

6/17/2023
GMAC Meeting, Ellensburg, WA
WA Cattlemen's Association

Meeting called to order at 10:00, a quorum present with Jake, Al, Roy, Max, Rachel, Bruce, Rob, Dave, Mark, and Bill.

Minutes from previous meeting approved.

GMP Update

Anis indicated the Commission wants one GMP, not to break it down into multiple documents individually (deer, elk, bear, cougar, etc.).

- SEPA will be potentially onerous with one document.
- Decision on one vs. multiple documents coming formally at next Commission meeting.
- Wolf, cougar, fur-bearers will be most problematic.
- Anis has already drafted waterfowl as a standalone document, will likely be included in GMP as single document.
- Anis is working on introductory chapter with issue statement.

Question asked about how GMP not being passed soon will affect regulation setting. Anis assured the group that this process will not be affected by the status of the GMP.

GMAC requested the ability to review all chapters of the GMP during the drafting process. A subcommittee was established to work with Anis on this including:

1. Rob-Chair
2. Rachel
3. Roy
4. Mark

Harvest Updates

Anis presented historical harvest data in a spreadsheet form to the group. Some highlights include:

1. Bear harvest up last couple of years, but not a significant increase. Fear among group this rise in harvest will concern the Commission and limit bear hunting moving forward. Discussion on WDFW density estimates across the state for bear, that don't indicate any population level issues as this time.
2. Deer harvest significantly lower driven primarily by WT deer in the NE struggling with the effects of disease, harsh winters, and predation.
3. Elk are relatively stable, variance in harvest driven by antlerless tag allocations primarily. A brief discussion on the Colocum herd which appears to be doing better in terms of bull:cow ratios with spike regulation restrictions changing. WDFW working on

increasing the number of branch bull tags available by special permit to increase opportunity.

4. Cougar harvest numbers are higher with boot hunters than the old hound hunting system. Likely some changes/restrictions coming due to depredation hunts in some areas accounting for a significant harvest. This not well received by GMAC.
5. Small game many populations are down. Speculated due to multiple factors such as mesopredators, weather, and habitat.
6. Furbearer presentation resulted in a heated debate about beavers in particular. Due to the Commission wanted beavers transplanted instead of killed through depredation permits.

Commission Update

Anis provided a presentation introducing all of the Commission members to us, including the 2 newest members.

Commission has formed a wildlife committee including: Jim, Woody, Melanie, and Lorna.

Appears to be a climate driven ideology from some members.

Ecosystem management – Commission doesn't seem to understand the concept in terms of their ability to influence. WDFW doesn't have much influence on the vast majority of the State in terms of habitat change/alteration.

Points Discussion

Jake provided a presentation on Washington's special permit draw process as well as 14 other western states. Discussion centered on Washington identified the only way to change draw odds is to restrict hunters from applying for multiple species and to only have the ability to submit one choice when applying. A Subcommittee was formed to further explore this issue (Didn't write down who was on this) and work with Anis to better understand the ramifications on modifications from a draw odds and financial perspective to WDFW.