

**ADMB Meeting  
January 18, 2024**

**Members Present:** Doug Miyamoto (Co-Chair), Brian Nesvik (Co-Chair), Jared Zierenberg, Rodger Cox, Bob Harlan, Richard Ladwig, Tate Smith, Zeta Anderson, Jeff Boner, Brett Belden

**Board Members Absent:** Phil Osterli, Jennifer McConchie, Amanda Hulett, Tyler Abbot, Sharon O'Toole

**WDA Staff:** Jerald Johnson, J.D. Sater

**Public in Attendance:** None

Meeting called to order at 10:02 am

Doug entertained a motion to approve November 9th minutes. Roger moved, Tate seconded, Motion carried.

Jerry gave an update on the mandatory Special district training that is now required and he will be doing multiple zoom trainings for the county boards.

Doug gave a legislative update on the budget and informed the board that the Governor had presented a budget that added additional funding for predator control and the legislators wanted wildlife funding be included. Richard Ladwig asked questions on the G&F funding that was to be added, and this issue will be followed through the legislative process.

The County BLM predator reporting forms have been received and will be included with the USDA/WS, BLM work plan agreements.

Jared Zierenberg is the new State Director and he gave update on their program, and that they will be working with FWS on the Golden Eagle issue in the coming year.

**Public Comments**

No comments

Brett moved to adjourn, Roger Cox seconded. Meeting adjourned at 10:35 am.

**Animal Damage Management Board Meeting  
Wednesday May 15, 2024 & Thursday, May 16, 2024  
Natrona County Extension office  
Casper, Wyoming**

Call to order at 8:05 a.m. by Co-Chair Brian Nesvik

**Board Members Present:**

Slade Franklin for Co-Chair Doug Miyamoto

Roger Cox

Sharon O'Toole

Brett Belden

Jared Zierenberg

Tyler Abbot FWS

Co-Chair Brian Nesvik

Bob Harlan

Zeta Anderson

Jeff Boner

Richard Ladwig

Phil Osterli USFS

**Board Members Absent:** Zeta Anderson – Jennifer McConchie BLM, **Urban Rep(Vacant)**

**WDA Support Staff:** Tracy Myers, Jerry Johnson, JD Sater, Slade Franklin, Dale Heggem

**Public Attendees:** Allison Crane, Jeremy Warner, Rob FWS

TJ Tavegie

Dave Hall

Pete Camino

Cat Urbigkit

Amy Hendrickson

Mike Barker, falconer

Michael Burrell

Brady Smith USDA

Scott Alls, assistant reg director USDA Wildlife Services

Roger Cox moved to approve minutes from the January meeting, Richard Ladwig seconded.

Motion carried.

**Public Comment**

Cat Urbigkit shared that she is very excited to have FWS migratory bird permit staff here, with the eagle depredation ranchers are seeing. The ranching community appreciates FWS rules and regulations, and the good ideas for compensatory mitigation. She also shared that ranchers appreciate being engaged in this conversation.

**Overview of Funding**

Jerry Johnson gave an update on the financials. He shared that the Board will consider renewing the contract with UW Vet lab for rabies testing; that the next meeting is June 20 at the Thyra Thomson building, Nov 14 meeting which will be a discussion with FWS and stakeholders for an eagle discussion; there will also be various meetings for the mandatory training for budget sheets. The Board discussed PMD funding \$3,920,000 general funding and \$800,000 for Predator control to mitigate listing of endangered species (Sage Grouse protection), \$150,000 for wolf control and \$36,000 and need to renew the \$20,000 contract for testing with University of Wyoming Vet Lab. They discussed leaving a little leeway to keep the contract at \$80,000 with WS, and also regarding adding to that \$80k. Brian's concern is the potential to have increased requests in the future, so this increase would help with that. The Board was asked to consider a higher number for that budget. Brett Belden motioned, Roger Cox seconded to increase the WS Wolf contract amount to \$100,000. There was then discussion of where the money would come from, and how it is used. Slade share that Doug supports the \$100k contract. This change left the Board with \$3,900,000 for general funding, with the rest being as discussed. With Jared Zierenberg (WS) abstention, motion carried.

### **FWS Eagle Discussion**

Jeff Boner shared they have seen a bit of increase in depredation from crows/ravens, but significant damage from eagles. FWS has had key recommendation from the meeting held last Dec: First was to start conversation among key stakeholders for depredation and hold the dialogue to help FWS become more familiar with this issue, so FWS can do a better job responding and help producers understand FWS' perspective as well. Rob & Jeremy: Rob - discussed the number of eagle removal quota, as an increase to the quota was requested. Rob explained how the quota number is reached, to meet the preservation standards for eagles. Attendees talked about how long it takes to get a falconer to come take an eagle that is depredating. Bob shared his perspective on how the falconers communicate about this, and how it depends on where the falconers are, and whether it is a trap-and-relocate or trap-and-remove. It is also tough to catch the eagles that are actually doing the damage. Falconers offer their expertise on eagle management, which is helpful to the producers. Cat talked about the importance of having all the parties at the table when these discussions are held, so everyone can work together and think outside the box to help all sides. The lambing window vs when falconers can get in and trap, and the time it takes to get a depredation by eagle confirmed was also discussed. FWS is trying to find ways to protect eagles from being killed by things unrelated to ag production. Other FWS suggestions: timing of lambing, automatically issuing permits to ranchers who have documented depredation for two years in a row, prior to depredation in the current year. Part of the discussion included the idea of creating a research project involving netting, trapping and relocating eagles early in the season to give the ranchers an on-average 45-day window before the eagles return, allowing them some relief during lambing period. Jerry identified a potential funding source for this project.

## **Presentations**

*Goshen County: Dan Heilbrun and Brady Smith (WS)*

*Request: \$130,000*

They have one person on the ground in the area for predator control. Seven WS employees worked in the county last year. Turkey vultures are an increasing nuisance species. The district would like to add a part time employee to help in busier times and with special projects. Thermal imaging will be a heavier focus this year. Very few losses in Goshen. Spring brought some staff changes, and they lost their Specialist. They would like to have two Specialists, as it is too hard to cover the County with one. They used to have two and it worked much better. Brady shared that aerial work is tough with the weather in Goshen County, so this second person would provide better coverage. He also said they want to know whether or not they have the Board's support. Dan said they are prepared to use reserves if they have to.

*Johnson County: Pete Camino, Dave Hall, TJ Tavegie*

*Request: \$275,000*

*Rabies: \$15,000*

Currently have two trappers, and two rabies mitigation trappers, private and WS aerial use. Mountain lions and bears are worse than in the past. Ravens have been a problem in the south end of the county and they have been working with WS on control efforts. Concerning rabies – they have one trapper in Kaycee and one in Buffalo. Buffalo had an influx of skunks this fall so they did work in the town rather than just working on the outskirts. Request is the same as it has been for the last three years. They have worked to be efficient over time with 4% in administrative costs, they use contract trappers, and about \$1700 in inventory. They make decisions on data that they have collected over the years. Losses were surveyed: last survey showed 669 sheep reported, 20-some calves, totaling several hundred thousand dollars. They are guessing about 25% of producers didn't respond, so they are guessing the financial loss is at least 25% higher. Survey is resulting in better relationships with especially new producers who are moving in.

*Carbon County: Whitney Merrill, Ben Acres*

*Request: \$265,000*

70% traditional work, 30% non-traditional, ravens, magpies, crows, skunks, feral cats, raccoons, disease surveillance. Carbon County has completed 7 wildlife projects and will be submitting a new project application. Three wolf sightings have livestock producers have concerns with the trend in Colorado and seeing more wolves along I-80. County wide antelope numbers are down. Difficulty getting plane due to weather and competition from other county boards. Losses surveyed: \$41,000 loss in livestock, \$8000 equip damage ravens \$14,000 structural damage by ravens. Additional \$20,000 requested would be for an intermittent trapper to help cover the County.

*Sheridan County: Board: Cole Benton, Kellen Little, member-at-large Jerry Reid*

*Request: \$227,500*

*Rabies: \$20,000*

They provided some population numbers in the county for eagles, pronghorn and mule deer shared by Game and Fish. For rabies mitigation they hired two trappers to remove skunks. Thirty-nine skunks were sent to the vet lab for testing and 21% came back positive for rabies. They have one trapper now. City of Sheridan is helping with funding. They are also asking the smaller towns to help with funding. Mule deer numbers up this year, antelope not as much. Some funding is used on advertising for rabies public awareness. Discussed the financial cost of rabies exposure. They built a website for public awareness as well, which will begin to include GPS coordinates of animals testing positive for rabies. An error was found on the application: they had planned to request \$30,000 for rabies, which got missed on the application.

*Weston County: Carson Keeline, Ray Norris and Kassie Swartz (bookkeeper), and Brad Troftgruben, WS*

*Request: \$100,000*

Coyote numbers are steady and small prey base is very limited. 95% traditional program, and the balance is non-traditional, raccoon, turkey vultures, very few skunks. Hard to get a plane when they need one. They want to increase aerial time this year. Last year they saw significant calf loss even with low coyote numbers. Some of this could have been mountain lion issues and they were seeing some black bears on cameras. They also saw more significant increase in eagle depredation of sheep and cattle both. Also seeing bald eagle depredation which is new. Asking for \$35,000 less than last year's request.

## **Lunch Break**

*Albany County: Joel Moody, WS, Brooke Willis*

*Request: \$235,621*

Coyote numbers are up and losses have been steady, approximately \$45,000 loss to livestock and \$30,000 loss to ravens at lime plant and in the city. No current wildlife projects with Game and Fish. More producers have been added with agreements. Have had three golden eagles removed. Fixed wing competitive to get with fewer planes available. Working hard to keep cooperators happy with service as they depend upon the service provided. Wolves may become an issue due to Colorado's proximity and control. They are seeing more predation of calves this year than in the past. Brady shared they have been utilizing the FWS helicopter as well.

*Campbell County: Kevin Geis, Board, Kenda Ford (bookkeeper)*

*Request: \$290,000*

*Rabies: \$10,500*

Coyote numbers are steady, program working well and would like to continue as we are. They have three trappers who also do rabies work. They usually get some funding from the County

commissioners to help with skunk control to mitigate rabies. They have limited their trapper days to balance the budget. 41 skunks tested with 12 positive, two human contact cases. Crows and ravens are more of an issue. They use mainly private pilots so they have been ok getting aerial help. Raptor numbers (golden eagles mostly, some bald eagles) are steady to increasing; crows and raven populations seem to be increasing.

*Park County: Regan Smith, Board and Mike Burrell, Monty Nicholson, WS*

*Request: \$225,000*

Park County has two full time trappers. They are seeing wolf depredation earlier this year than normal. With more people on the landscape, predator management gets to be more challenging. They have been working on a Clarks Fork mule deer winter project that was not funded by ADMB but has been successful. Their proposed budget includes money for non-lethal trailers, and they are having issues with the solar panels. They will spend \$2500 each fiscal year to provide traps for the public with education on trapping to aid their mission. They utilize binoculars and thermal scopes to help control predators. Lower predation with wolves seen. First calf kill by a golden eagle was documented this year.

*Big Horn County: Brandon O'Brien, specialist, Randall Jones, and Mike Burrell, WS*

*Request: \$238,000*

Currently, they have two full time trappers. Livestock protection is primary focus on coyote. A little raven work has been done when time allows. They do have eagles and last year one rancher lost a dozen lambs to eagle predation, but did not see the same loss this year, not sure what's different. Density of people in the summer has increased, making it difficult to trap and snare. Corn growers in the County have shown interest in a bounty system to control the racoons. They are considering doing this with the producers matching what the County pays. This would be an additional \$2500 in funding they would request. Jerry reminded them that bounty funds cannot come from ADMB; it has to come from predator fees.

*Uinta County: Steve Sims, Wade Larsen*

*Request: \$215,134*

Uinta has chosen to use USDA/WS for their program and are in the process of working with the new trapper. Eagle problems are worse than in the past. Some trapping of eagles for relocation has occurred. They also use private contractors for aerial hunting. They are getting a good handle on coyotes. Wade shared the annual report for their Board.

*Lincoln County: Jon Child, Steve Moyles, WS*

*Request: \$268,500*

Work in Lincoln County is traditional work for livestock and wildlife protection, with 25 herds of sheep (27,500 head). Some work in the fall and winter in Sweetwater County for the protection of sheep of Lincoln County producers. Lincoln County is in migratory corridors for deer and antelope and these are in cattle and sheep wintering areas. Work relationships with Game and Fish, Forest Service, and private trappers and pilots is good. They have one WS specialist and two part time private contract trappers. They expected a good year, but coyotes are

same if not greater in numbers, and they are not sure why. Their helicopter expense has increased \$12,000, WS increased \$11,000, and their trappers received a raise. They are needing to replace some equipment. They are very short on their branding income. \$36,000 additional is needed to cover thermal binoculars, more trapper time, helicopter work. Concerning trees for beavers in the budget, Steve shared the expenses of that. He also shared losses are about the same overall, significantly less wolf damage. Still lots of ravens threatening lambs and sage grouse.

## **Break**

*Hot Springs County: Jack Baird, Josh Longwell, Board, Mike Burrell, WS*

*Request: \$384,000*

Currently have two specialists, and a plane based in Worland. Majority of the work is in livestock protection. Owl Creek drainage is a challenge with wolf and bear influx. One board member has provided thermal scopes to the two specialists. The reason for an increased request is because they learned they can build up a reserve and wish to do that. Their goal is a 12-month reserve. Trends: coyote depredation has been lower; lions are the big problem; part of the county has diverse predators, including grizzly bears, black bears, mountain lions and wolves. Also, lots of bald eagles, golden eagles and ravens.

*Washakie County: Rolly Redland, Kent Lamm, Board and Mike Burrell, WS*

*Request: \$250,000*

They have two specialists. They also work on raccoon and skunk work as well. They have continued with deer project with coyote removal on south end of Bighorns. They have submitted another mule deer project in Washakie County for consideration. Some of their request is for thermal technology. Eagles and ravens are hard on gamebird populations, but when the landfills closed, the predatory bird numbers dropped.

*Sweetwater County: Jim Burnett, Gary Zakotnik*

*Request: \$248,500*

Sweetwater County has been wintering sheep, therefore not receiving much from predator fees. Currently have a couple contract part-time trappers. They currently run a spring program and a winter program to deal with the seasonal herds and to help wildlife in the area. A large area of public land and not much buy-in of private land/producers that winter their livestock in Sweetwater County. Their trapper is seeing more sage grouse skeletons in coyote dens than before which is concerning.

*Crook County: Wade Dennis*

*Request: \$200,380*

Currently have two full time private contract trappers that address traditional and non-traditional predator work. They are getting more people getting into the sheep business in the county. They also use two private contract pilots/gunners for aerial work. Preventative control in livestock and wildlife are their primary focus, but have had more calls for work in town. Their program will stay pretty much the same. Brand fee income should remain level. Slade clarified they would be able to do the same job with \$11,000 less of a request.

*Fremont County: Rob Crofts, Tracy Frye WS & Mac Chrome WS, Ivan Laird, Tina Haddenham*

*Request: \$313,100*

Seventy-two percent of county acreage is covered with agreements. 116 private landowner agreements in the county. They have 41 individuals inside the reservation also have agreements. They have a large population of cow calf operations. They also do some human health and safety. Wolf depredation has been pretty quiet as of late. They also do a seasonal bounty program. They asked for clarification about reported vs. verified. They believe the database is incorrect. They feel the eagle predation is not documented, but definitely have a problem.

*Niobrara County: Arlene York, Kitson Boldon, Board*

*Request: \$180,000*

Nothing has changed in the program. They have two trappers. They take care of the entire county and some across other county borders. Not many sheep in the county and seeing more losses by cattle producers. They have been spending down their surplus. Their trappers have never received a raise but are very dedicated to the county and the program. Only 4.4% of the budget goes to administration and they do not carry any inventory items. They have a balanced program with both aerial and ground work, however would like to have more availability on air time (fixed wing). Their trappers are year-round and provide all their own equipment, but are reimbursed for some ammo. Trends: They feel they are not doing a good job reporting losses, but are working on that. They didn't have luck hiring a part-time trapper, but they're looking for one that could work into full-time when the time comes. Their deer numbers are down, possibly because of 2022-23 winter.

*Converse County: Casey Tillard, Curtis Maxwell*

*Request: \$284,464*

They have 3 full time trappers and one part-time trapper and a bookkeeper. One of the largest sheep producing counties in the state. They estimate they lost 5,000 lambs last year. Hard to get WS aerial help due to BLM situation and other county demands. Trappers work hard and have been dealing with challenges managing coyotes in a lot of sheep flocks with limited rodent and rabbit populations. Ravens have not been a large problem since the Glenrock animal dump has been closed. They have some reported losses to eagles that continues to increase. Calf losses are increasing.

*Natrona County: T.K. Atkinson, Board*

*Request: \$290,000*



The plan is the same as in the past. Currently have 3 trappers. The projects include the Bates Hole project and another project in the north end of the county. They will be requesting continuation of these projects. Started a raven project with the dump, which has made a huge difference in Casper. They are considering a project to help keep predation in check for a sheep transplant project with the Wild Sheep Foundation. They always try to do the wildlife projects with or without the wildlife funding.

Meeting will reconvene at 8:00 am, Thursday, May 16, 2024. Meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

### **Wednesday, May 16, 2024**

Called to order at 8:03 a.m. by Co-Chair Brian Nesvik. A quorum was confirmed.

#### **Public Comment on grant applications**

Amy Hendrickson: She noted the increase in the quality of requests, which shows the Board is working hard. She also commended Jerry for helping bring the District Boards up to speed, and the commitment of Boards who make the drive to present and are well-prepared to present and ask questions. She posed the idea of having a meeting on the west side of state occasionally. She thanked the Board for their time. Brian asked if it would help to direct Boards as to what they should present on. Amy agreed this would be helpful.

Jerry introduced Zeta Anderson, the new Board member who wasn't in attendance yesterday.

Jerry Johnson presented the board has \$36,000 funds available for this year's rabies allocation and \$45,500 in requests from 3 counties Johnson, Sheridan and Campbell.

Jerry explained his thinking concerning his recommendations to the Board. The Board discussed transparency of District Boards, and their stewardship of funding. They also discussed the possibility of moving the Wildlife funding meeting to occur before this meeting each year, so the Boards know the amount of Wildlife money they're receiving prior to applying for ADMB money.

Jerry proposed giving \$38,000 for sage grouse money to every board except Goshen who would receive \$5000 because of the low population of sage grouse in that county. Bob motioned to follow Jerry's recommendation, per the spreadsheet, and lower the application requests accordingly, Roger seconded. Discussion also included adding \$27,750 sage grouse money to Carbon, Fremont, Natrona, and Sweetwater as they are large counties. The vote being unanimous, the motion carried.

The final recommendation for allocation by Jerry Johnson was presented, per the spreadsheet. Jeff motioned to accept Jerry's recommendations per the spreadsheet. Brett seconded. Discussion ensued. Slade made an amendment motion to move Campbell from \$308,000 down to \$305,000 reduction of \$3000, seconded by Jeff. With a unanimous vote, the amendment was approved. There was a motion by Bob to reduce Fremont by \$20,000, which was seconded by Sharon. With

one abstention, this amendment approved. Slade moved an amendment to reduce Niobrara by \$5000, which was seconded by Bob. With a unanimous vote, the amendment was approved. Slade made an amendment motion to increase Sheridan by \$10,000, which Jeff seconded. With a unanimous vote, the amendment was approved. Per the original motion and second, the vote to accept with the amended changes was unanimous, and the allocations were approved.

**Rabies: \$36,000 to allocate.**

Bob Harlan motioned to allocate \$12,500 to Sheridan county, \$10,500 to Campbell County, and \$12,500 to Johnson county. Roger Cox seconded, and with a unanimous vote, the motion passed.

Jerry pointed out that he will ask Districts to amend their applications if they are receiving more funding than requested. The Board also discussed the importance of consistency of Districts reporting the budget items. Jerry confirmed there will be a mandatory meeting for Districts in how to report their budgets, to provide this consistency. Bob suggested that the Board let the Districts know that them having a one-year reserve was part of the funding discussion this year.

Jerry Johnson presented funds available for this year’s allocations. \$3,920,000 general funding and \$800,000 for a total of \$4,720,00 is available for allocations.

The board discussed funding allocations.

**PMD: \$4,720,000 to allocate.**

Question called to vote on main motion to approve column. Motion carried.

The final allocation is shown below

<u>General funding</u>	<u>Sage grouse</u>
Albany \$197,621.00	\$38,000
Big Horn \$189,000.00	\$38,000
Campbell \$267,000.00	\$38,000
Carbon \$213,250.00	\$65,750
Converse \$246,464.00	\$38,000
Crook \$162,380.00	\$38,000
Fremont \$227,350.00	\$65,750
Goshen \$125,000.00	\$5,000
Hot Springs \$346,000.00	\$38,000
Johnson \$272,000.00	\$38,000
Lincoln \$230,500.00	\$38,000
Natrona \$246,250.00	\$65,750
Niobrara \$160,000.00	\$38,000
Park \$148,000.00	\$38,000
Sheridan \$214,500.00	\$38,000
Sweetwater \$197,750.00	\$65,750
Uinta \$177,134.00	\$38,000
Washakie \$187,000.00	\$38,000
Weston \$62,000.00	\$38,000

Total funds allocated: \$4,669,199.00

Motion to adjourn was made by Roger, seconded by Jeff. Meeting was adjourned at 10:54 am.