

Wolf Depredation Advisory Committee
May 14, 2024
Upper Conference Room, Bartholomew Building
Heppner, Oregon

Present In-Person Roy Drago Jr., Dean Robinson, Cam Sweeney, John Gould, Bob Mahoney, Stephen Thompson, Valerie Ballard; Audience: Emily Weidner, Brian Christensen, KayRene Qualls, Same Martin, Cheyenne Rodgers

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

7:00 p.m.

Minutes

Commissioner Drago motioned to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Mr. Gould seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval

Election of Officers

Mr. Sweeney motioned to keep officers the same as they were before. Mr. Gould seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval

Agency Updates

Steve Cherry, Oregon Department of & Wildlife (ODFW)

The Madison Butte Pack (Formerly Heppner Pack) is denned in the same location as last year, consisting of two pups and an alpha male and female. The female's collar fell stopped in February, ten months early. A pup was caught and collared a month ago. This pack has four confirmed depredations over the last five weeks. One of those depredations was not killed and is being monitored. A couple of other investigations have concluded to not be caused by wolves. Landowners work on hazing and successfully hazed out a collared wolf from a calving pasture last week.

Now that the Madison Butte Pack has been collared, the Five Mile Pack is the next priority. Pictures of the Five Mile Pack include a black wolf that doesn't align with known wolves. Through winter, more pictures show it accompanied by a grey wolf and it is assumed they are a pair and will mate. The pair may have moved as they haven't been able to locate since March.

The annual count came out in March and shows the wolf population has plateaued. This is driven by wolf transfers to Colorado, lethal removal, and illegal take and the population has plateaued through the state over the last couple of years. Regional counts are available on the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife website.

Review Grant Agreement

Morrow County was awarded \$8,000 of the \$20,000 requested for preventative measures. As the last depredation was in 2020, this wasn't a surprise. Counties that have regularly had confirmed depredations are the priority for funds and we have requested additional funds due

to the four confirmed depredations so far this year. While the money is not currently available, Morrow County will be taken into consideration as they become available

Good of the Order

Emily Weider from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) introduced herself. Ms. Weider reported drone hazing being an effective preventative measure with positive results in the Rogue pack. There are still depredations in the area, but not as many as in the past. She is working to get more funding for the Central Oregon and La Grande offices for preventative funding.

After a species status assessment in February, USFWS determined the western population of wolves is not warranted for listing. The status however has not changed.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will either be September 10 or September 17th. The date will be announced later.

Adjourn

8:03 p.m.