range that way and we have had some really mild winters there. In talks with several folks, they still want to see more work done to fall in the same lines of where Policy 23 is. I know there are some people think that you won't know if it is the coyote work or the PJ work or the horse work. I have always been told you can't pin it on one thing. You have to work at this from different angles. If it was only one thing it would be easy to fix. It is not, it is multiple things. This particular project brings them all together and it is what we wanted to see done in Policy 23. I would hope that there is a way that we can find more money to make this a worthwhile project because at \$20,000 I think it is a waste of money.

Projects recommended for discontinuation

Project 22-205/207: Gabbs valley Range Desert Bighorn Release Protection

Pat Jackson: This now just falls under Project 37, instead of being a project on its own.

Project 29: Roadway Carrion Management to Enhance Greater Sage-Grouse Populations

Committee member Cassinelli: I have been thinking about these projects, dump sites and where we are trying to do some of this work. We have all these sage hen out there feeding on dump sites. We need to watch what we do when we take that away from them. We are trying to protect the sage hen and we may be doing some damage by shoving all of these birds out into the brush looking for sage hen nests. I was all for it and I have been thinking about it over the year and where do we stand on projects studying these ravens that we are dispersing back into the wild?

Pat Jackson: I think that is an excellent question. I wanted to cancel this project. We have more ravens on the landscape because of human subsidies. They have more places to nest and more food. So removal of human subsidies would certainly benefit sage-grouse in the longer term. But the short term, like you just mentioned, we remove the subsidy today where are the ravens going to be tomorrow. I don't know that anyone has ever looked at that. We plan to under project 29-30 this fiscal year by putting out 7 GPS transmitters to understand. We are also following up on a project that has been delayed for a few years, but we will be creating an exclosure at the Midas Transfer Station so those ravens can no longer access the trash and that is within a mile of a couple sage-grouse leks. We are going to have at least a few months of data what ravens do, while they can access the sage-grouse and the trash and then what happens afterwards. We are certainly doing that for our non-lethal work management and then also to really understand how we can do this in the future. I think this is a really good project, baseline, but it was kind of misguided. Ravens are a fascinating predator but they have wings. We remove food here, how far are they going to go to get to another food source like a sage-grouse lek. If we are going to be removing human subsidies we need to understand where instead of a shotgun approach.

Project 30: Landfill Waste Stream Management to Enhance Greater Sage-Grouse

Pat Jackson: There are a lot of parallels between projects 29 and 30. We propose canceling this for now for the same reasons of we don't know what happens when you exclude ravens from a landfill.

Project 33: Bi-State Sage-Grouse Nesting Habitat Restoration

Pat Jackson: Recommend for cancellation because there are other funding sources than the \$3 predator fee.

Commissioner Johnston: An overall comment. We went a lot of questions and some answers and feedback. I don't want to make this too much of a project in putting his Predator Management Plan together but I think addressing these types of issues. You are going to do a study, what do we want to find out, once we have the answer what does that mean and you put it in this Plan. I think it does a lot to make it better. I think also more concrete goals, dates when things are going to occurred if you can. I understand that you set out a plan and you may have to amend it but I think adding that into this management plan is going to go along way so the public understands what is going on, this committee and Commission and everybody else. I think the people conducting the projects are going to know what the expectations are. I would like to see a lot of that worked into the revised draft.

Public Comment:

Mike Reese: I appreciate what Commissioner Johnston has said, is the accounting of this. I have read the whole 92 pages of how this has come about. It basically started with the idea of removing coyotes and removing ravens. With that being said down the road in the conversation it says well we might have to be explaining why we do this therefore that is the educational portion. Explaining it to the public and sportsmen of why we are doing this and taking this out. In doing some of that we might have to have some research to back up the why. That is how the four fit into this. I have a couple of questions on the graph showing the total dollars amount. If we are really going to run this like a project on that spreadsheet there should be a date (start date and end date) so any sportsmen can see this and that is where the transparency comes in. I do understand that some of these projects can be more effective during certain times of the year, but as we do that we would like to know, we call it a fiscal year but somebody says when is that going to happen. Is it March or June? When are they going to do this removal, etc? I am not saying that we have to limit it to a time but if it is a 4 month project let's call it a 4 month project, if it is 8 months or a year-long project, let's call it that so the sportsmen understand better how their \$3 is being spent. We are not trying to tell them how to do it. We are just trying to get some more of that information out there. I am a little concerned on a couple of projects as far as who is really running the projects. I heard on Project 32 we had 3 different names. I am wondering who is our main driver of this, my question is do we have enough manpower to actually man 12 projects effectively. Who is going to get that data back in and who is going to put everything together. In order for it to be successful it has to go through one guy. I would personally like to see who is in charge of the project. I would also like to see in the accounting process, if we are going to allocate \$40,000 how do we spend that? Is it a purchase order that goes to a subcontractor, i.e. Wildlife Services and in that is there a scope of work defined on that project? Then there should be a date of when does it close. As I have asked in the past of a calendar date of when do we get to judge the results of that? How long does it take? I would like to tighten up the Predator Management project of how we are doing it. I am glad to hear that 75/25 is the ratio we are doing. I know last year we tried to put a ratio together and it fell apart and we didn't do it.

Daryl Capurro: There are a couple of things that I am confused on. Looking at it from a macro standpoint, the wildlife budget for this year showing what the Nevada Legislature shows that predator management going to Wildlife Services, the work program was \$400,000. Actual expenditures was \$208,349. I understand that the physical year isn't over yet. But, that is hardly 75% of the \$570,000 that the Department indicated was collected by the \$3 fee on their handout to the Legislature. When you look at some of the uses of the funds I have some question about whether they really should fall under the \$3 predator fee as sportsmen understand it to be used for. I realize there is language in there for some broadening of it. But, I think the important thing to remember is that what we are trying to do is to prevent over predation on wildlife, whether it be sheep, antelope or deer. With your Predator Plan for 2016 you show, as I understood it, a \$456,000 where I am a little confused is if you collected on the

\$3 fee \$570,000 in fiscal year 2014 I don't see that number going down in future physical years. Therefore, assume that it went to \$550,000-\$600,000, where is the other \$150,000 that is not accounted for under the Predator Plan? Under your Predator Plan you have of that \$456,000 literally there is \$169,000 for studies. It is not for removal of predators. It is not for lethal removal or any such thing with regard to Wildlife Services. That leaves \$287,000 relative to predator control or lethal management. Hardly 75% of the amount collected on the \$3 fee. I think there is a lot of questions that the Department really needs to answer and probably will be asked to answer before this session of the Nevada Legislature and perhaps in front of you people. I think some of the figures don't match with what is actually on the ground as opposed to what is being recorded.

Chairman Bliss: I appreciate you coming. I think in some of our discussion earlier we kind of touched on some of that and the accountability of where some of those funds are going. So that has merit and they indicated that we are going to start working in that direction and I am happy to see it.

Daryl Capurro: Mr. Chairman, according to the handout that the Department put out that that 75% was the figure that was over the period of time that the Predator fee has been charged for fiscal year 2002-2014 they collected \$5.5 million, they expended \$5 million. I guess my next question is where did the other \$500,000 go? The fact of the matter is that they show that during that period of time the \$3.7 million and that is where the 74% actually was paid directly to APHIS or Wildlife Services, presumably for lethal management. This is something that they say according to the handout that they provided to the Legislature that they have been following that 75% but it is now shown on the ground.

Gerald Lent: You have a dozen projects here and to comment on them we can't do it in 3 minutes. I think if you want public comment on these projects I would like to take about a half a minute for each project to go through because there are a lot of discrepancies.

Chairman Bliss: I have allowed people a little bit over and I am willing to do that but I don't want it to go on. I have actually gone about 4 minutes with everybody.

Gerald Lent: All of these projects on here, if you go over Policy 23, none of them comply with it. If you look at Policy 23 it says it has got to be geographical, it has to have clear goals, it has got to have specific management and none of these things go by that. Not statewide. Statewide is not a map. As needed is not a specific goal. There are no specific goals in any of these plans. A specific goal would mean we want to increase the fawn/doe ratio in this area to this..., you have to population goals to start a predator project or how do you know that you need a predator project in a certain area. Or it looks like we are going into an area to just kill coyotes and lions with no goal in site. That is what a lot of these projects are because there is no goal in there saying why we are doing this. Starting with Project 21, it says project area in all these counties, based on what science or studies. There is no science or studies that these counties need sage-grouse protection. I don't see one thing in here and that is a violation of Policy 23. The same thing with project 22, mule deer, it says experience a chronic low carrying capacity, how do you determine this? Can you do this without any reproductive goals? There are no goals so how do you know what to do on that and what the low carrying capacity is? Statewide, where deemed appropriate, what kind of science is that? That is not science. You are throwing out a shotgun approach. The mountain lion one on 22-074 to determine mountain lion diet, don't we know that they don't eat sagebrush yet? Do we need this? We have the black bear one and it is really not even in line with what this \$3 fee was supposed to be for. Don't we know from our many peer review studies what happens on this. I can name you 2-3 peer reviewed cases that shows results on that why we need it now is beyond me. Again, 36 captured mountain lions statewide is not specific enough. I tell you what this project is going to do. This project here on catching mountain lions that are caught incidentally in a trap this is setting it up to prohibit trapping due to its impact on lions. When the report comes out and says that trapping impacts lions then that is the excuse to ban trapping and we are using our sportsmen

money to kill trapping on it. The big game protection mountain lions, goal, it is not a clear goal as required in the Policy. There is a conflict of interest on Project 38 where it says been demonstrated to reduce predation on domestic livestock and on the other page it says we don't know if does livestock. Project 40, this is added and what sign of evidence do you have that says you need to go and kill coyotes in the Diamonds except what Chad Bliss personal project that he likes. This was added to it here. You don't have any scientific data to say that you have to go up there in the Diamonds and kill coyotes. What are you going to do it for, is it to increase the fawn/doe ratio? A lot of these projects are useless and they are against your policy. You ought to really read what this policy says, we need specific goals, geographic areas and things like that.

Joel Blakeslee: I was contacted by these guys about this several months ago. I didn't really realize it was going to be on predator management. I guess I should have. Anyway, what I suggested at the time as far as this lion stuff, is I suggested that they do what Idaho and Utah have done. They have got some guidelines on how to avoid lions the best you can. As far as the BMPs go, WAFWA spent \$12 million on BMPs over the last 20-30 years and I think that stuff has already been done. I did go to my Board and not make my own decision, basically what I got from my Board was what Brad had said, what does this have to do with predator management really. I didn't get anybody that was interested in participating in this. As far as the goals, determine the trap type size and set type influence. We can sit here and do that in about 15 minutes if you want. I don't know what we would do to spend \$20,000 to study that quite frankly. We have trapped a few lions every year for a 100 years and they have done nothing but increase as far as I can see, at least where I go. I have contacted my Board and nobody really wants to do this.

Rex Flowers: It may be a goal to try and get a 75/25 split on moneys. I would say we are in a fourth year of a drought. It is affecting the whole state. Our water sources are drying up. Our habitat is going to pot. We need more money on the ground for predator control. Our wildlife I believe is going to be more at risk and aren't going to have the hiding places. They are going to be forced into seeking water in places that are not going to be favorable for them where predators will have a better opportunity. One of the ways to get more money on the ground I really think should be 80-85% going to on the ground for predator control. I think one place you do it is by eliminating project 36. I think that is a worthless program.

Fred Voltz: I have 5 brief comments to make about the proceedings today. First, have none of the other 49 states answered any of these research questions? Why are we reinventing the wheel by redoing this research when we could be asking these states what is going on in their bailiwick with the same species? I didn't hear any of that in the presentation today. It seems to be a missing piece. Secondly, these projects don't spend sufficiently on non-lethal approaches to coexisting with wildlife. I have heard lots of discussion today about the lethal approach but the non-lethal is really the sounder way to approach the whole subject of how we live with wildlife rather than just kill it. Third, trappers are the last groups to be consulted on mountain lion non-target data caught. They have an inherent conflict of interest to minimize problems. Fourth, the collected fees become public fees as soon as they are paid by the licensees. It is the non-licensee public you need to serve with the programs and policies, not simply the licensees. Finally, take public comment after each project rather than waiting until the end so that somebody has to try and consolidate all of their comments about 12 different projects within 3 minutes. It really doesn't do it justice.

Back to committee: 5:45 p.m.

Commissioner Johnston: I will reiterate a comment that I had. I want to see more detail in the Predator Management Plan in the next draft with goals, who is responsible and things of that nature. When there is research components what is the specific question we are trying to answer and then once we get the

answer what does that mean? I don't claim to be a biologist or scientist, I know sometimes you word things differently than everybody else, but I think if you are going to do a project say I want these questions answered. You should be able to identify the questions and say this is why I want the questions answered and depending upon the answers it will mean most likely one of the following scenarios. I cannot support project 36 under the Predator Management money. I don't see how it fits. I would like to see that money redirected to the on ground implementation projects in the revised draft. The other thing is the urban black bear educational component. I don't think that fits. I would like to see that money in either an educational component so you keep the educational budget the same. My final comment that I have is that I too would like to see a budget. When I have worked on other boards, you say okay in this year we took in \$X, we approved the following projects to this day. Here is how much we approved them for to date, here is how much has been spent and this is the remaining commitment that we made to that project that has yet been paid for. Now we are coming into the new year and you have your budget just like in a fiscal year cycle for this predator management account. We know where we stand. We know where money has been spent and what is left to be spent on a project, if it has been fully funded or not, is it going to carry over to the following year. They are not that hard to put together. I think that would do a good service to the people who are funding these projects and paying the \$3 Predator Management fee with their big game applications.

Committee Member Cassinelli: I agree with that. I think one thing we definitely need is project managers for every project. Where we have these projects that 3-4 people are handling, it is not going to cut it. We are not going to get the numbers back to us. Somebody has to be responsible for what they are spending and get us that report.

Commissioner Layne: One of the issues that I am concerned about and the fact that the chair only put one person from Southern Nevada on this committee this year as opposed to the two that we had in the past. If you remember we have had this discussion many times. Our discussion, if you remember, mirrored what was going on at the last legislature about the whole predator fee where you had southern Nevada Senators saying they wanted to see more research and you had northern Nevada Senators saying they wanted to see more predation management. We see this continual tug all of the time. My concern is that when we see this discussion about predation management that we want to make sure that it is very measureable and that there is research behind what has been done. I think we all agreed to that in this discussion that we have had. We want to make sure that we are doing something that is going to be effective. I wouldn't agree that we have to spend it all for predation management because we are never going to understand if it is effective until we answer questions that have to be asked in terms of research. I do like the approach that has been proposed here in terms of looking at these three areas. One of the problems that we have had in the past is that the Plan because we had these concerns didn't get approved until after June. So, the big issue for this committee is that we have to make sure that we get some of these issues resolved so this final draft in May that we have can get approved by June. If we don't do that we are always running behind. Because this has been such an issue in the past, we need to be very clear what we are looking Pat to do in the next prior to the May update because I don't think we are going to massively change this around. It is not going to get done before May and that is my concern. I think we are going to have to set up some parameters to make sure that gets done. We can't be so broad that you are not going to have the time that it needs to get done. The final draft is supposed be presented.

Commissioner Johnston: I think we are going to have an April Commission meeting. We could ask that on that agenda we at least get an update on where we stand on this Predator Management Plan.

Brian Wakeling: What I am hearing from the Committee are several recommendations and what I would envision us doing on Saturday when we present this before the Commissioner is to identify the points that you have enumerated that you would like us to work further on. While the Commission isn't

scheduled to meet again until May the Committee may choose to hold a meeting in between there at what point you might be able to see the progress that we have made in accordance to what we have shared with the Commission and the direction the may choose to give us on Saturday.

Chairman Bliss: Just to clarify, on the scheduling that May is when the final is presented and end of June is when the Department has to have that out to the contractors. May is the final decision on approving these projects.

Brian Wakeling: If there is anything that comes back that is not approved at the May meeting, we do have the opportunity to get the Commission to address it one more time in June. It is our intent to have it final at that point, but that would still allow us to have a plan in place prior to the new fiscal year. We should have a really good idea at that point the types of vendors we may need to have lined up in order to be able to move forward. We are working currently towards developing a more direct relationship with Wildlife Services than what we have had in the past. It is my sense that even if the committee should choose not to meet between now and May that we will be in a very good position to address all of the direction that we get from the Commission on Saturday.

Commissioner Mori: A couple points that I would like to make after listening to some of the public comment. First of all I would like to thank you guys for stepping in. We are in a transition period here and we fired some questions at you and you were dealt a hand that you had to play here today with not all the cards in the deck so to speak. I want to give you guys credit for that. I am hoping that this will improve as you guys get more familiar with what is going on. There was a comment made as to the trapping community weighing in. That would be the last thing in the world that you would want to do. The trapping community was specifically asked and listed in this project as to provide assistance. I think that is why I think it was important to hear what those guys have to say to see what they think about that individual project. I am not a mathematician but on the percentages. If you use the \$456,000 as the \$3 predator fee money and I went down through the lethal projects we are at 69.7%. We are trying to shoot for 75% and maybe we are not there but we are in the neighborhood. With the few changes that we could propose here as a committee or as a commission when it becomes time, we can make those changes to fall into where we want to be if that is where the Department also wants to hang.

Commissioner Johnston: I make a motion that we direct the Department to revise the draft Nevada Department of Wildlife Predator Management Plan for fiscal year 2016 as follows: Project 36 be eliminated and funds for that project redirected to the other on the ground implementation projects that are set forth in the Predator Management Plan; that the Black Bear Urban Conflict educational component in project 39 be eliminated, the remaining projects remain in the plan with the following general revisions to be made: 1) identify people responsible for each project, 2) identify goals and timelines to be followed for each project, 3) With respect to anything that is experimentation/research we identify the specific questions we are trying to answer and 4) the actions that will be taken based upon the answers received. Finally as an amendment to the overall plan we include not just the overall budget for this fiscal year but a fiscal year to year budget that tracks the Predator Management Money that comes in, where it has been allocated, how much has been spent and where we are at.

Second by Committee Member Cassinelli.

Commissioner Layne: I am going to vote against that. I think that we have very few research or education programs in this as it currently exists and I think to take out those two you pretty much have gone over the 75%. I would also say that unfortunately I am not going to be here Saturday but I would hope that there would be some discussion. I maybe the minority on this, I don't know what the vote is going to be, but I don't agree with this particular motion.

Commissioner Johnston: Just based upon statements that have been made during the Legislative session I think they are currently looking for more than 75% for on the ground projects. We are not defined by specifics to 75/25, it is a goal. I think if we are over that a little bit that is okay. I think Mr. Flowers made a good point with respect to conditions this year. I think we have to look at the projects presented and whether or not they are worthwhile in pursuing and not just a ratio. I don't want to adopt an educational program that doesn't make sense just to have a magic 75/25 split.

Commissioner Mori: The intent of your motion is that these projects carry forward but the Committee would not be necessarily recommending the Commission to pass them?

Commissioner Johnston: Right, I think the key part of my motion is that I am not recommending approval of the projects that I haven't suggested to be eliminated. I want to see the detail in them in the revised draft. Perhaps at that time we make a recommendation that those projects be approved.

Commissioner Layne: But you are recommending the elimination of Project 36 and 39.

Commissioner Johnston: Yes, but only a portion of Project 39. There is a part of 39 that talks about public education on raven predation and I think that should stay.

Vote 4-1 (Commissioner Layne - Nay) motion passes

5. Public Comment Period

Persons wishing to speak on items not on the agenda should complete a speaker's card and present it to the recording secretary. Public comment will be limited to three minutes. No action can be taken by the Committee at this time; any item requiring Committee action may be scheduled on a future Committee agenda. In addition to this Public Comment Period, Public Comment limited to three minutes per speaker will also be allowed on each agenda action item, but not, unless otherwise noted, on reports or informational items.

Gerald Lent: Representing Nevada Hunter's Association. This is a big problem with this Committee. This Committee should be, but isn't, up to date with current predator information to help them decide predator projects. Read a couple sentences from "Top down, bottom up" article. Feels it is essential for committees to read an article like this. High levels of predation should not be allowed to threaten the visibility and viability of any game species. Renowned wildlife biologists agree that harvest levels of predators must be managed in appropriate as we manage harvest levels of ungulate species. That is why this predator plan is so important. If this Department reacts so quickly on sheep kills for lions why don't they react in the same manner when a lion kills a mule deer? Mule deer is the bread and butter of the organization. We see a lot of this with sheep but don't see it with mule deer. I think one of the things they consider mule deer is a renewable natural resource. There are a lot of studies out and he named a couple: 3 Bar study in Arizona, Red Rock in New Mexico and State Islands in Ohio, St. Paul Island in Arkansas. There are all these studies with predator free zones. There are also studies with predation zones where they predate. All of these are studies with predators on game species and there are studies with non-predators like the 3Bar. Dramatic difference and it tells you the effect of predators on game species.

Daryl Capurro: I am taking my figures, Mr. Mori from there and it is 35% not 69%. The numbers that had been given by the Commission to the Legislature indicate that they have spent with Wildlife Services \$208,000, yet they have collected \$570,000 with the \$3 fee. That comes out to about 36.5%. It has been on the downward trend since Chairman Lent and I were on the Commission. We were spending about 90% with lethal management through Wildlife Services. Ever since that year, fiscal year 2010-2011, it has been on a downward trend ever since then. I would also like to tell you that in looking at the final report that was presented and funded by the Department of Wildlife with the 3 professors

from the University of Idaho and was provided to the Commission on April 17th, one thing that stands out to me is on page 19, these were questions that were asked to a sufficient number of deer hunters and after all deer is the largest individual type activity we have in Nevada. The questions that were asked to these following the hunts were basically to find out what they liked about their hunt and what they didn't like. If you go to page 19, question 20, the potential negative effects factors affecting mule deer numbers, the top one by far is predators. Likely and very likely represented 71% of the comments that people pointed to as being a problem in their deer hunt. You had another 16% for likely or not likely and you are up to 85%. What I am trying to say is I don't believe we have done as good as a job as we like to believe we have with regard to predator management. Deer hunters are certainly saying no. Because in the same study on question 19 almost 58% said that they were either very dissatisfied, dissatisfied or unsure with respect to the overall job that the Department of Wildlife does managing mule deer populations. This is the study that they themselves paid for and was presented to the Commission. Predation is a big problem in the state of Nevada. I don't believe we are spending enough money on it and I would like to find out where the differences are in these amounts that were collected and the amounts paid. Mentioned an article in the Fair Chase winter edition, article by Dr. Eric Romenger. He is a Ph.D., bighorn sheep biologist, New Mexico Department of Fish and Game. Is also a B&C professional member. It is an interesting article and should read it if you have an opportunity.

Meeting adjourned 6:16 p.m.