

Wolf Advisory Group

MEETING SUMMARY¹, JUNE 27-28, 2023

WAG members present: Tyler Allen, Alex Baier, Samee Charriere, Todd Holmdahl, Jessica Kelley (virtual, day 1), Bill Kemp, Nick Martinez, Marie Neumiller, Scott Nielsen (virtual), Lynn Okita, Dan Paul (virtual), Caitlin Scarano, Lisa Stone (virtual), Sierra Smith, and Paula Swedeen.

Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW, Department) staff members present: Jim Brown (virtual), Brock Hoenes, Mike Kuttel (virtual), Staci Lehman, Ben Maletzke (virtual), Trent Roussin (virtual, day 2), Julia Smith, Seth Thompson, Jeff Wade, Kyla West, Joey McCanna, and Paul Wik (Day 1)

Facilitation team: Casey Hart, Susan Hayman, and Tristan Marquez

Meeting Action Items

| Responsible Party | Action Item | Target Date |
|---------------------------|---|-------------|
| Facilitation Team | Distribute provisional final advice for wolf-ungulate interactions to absent WAG members for review and concurrence. | Completed |
| Facilitation Team | Distribute final advice for wolf-ungulate interactions once all absent WAG members have reviewed and responded. | August 18 |
| Facilitation Team | Ensure that all comments received from the online survey are captured in the digital white board and that it, and the full text of the responses, are distributed to WAG members. | August 18 |
| Cross-boundary Task Group | Convene to frame discussion around cross-boundary issues between Washington and Oregon. | August 25 |
| Julia Smith | Inform Director Susewind of the cross-boundary issues discussion. | Completed |

June 27, 2023

Opening

Susan Hayman, Ross Strategic facilitator, opened the Wolf Advisory Group (WAG) meeting by welcoming members, WDFW staff, and meeting observers, and providing an overview of the meeting objectives and agenda.

The purpose of the meeting was to 1) Consider proposed WAG advice to WDFW regarding wolf-ungulate interactions. 2) Hold two conversations regarding range riding: Discuss at a general level what's working well and not working well; identify items relevant to range riding program contracting, funding, and administration; Collect potential advice points relative to the range riding program contracting, funding, and administration and identify next steps for drafting advice. 3) Provide opportunities for WAG

¹ This summary is a synthesis of the meeting discussion June 27-28, 2023. The meeting summary will be publicly available following finalization of the meeting documentation package.

members and WDFW staff to build collaborative capacity and strengthen their relationships with one another.

The meeting followed the previous day's field trip to WAG member Samee Charriere's Clarkston-based Ledgerwood Gelbvieh Ranch.

Introductions

WAG Member and WDFW Staff Introductions and Morning Check-in

Hayman invited WAG members and WDFW staff in attendance to provide the customary round-robin introductions.

WDFW Announcements

Gray Wolf Updates

Julia Smith, WDFW Wolf Policy Lead, provided a brief update on recent WDFW activities. A full update can be found in the [May 2023 Monthly Wolf Report](#). Highlights of the update included:

- The release of the [Draft Periodic Status Review for the Grey Wolf](#). The public is invited to comment on the draft by submitting written comments until 11:59 p.m. on August 16, 2023.
- Two depredation events were documented for the Scatter pack in May and June, respectively.
- A group of wolves (WA139 group), including a collared wolf from the Tucannon pack, have been active in both Southeast Washington and Northeast Oregon, and have been involved in multiple depredation events. WDFW staff are working closely with the affected producers from the Scatter pack depredation events to employ non-lethal measures to better protect their livestock, and staff are coordinating with ranchers in both regions to deter future events and monitor the pack's activity.
- The Colorado Department of Parks and Wildlife have officially requested several western states, including Washington, to translocate some of their wolves to Colorado. The Washington Fish & Wildlife Commission (Commission) is expected to discuss the request before any action is taken. Smith noted that the ultimate decision for translocating wolves from Washington to Colorado is made by the Commission, but the Washington's Governor's Office may take interest as well.

WDFW District Wildlife Biologist, Paul Wik, informed the group that 115 elk calves had been collared for the Blue Mountain Elk Study by June 12th, which was the end date for calf-capture. A few collars have since been caught on and lost to shrubs and fence lines, and some elk calves have been killed—evidently by cougars, but with some possible deaths by bears and wolves. Previous elk calf survival rates were 30% in 2021 and 46% in 2022. In 2023 to date, three-four elk calves are being lost per week. The department has not yet decided what action it will take based on the data. The WDFW game management division seeks to understand why the elk population is not successfully recruiting calves.

June 26th Field Trip Takeaways

WAG member, Samee Charriere, hosted WAG members and WDFW staff on a field trip of her livestock operation. Participating WAG members and WDFW staff received an overview of livestock operations at the home property, leased pasture in Peola, and the ranch's permitted grazing allotment on the Umatilla

National Forest. Participants gained a better understanding of the flow of livestock operations through the year, and the challenges of managing livestock and deterring predators on expansive, forested grazing allotments with rugged terrain. At the last stop, field trip participants met with local ranchers in the Anatone who spoke of their personal experiences with depredation events and wolf-livestock conflict. Charriere noted that she wanted to show the group the challenges of the landscape. The operation is very spread out and it would be impossible to monitor every cow daily. Many other livestock operations face the same challenges--fladry and range riders are beneficial but cannot be deployed everywhere.

WAG members and WDFW staff who attended the trip spoke about how impressed they were with the size and scope of the operation. They recognized how hard it is to manage so many cattle across several pastures with difficult terrain. Participants acknowledged the effort to manage and protect the cattle and appreciated hearing about the personal depredation experiences of producers in the area--the conversation was difficult, but it helped the group better understand the challenge of running an operation near wolves. It also provided more context on why range riding and other nonlethal deterrents do not work consistently across all landscapes. Several participants expressed how impressed they were with the care and stewardship of the land as evidenced on the trip. Participants noted that they were moved by the plight of the Anatone producers and hoped to identify potential solutions that could provide relief.

During the field trip, Charriere informed the group of several pieces of technology she uses to monitor her operation and that there is a lot of promising technology available that could be used to help with monitoring and deterring conflict. WAG members expressed interest in future conversations around potentially useful technologies.

WAG members and WDFW staff thanked Charriere and her father, Sam Ledgerwood, for hosting the trip and for the earnest conversations.

Proposed WAG Advice: Wolf-Ungulate Interactions

Introduction

The WAG engaged in a two-part discussion² to review and refine draft advice for wolf-ungulate interactions developed by an assigned writing team of three WAG members following a special two-hour WAG virtual meeting where members and WDFW staff discussed potential advice points. The advice is the culmination of a one and half year process where the WAG gathered information, learned from subject matter experts, and discussed matters relating to wolf-ungulate interactions. The draft advice was reviewed by WDFW ungulate specialist, Kyle Garrison. The advice was provisionally adopted per the WAG's Decision Making (Sufficient Consensus Model). There was one area of disagreement noted during the meeting:

- One member from the Livestock Producer identify group could not support the advice because of concerns that the habitat restoration encouraged in Advice Point #2 would redirect/reduce

² Discussion of the advice occurred in two separate sessions on June 27th and 28th, respectively. All notes on the discussion and the final provisional advice are presented together in this section.

funding provide to range riding programs. Other WAG members expressed their belief that these are separate funding streams, and funding for one would not impact the other.

WAG members that were absent for the decision-making discussion for this advice will be contacted individually to determine their level of support for this advice³. A final version of the adopted advice will be distributed once it is affirmed.

Discussion

WAG members discussed and revised the draft advice at length during two sessions over both meeting days. Key points of the discussion included:

- Advice Point #1: Ungulate population data and dynamics are needed before assessing causes of population change and informing management decisions. Increased funding would allow biologists to monitor more ungulate populations broadly across the state to make data-informed management decisions rather than assumptive ones. A major goal for understanding ungulate population dynamics is to determine the impacts of wolf predation on ungulate populations where wolves are present.
- Advice Point #2:
 - There are more locations that need restoration than there is capacity to do so. Strengthening partnerships between the department, land management agencies, Tribes, NGOs, and private landowners will help break down barriers across groups and have a stronger impact. WAG could potentially facilitate a collaborative effort, though it would be beyond this group's scope to engage in the on-the-ground work.
 - Habitat restoration is already a WDFW activity. The proposal of the second recommendation is to increase the total funding the Department has for restoration without taking funding from other programs, such as the range rider program. The Climate Commitment Act has funding for habitat restoration that could help.

Range-Riding (Part 1): What's Working? What's Not?

The discussion was framed by the Range Riding Task Group to assist in eventually developing draft advice for how the range riding program may be administered. Hayman noted the discussion would be conducted in two parts—with Part 1 focused on broad information-gathering around what is currently working with range riding and what is not. Part 2 would take place on Day 2 and would focus on

³ Another member from the Livestock Producer identity group who missed this discussion and was contacted after the meeting said he could support Advice Points #1 and #3 but could not support Advice Point #2. This is because of concerns that the language in Advice Point #2 could potentially be used as a tool to reduce livestock grazing to achieve habitat restoration. Without explicit language such as "In no instance is WAG recommending reducing livestock grazing to enhance or restore ungulate habitat," this member could not support Advice Point #2. This member missed the second day discussion of the advice and did not expect the other members to reopen the discussion to address this point—he requested this concern simply be noted for the record.

identification of potential advice points focused specifically on administration of the range-riding program. WAG members were presented with a digital whiteboard ([Appendix A](#)) displaying synthesized feedback received from a brief online survey of what was currently working and not working with range riding. This feedback was solicited from producers who utilize range riders, WDFW staff who administer the WDFW contracted range-riders and the Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreement for Livestock (DPCAL) programs that provide funding for producer-managed range-riders, WDFW staff who coordinate on-the-ground range-riding activities, and those who administer the two non-profit range riding programs in Northeast Washington (CPoW and NEWWCC). Members reviewed the synthesized responses and provided the following reflections:

- One respondent expressed concern that not all responses submitted via the survey tool were captured in this synthesis. The facilitation team took the action to review the submissions to ensure all the information has been captured. In addition, the facilitation team will distribute the full text of the responses following the meeting.
- Wolves were not present in all the areas they currently occupy when the range riding program was created. This provides an opportunity to evolve and improve the range riding program to function across areas with wolf activity.
- Proficient range riders need to be recruited and compensated properly. Some range riders reporting having issues being paid in a timely way by WDFW.
- Recruiting competent range riders is difficult. Future range riding programs should consider the following questions:
 - What program or structure could be put together to address these problems?
 - What is the root of the issues?
 - What works for ranchers within particular regions?
 - What is socially accepted?
- Range riding programs need to be consistently administered to avoid confusion. A standardized pay-scale, range riding program document, and training guide would be helpful.
- WDFW range riding funds may be put to better use by funding other range riding initiatives and training programs.
- WDFW is moving away from managing the range riding program. It will no longer have a program administration role in Northeast Washington (except for providing DPCAL funding) and is providing contract range riders in other parts of the state to fill gaps in 2023.
- The scope of WDFW's involvement in the future of range riding needs to be determined.
 - How can WDFW provide the best service to make a broader network of services available?
 - What will the program look like if not run by WDFW?
 - Who will run the program?
 - What information from range riders will be used to help with wolf management?

- The Range Riding Task Group should continue its work. The surveys responses are helpful, and the data received should be provided to department and entities running range riding programs. An entity besides the WAG may be better at determining how to respond to the feedback.

WAG members and WDFW agreed on the following next steps:

- The facilitation team will ensure all comments received from the online survey are captured in the digital white board and that it, and the full text of the responses, are distributed to WAG members.
- The Range Riding Task Group decided to gather at the conclusion of the Day 1 meeting to reconsider how to frame up the discussion for Day 2.

Public Comment

Nine persons provided public comment this day, as documented in [Appendix B](#).

Closing

Hayman invited WAG members and WDFW staff to provide final reflections. Hayman thanked members and WDFW staff for their participation and closed the day's session, reminding the public of the opportunity to join an informal, in-room discussion session with WDFW staff following the closure of the Day 1 WAG meeting.

June 28, 2023

Opening

Hayman opened the second day of the meeting by reviewing the meeting agenda and objectives. She invited WAG members and WDFW staff in attendance to provide round-robin introductions.

Proposed WAG Advice: Wolf-Ungulate Interactions Part 2

WAG members and WDFW staff continued to review the draft recommendation language developed by the Wolf-Ungulate Interactions Task Group. Thirteen of the 14 WAG members in attendance reached consensus on the language for the recommendations. One WAG member dissented due to concerns that Advice Point #2 opened the possibility that encouraging increased habitat restoration could potentially redirect funding away from range riding programs. Details from the discussion can be found in this [section](#) of the document.

Range Riding (Part 2)

Range Riding Task Group members felt that the WAG was not ready to develop potential advice regarding future administration of the range riding program, and that additional background information was needed for all WAG members to be on the same level of understanding of the current programs. The task group led the WAG in a discussion on existing programs. Key points and questions from the discussion include:

- The current overall administrator of range riding programs is WDFW. DPCALs and WDFW-contracted range riding were initially the only tools available to hire range riders through the department.
- Conservation Northwest raised money to cost share range riding in northeast Washington, where the need was greatest, and established one of the two programs (NEWCC) now funded by the Agriculture Grant program to provide another option for range riding for producers that preferred not to use contract riders. CPoW is the second program available for northeast Washington producers.
- There are not enough options for range rider funding outside of northeast Washington. Other areas of the state, particular southeast Washington, present a new set of challenges for finding and funding range riders.
- DPCAL does not provide enough funding for range riding beyond the summer, and some producers need riders for longer periods of time.
- A lot of bad actors were hired as range riders in the beginning, which resulted in more prescriptive contracts, a strict hiring process, and specific (and unduly complex, in some producers' view) reporting and operating requirements for riders.
- Outstanding questions:
 - How can riders local to areas that need the program be found and trained?
 - What would WDFW's role for range riding be if it evolves away from managing the program?
 - How can producers in all parts of the state get access to high quality range riders?
 - What role and level should the WAG play in providing advice on range riding?

WAG members expressed interest in a one-pager that provides the details of the history of range riding and the differences between the different programs for reference. WDFW noted the existence of summary information on range riding and will work with the facilitation team to ensure members have access to these resources.

WAG members asked the Task Group to frame up future conversations to address the questions identified during today's discussion.

Future WAG Topics

Cross-Boundary Wolf Management

Hayman invited WAG members and WDFW staff to provide input on the framing for the cross-boundary topic that was brought up the previous day. She presented the following questions that had been identified:

- How do other states manage cross-boundary issues?
 - How can double-lethal removal be avoided?
- How do different state agencies coordinate and share information?
- What are the requirements for nonlethal deterrents in other states?

- What is the current basis of cross-boundary discussion in Washington?

Several members felt the WAG was well positioned to provide advice on the cross-boundary topic and that most of the questions had been addressed the day before. Members agreed Idaho should not be included in the initial scope of this topic, as it doesn't employ or require the same nonlethal deterrents used in Washington. Additionally, members believe it would be difficult to include Idaho in the discussion as they do not record depredation numbers or lethal control of wolves. Members agreed to start with Oregon for this topic, due to its similar wolf management practices.

WDFW advised that it would be helpful to check in with WDFW Director Susewind's perspective on whether such advice would be useful for the Department. Following additional discussion of the pros and cons, WAG concurred that it would be good to provide a heads up to Director Susewind and be informed of his perspective before moving forward. Julia Smith took the action to speak with Director Susewind about this topic.

The WAG agreed to the following framework for future discussions:

- Topic Scope:
 - Focus on the Oregon and Washington boundary first.
 - Hold on Idaho boundary for now, but the group may decide to pursue investigating options on the Idaho side in the future.
- Potential advice considerations
 - Consider actions on a pack-basis.
 - Do not duplicate lethal orders.
 - Consistent requirements for non-lethals.
 - Coordination and information-sharing between state departments.
- Next steps
 - Convene a team to draft advice based on these potential advice points.
 - WAG Members: Sierra, Marie, Caitlin, Samee, and Dan
 - WDFW Staff: Joey and Trent
 - Concurrently inform Director Susewind of the groups intention to draft advice.
 - Take the director's response into consideration when moving through the advice development.

Hemorrhaging Discussion

As the WAG discussed the prioritization of future meeting topics, the topic of revisiting how hemorrhaging is considered in depredation investigations was raised. One WAG member expressed concern that how the use of hemorrhaging in depredation investigations is described in the Wolf-Livestock Interaction Protocol is not how it is being interpreted and applied during depredation investigations. Some WAG members felt this topic should be discussed based on the following discussion points:

- Producers in several counties are frustrated that hemorrhaging must be visible for a depredation to be considered a confirmed versus a probable wolf kill, even if other evidence points to wolf depredation. They assert that hemorrhaging is often not present in instances where the animal (e.g., small calves) has largely been consumed at the time it is discovered.
- Properly identifying wolf depredations will lead to faster conflict mitigation, which benefits the whole pack and producers.
- Cases often end up in the court to determine how the livestock died.
- A hide can be soaked and rehydrated to examine hemorrhaging and bites more clearly.

WDFW staff clarified that hemorrhaging is trauma to tissue. Other methods and evidence are gathered to determine a probable kill, such as tracks, location data, and trail cameras. The discussion around hemorrhaging is to determine if a kill is considered confirmed or probable. Other factors could contribute to a confirmed case in the absence of hemorrhaging, and this could be a point of discussion. Another approach could be for WAG to revisit the number of probable kills needed before lethal action is taken.

WDFW staff members asserted that the definitions around hemorrhaging were sufficiently clear and this indicator is critical from their perspective. As an important element within the Protocol, this discussion would need to be focused, and would be potentially difficult for WDFW and WAG members alike.

Hayman recognized that WAG members need more time frame this topic before pursuing this topic. An initial virtual conversation before the November 2023 WAG meeting, as well as background materials, would help for framing any future conversation, should WAG determine an interest to move ahead with this discussion.

Future WAG Meeting Priorities

WAG members were asked to rank their top three topic priorities for future WAG meetings. While the results were shared in-room after being tabulated, it was apparent that there was confusion in how some of the overlapping topics were scored. The facilitation team will review the outcomes and may ask WAG members for clarification to ensure an accurate reflection of their perspectives.

WAG members and staff also reflected on the complexity of the topics, and that several topics would require multiple meetings to appropriately discuss them.

WAG members and WDFW staff made the following observations about the monitoring discussion:

- The vision for the monitoring task group is how to monitor wolves in future without the minimum-counts method. Research and outreach are needed to identify the methods the public would accept and would work in long term. The group should look at methods and actions used by other states.
- Denning is a sensitive topic, and locations cannot be shared with public other than producers through a written agreement, according to the Wolf-Livestock Interaction Protocol.
- WDFW hopes to develop a plan to monitor wolves that meets public trust. This becomes complicated with many possible methods.

Public Comment

Following the discussion of future topics, seven persons provided public comment this day, as documented in [Appendix B](#).

Closing

Hayman invited WAG members and WDFW staff to provide final reflections. Hayman thanked members and WDFW staff for their participation and closed the meeting.

Appendix A: Range Riding Survey Synthesis

(as presented during the meeting—provisional until confirmed all synthesized responses reflect the feedback received from the survey)

| Working | | | | | | Not Working | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|---|---|
| The money helps with extra fuel (WW) | Riders report to producers and have their trust (Stev) | Riders that know cattle and how cattle act and react. (Ferry) | Provides a service to help with a problem (Gar, Col) | Communication is key (Col, Ferry) | Extra set of eyes when rancher can't be there (Col) | If you don't find a good range rider, better to not have one at all. (Kittas) | Finding proper range riders is difficult; temporary, doesn't pay enough to cover expenses (Kitt) ★ | Range riders can't keep up—no real pattern to wolves—need real time collar data (Col) | Feels like range riders are a tool for watching ranchers—RR not supportive of ranchers (Stev) |
| Close communication with producer—extremely effective communication through group chats, texting, and phone calls. (Stev, PO) | CRR's are 1) flexible, 2) cover multiple livestock owner operations, 3) negotiate the need for individual DPCA L's (Kitt) | Trust they put in riders to work according to what they see happening (Stev) | Honest relationships (Ferry, Stev, PO) | Giving producers ownership of hiring process, field plans and other aspects so they provide expertise and are part of the effort. (Ferry, Stev, PO) | The money helps check herds more often and consistently. (WW) | WDFW not following thru with lethal removal after requirements met (Stev) | Insufficient funding to hire sufficient # of riders. (Stev & Ferry) ★ | Days where riders never see a cow...just a function of # of acres available for grazing. (Stev) | Rules ever-changing, undermines chance of success. (Stev & Ferry) |
| Closely monitor livestock, movement, and general behavior, and stay on top of any situations that arise.(Ferry) | Good leadership (Ferry) | Extra human presence during summer pasture (Col, Stev) | Access to collar data (need more) (Stev, PO) | Working together with rancher and using GPS to track riders (Stev) | Find problems when they are present (Stev) | Riders need more tools/ weapons to haze wolves (Col) | Paid late (Stev) ★ | Lack of ability to work with a partner—safety issue (Stev/PO) | Blackout period—collar data is critical on large allotments (Stev/ PO) ★ |
| Riders being available and willing to work when wolves are active (Ferry, Stev, PO) | Good riders that can be trusted | Someone knowledgeable in the terrain, how it's used. (Ferry) | Range rider utilized in spring calving area—kept the wolves away and if they were seen we were notified right away (Col) | Range riders out there at all times putting pressure on the wolves by loud noises, being present to keep them away from the cattle (Stev) | Rider who knows how to maneuver efficiently and effectively and safely. (Ferry) | Clocking time from driveway to driveway (Stev/PO) ★ | Insufficient funding for tools (like cameras) to help riders (Ferry) ★ | Help neighboring areas that would be time efficient for us (Stev/PO) | Lack of wolf management (Ferry) |
| Open lines of communication with producers and contract administrator. (Stev, Ferry) | Large range areas very difficult to monitor – RR services true value to us.(Stev) | The consistency of being on the same range year to year, building a relationship with the rancher and seeing the geography. (Ferry) | Range riding on a horse.(Ferry) | Filing requirements for being with the cattle (Col, Gar, Asoin) often at no cost to producers (Stev, Ferry, PO) | Options other than WDFW—lack of trust (Stev, Ferry) | Inability to keep cows grouped, easier to locate and defend (WW) | Producers should determine the activity of their riders (Ferry/ Stev/ PO) | Politics and infighting...and egos (Ferry, Stev, PO) | Forrest service roads are not well maintained (Ferry) |
| Having riders exposed to cattle in daytime to help cattle get familiar with them. (Stev, Ferry, PO) | Instrumental in sighting wounded calves and helping us corral them so they can be treated. (PO) | Being able to pick where we rode depending on where the cows are or where we find predator activity (Ferry) | Provides producers the opportunity to tend to other livestock (subsidiary duties while range riders are reducing the likelihood of wolf-livestock conflict. (Stev, Ferry, PO) | Committed experienced riders who are knowledgeable about the areas they are covering. (Ferry, Stev, PO) | Committed experienced riders willing to document the required information for billing and necessary reports to determine effectiveness of the programs. (Ferry, Stev, PO) | Bureaucracy and competing programs preventing timely payment (Stev, Ferry, PO) | Lack of communication with WDFW (Ferry) | Untimely depredation investigations (Ferry) | Lack on information on denning and wolves on private land (Ferry) |
| Less complaints about wolf depredations. (Ferry, Stev, PO, Oka) | Accurate observations of cows and calves. | Dependable, honest, qualified, communicate daily with their findings. | Peace of mind knowing that somebody is monitoring their livestock herds when they cannot. (Stev, Ferry, PO) | | | Lack of comms between dep and riders (Col, Gar, Aso) | Riders lack knowledge of landscape (Aso) | | |

Appendix B: Public Comment

Public comment received at the end of each meeting day is paraphrased below:

June 27, 2023

- Sam Ledgerwood: Thanks for taking the time to see our country and challenges with terrain and range riders. There's no cookie cutter solution for range riders. It is an individual thing. I encourage the group, if it doesn't work in some areas, fix it. It will be different in each area, find solutions where it's not working. My other comment: these producers are being financially impacted by wolves. They are not living high and don't need to take financial hits. Going above and beyond to monitor cattle is a financial hit. They are willing to do it but can't stand the losses. Those who want wolves should compensate losses without harassment and challenges.
- Mark (last name not captured): The problem with range riding is the terrain. There are a dozen of us--how many range riders it will take to cover ground? It takes a lot.
- David Rustebakke: I am a local veterinarian. I don't have cattle. I work for a lot of people that do and see the anguish they have. Most these people are second to fourth generation ranchers. They started ranching without wolves and now they have this issue. We want to pass farms to the next generation, but the fear is if it gets too hard, and they work very hard, and then to add predation on top, is the next generation even going to want to do it? It is a vital part of our economy and lifestyle. We don't want to see next the generation not want to do it. There has got to be some way to make it easier for people to survive. There are physical and psychological effects on cattle from wolves being present. It makes cows nervous and adds steroids in their system. We can have wolves but compensate the ranchers for their losses and help the next generation to want to come back to work the land.
- Brad (last name not captured): I'm a 4th generation rancher and have dispersed pastures. Started in Cloverland in Anatone, and it used to be that we could put the cattle in a fenced pasture and leave them for the week. Now as a one-man operation with both farming with ranching, I have to take time to check cows more often than I did before. With the price of gas and the impact on my other work, it is hard. It would be nice to have a streamlined process for paperwork that doesn't require an attorney to fill it out. Also, most of us are on a fire district and commissioners. We recently had an event in the county with all hands-on deck to fight a fire. How do we check cows when we need to fight fire? Cows are vulnerable when we go away. 75% of the ranchers in this area are part of the volunteer fire team.
- Richard Whitters: I'm from Sultan and live in steep country. This is our county; it is called Hells Canyon for a reason. We are 4th generation ranchers with 5th 6th working family members. Appreciate you looking at our land, it is unique. If we bring range riders in from elsewhere, they won't want to take horses down these steep cliffs because it's impossible. We ride horses around the rim and appreciate you looking at this. I believe wolves are here to stay but so are my kids and neighbors. We have been here a long time, 200 yrs. Paperwork should be streamlined, it is hard to fill out. I have 4 orphaned calves, traumatized, and it is hard to keep them alive with weather and

parasites, let alone wolves. If calves are skinny and weak, it makes us feel like failures for not doing our job. I lost 4 mother cows from wolves. Compensation gives a year or two of replacement, but the cows were supposed to last 10 years. This is about generations down the line. How will my family afford it? Please help us.

- Ted Jones: I have a WDFW allotment and another 2500 acres at the bottom of Wenatchee creek. It takes half an hour to drive from one area to another—I can't cover the whole area in a day with a horse. I have 3 UTVs staggered to check cows. Jeff (Wade) is great to work with. As far as elk, they live with my cows and eat my salt. It's interesting how many elk end up with cows. Elk aren't afraid of me, just wolves. I appreciate you doing what you are to help us as livestock producers.
- (Name not captured): I don't know enough about the range rider program to make a difference to comment on what it does. Efficiency is important, so why should there be multiple contracts? More efficient means it will be better. I expect programs to be more efficient and ask you to direct the agency to do so.
- Rod Parks: I am a recreational rider on National Forest and WDFW land. If you hired me to be a range rider in the county, I wouldn't do it for money, only for recreation. To think you can hire 40 people to stick out there--it won't work. The producers should have an advisory committee and work up a solution and have the biggest say in what is being done. There is lots of different riding in this county. I appreciate you coming and representing this part of the state.
- (Name not captured): I'm from Garfield County and follow the game department. Don't try to second guess or fanaticize--wolves are an apex predator here. They control game and in a cruel way. The Endangered Species Act is an overrated thing that is forced on us. The game department did great job in old administration, but elk herds are now under 5000 in the Blues. We are in the political arena right now. I am a Washington state trapper and do a lot of work with the game department. Don't throw away the old program, it worked for years. Farmers raised elk on farmland.

June 28, 2023

- Brad Forgey: I'm with Washington Cattlemen's Association - Some local producers were kind enough to go on the tour. Half of them couldn't be here because they have to work. It is hard for people to keep up with cattle duties and depredation events. Wolves are killing livestock. If we can have any improvement to this depredation situation, we would appreciate it.
- Pete Charriere: I am a producer. I run cattle in Garfield and Asotin counties (Sammie Charriere's spouse). The timeline for lethal removal after depredations is hard to take. A depredation event can be one or 15 animals. There is lots of potential lost income. I would like the timeline moved up. What happens if wolves den on private ground? Lots of us run on summer grass. What do we do if don't have summer grass to go to because of wolves? We would like the department to have this conversation and consider alternatives if wolf packs den on private property. Cattle run 30 days on private pasture before they move to summer pasture. Could we utilize WDFW land to offer a place for cows to go during that time if private land is not available? WAG is a group of very dispersed people representing different interests. The fact everyone can collaborate with different end goals is impressive. I really appreciate this collaboration and hope to find solutions for everyone.

- Stan Wilson: I live in the county and represent Asotin County Sportsman. Thank you for coming here. Progress is so slow. We need to think down the line. Reaching the delisting goal, we have to think of the process now with the rate things change. I want to remind you all that this is a tough job. The government puts pressure on the director to not kill wolves. WDFW is so divided it is hard to get anything done but there is confidence that this WAG is the right thing because they have not made changes to what the WAG has done so far.
- Rachel Bjork: I echo what Dan (Paul) is saying—changing listing guidelines would be upsetting for environmental groups. The constituents I represent think livestock are already getting too much support. Collared data is not real time data, and given recent poaching incidents there is reluctance to share information. I do hear a lot of what seems to be glorification of livestock producers. It is a business. Lots of people don't like producers raising cattle. Wolves were part of the ecosystem before cows and came back after people sanitized the landscape. They are important to a healthy ecosystem. Healthy ungulates are important to having good habitat. It all connects to greenhouse emissions and climate change. It is frustrating that so many resources goes to this when a lot of people don't want to work as producers.
- Ilene le Vee: I am a rancher and own farmland in Klickitat and Clark Counties. It is sad not to be able to make this trip and attend the meeting in person. I withhold judgmental comments other than to say WAG is doing a great job. I really appreciate the facilitator.
- Roger Singer: I am a producer in the Togo pack area. I had my first confirmed depredation yesterday. I am already six calves out, including the one confirmed event. This area has a lot of conflict that doesn't seem to change, and we are not getting enough department support. Range riding is the only tool we have. Fox lights are not being maintained and have been shot out. It is frustrating to have to wait for four confirmed depredations before action is taken. Acting quicker will take care of the situation. Wolves, cougars, and bears are taking over with no ungulates to support the ecosystem. We have got to get predators back in check. It is very frustrating.
- Linda Weatherly: I'm the president of the Asotin County Cattlewomen. I agree with producers. Cattle are part of the ecosystem. Cattle keep fire down. I'm out there constantly looking at cows and seeing this to be true.