

## Wolf Advisory Group April 7-8, 2021 Notes (DRAFT)

### Special Focus Areas:

1. Agreement
  - a. Definition – lethal removal authorized in 2 of the last 3 years
  - b. Goal – minimize depredations, limit lethal removal of wolves
  - c. Staff coordinate (facilitating that 1<sup>st</sup> discussion, not picking the 3<sup>rd</sup> party) “the group” to assess the situation and develop a formal plan w/ a 3<sup>rd</sup> party review
    - i. Group: affected producers, associated landowners, range riders, county sheriff representative (if applicable), land management agencies, and Dept. staff
    - ii. An independent person does the 3<sup>rd</sup> party review
    - iii. The group would select the 3<sup>rd</sup> party
  - d. In this guidance: attempt 2 collars, and let the local group decide what types (VHF, long-term monitoring, or 4-fixes/day) of collars are best, based on their analysis for packs with 5 or more wolves observed during our annual survey (?)
  - e. Regarding consequences ...
    - i. Start with a general statement that all parties will make a good faith effort.
    - ii. If participating in a proactive plan, then get them added resources.
    - iii. It’s an expectation that non-lethal methods are used proactively.
    - iv. The Director will retain flexibility regarding the unique circumstances
2. Still being considered
  - a. “The group” should consider (the four topics below)?
    - i. How does the group resolve differences? What’s their decision-making process? (Should we specify how they make decisions?) The Director makes the final decision?
    - ii. Are we pushing this down one level w/o solving it?
    - iii. The group would have more information to help with decisions?
    - iv. Need some overarching/general guidance for the group on collaring topic?
    - v. Which pieces (below) are a good fit for the local community group?
  - b. 2 collars on wolves within SFA
    - i. Attempt to deploy a conflict and GPS collars
    - ii. Capacity for 4 data points/day; transmit once per day (to preserve battery life)
      1. Increase frequency in SFAs
      2. Need to better clarify these rates.
    - iii. Main frame tries to “sweep” data once/hr
      1. Current collars only upload data 1/da or every other day
    - iv. Concerns
      1. May be something we try
      2. 2 collars on wolves w/o knowing the family members, could put a lot of pressure on wolves causing more problems than good (stronger concern when dealing with small packs)
        - a. Small pack = ?
        - b. Needed for bigger packs (e.g. 8 wolves)
    - v. Worried collar data may lead people to falsely think producers may have killed a wolf?

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- vi. Is this a guideline/principle for the Dept.? Is this too technical for this document?
  - vii. Let “the group” decide about collars? List what the group should consider.
    - 1. FYI, collars take months to order and get in hand, need about 5-6 mo. lead time to get different collars
  - viii. We’re not too far off.
  - ix. If not fully, implemented, the Director can’t predetermine a decision.
  - x. Ask “the group” to decide?
  - xi. If you don’t fulfill your role with non-lethals, than resources don’t go in your direction?
  - xii. We shouldn’t write consequences on paper. The first page of the protocol has this Director-flexibility statement. It’s simpler without a consequences statement?
  - xiii. Don’t use the word consequences or accountability?
  - xiv. A flexibility statement may answer an expected reader’s question?
- c. **Timing**. When thresholds are met, what’s the timeline for staff recommendation to the Director, the Director’s decision, and acting on a decision?
- i. The Director asked staff to propose this timeline.
- d. Whether SFA’s focus too much on single-species management instead of all species
- i. Change the title of the protocol to something like Wolf, Wildlife, Livestock Interaction Protocol?
  - ii. Want the Dept to deliver to “the group” all possible ungulate data (historic and present by prey species, hunter success, historic and present by ungulate prey species)
    - 1. Already do this for the public
  - iii. If an SFA is declared, the Dept. should be required to do studies on neonates and juveniles’ survival by ungulate prey species
    - 1. Time and funding-intensive and is hard to compare/use with an SFA?
    - 2. Intent is to take a closer look at the ungulate populations in SFAs. Is there a way to do this?
      - a. Reach out to people doing existing, related studies for useful information? (e.g. Predator-Prey, Blues Mtns.)
  - iv. Wolves are still listed as endangered and their uniqueness point to a more focused effort.
  - v. Is this outside the scope of the protocol?
  - vi. What’s realistically going on with predators and prey? Do we have enough data?
    - 1. Need a section on predator and prey?
  - vii. Add a statement acknowledging ungulates are a factor, and we’re awaiting the completion of current studies?
  - viii.