

**WILDLIFE REHABILITATION ADVISORY PANEL
MEETING MINUTES – January 9, 2021
Teams Virtual Meeting**

WDFW Staff Present:

Patricia Thompson – WRAP Contact
Hannah Anderson

WRAP members Present:

Jennifer Teitzel, Chairperson
Alicia Bye, Vice Chairperson
Jenny Schlieps
Alysha Evans
Irene Holmes

Suzanne West
Lynn Tompkins
Craig Moran
Emily Meredith

Not Present:

Amy Hanson
Cindy Daily (could not access Teams)
Jasmine Fletcher-Glaze
Nicky Finch

Chair Jennifer Teitzel called the meeting to order at 9:06 am

Jennifer called for announcements and questions from the members

Question on the Decision Package for Wildlife Rehabilitation Account increase in spending authority.

- Hannah said that it is likely to pass through Legislature and be approved by the Governor and we are hopeful. We will not hear the final outcome until around May.

WRAP Charter

WRAP members reviewed and approved WRAP Charter via email.

SARS CoV-2 and mustelids update

Tricia gave a brief summary from Katie of what we currently know about SARS CoV-2, especially mustelids:

- Solid evidence of susceptibility of mink to SARS CoV-2 and back transfer to humans.
- Felids are another high-risk taxa.
- The big risk of SARS-CoV-2 getting into wild/animal populations is the potential for further mutations of the virus and then back transmission to humans.
- Given the risks of transmission to wildlife and back to humans, WDFW is requiring a SARS CoV-2 training and discussion protocol discussion.

Jenny wondered if there was going to be a public information campaign on the risks of transmission with mustelids and would they be informed on how to handle mustelids or what to do if they find one. Tricia answered that we could work with Public Information staff on posting on our website, perhaps on the wildlife rehabilitation pages.

Alicia elaborated on SARS CoV-2 planning and guidelines and was able to answer questions.

Concern was raised over the vulnerability of home facilities to admitting high risk species both to the wildlife and the danger to the rehabilitator and other people in the home. Alicia was concerned that there are some facilities that cannot euthanize right away and are unable to isolate properly. Mink must

be euthanized right away. We may be able to arrange with some vets to perform the euthanasia soon after admittance.

There are not that many mink admitted to rehabilitation but there are many otters. These otters tend to be transferred and handled quite a bit.

Alicia said that **contact tracing** is a biggy and must be done meticulously so record keeping is vital.

Alysha asked about trappers and have they been informed. Jenny looked up our hunting and trapping regs to see that mink can be legally trapped.

ACTION ITEM

Hannah said all our SARS CoV-2 guidance makes sense. She suggested that we and **Craig** work together and coordinate with Game for some public information.

Alysha asked about nuisance wildlife trappers, will they be informed? She sometimes ends up with babies that were orphaned by Wildlife Control Operators. They need education about exposure, transmission, and record keeping for contact tracing.

After the four SARS training and discussion meetings this month, WDFW will send out the SARS CoV-2 Guidelines to all Washington wildlife rehabilitators, likely to include enhanced PPE such as face shields. Face shield are reusable and not that expensive.

SARS training meeting DATES are:

- Jan 11
- Jan 14
- Jan 25
- Jan 29

WORKING GROUP* REPORTS

Working Group Chair positions

Emily asked if we need to elect new WG Chairs because the Charter says they are elected to a one-year term. WRAP members agree that elections were not needed and it would be best to retain the current Chairs to maintain the momentum of the group.

Emily and Alysha are happy to remain as Chairpersons in the Wildlife Rehabilitation Services and Endorsement and Training WGs respectively.

Outreach and Public Education

Jennifer announced that Craig is graciously taking over the Chair position of the Outreach and Public Education WG and they will be meeting and communicating regularly. Jenny volunteered to be on this WG so she could offer the perspective of a wildlife rehabilitator.

Wildlife Rehabilitation Services

Emily Meredith gave the report

Emily said she highly recommends to those who still have interest in wildlife rehabilitation volunteer at a facility to see if that's really what they want to do. Many have the misconception that they will be handling a lot of animals.

- The group is working through the emails sent by Tricia of those people interested in a wildlife rehabilitation permit and creating a spreadsheet of interests and needs.
- They are working on an initial draft of a letter to send to those who expressed an interest to see if they are still interested in pursuing wildlife rehabilitation.
- For those still interested in wildlife rehabilitation (many are not because of the requirements) the group is creating a resource packet and decision package to send to these people. WDFW may use this resource packet in the future to send to highly interested people.

The WG wants to help facilitate information to those interested but WDFW will lead the responses

Endorsements and Training

Alysha Evans gave the report

- The group is working on templates for endorsement standards and protocols, training, and the exams that can be used for all three endorsements.
- The group is continuing work on outlining and building the training documents.
- Cervid training curriculum will be created first because there is a lot of interest in rehabilitating cervids and it appears to be a pressing need. The group is waiting for feedback and review from Katie on the vulnerability of this taxa to SARS CoV-2 and the adequacy of the training guidelines before they continue. They believe caution must be taken in light of COVID 19.
- Alysha is delegating research subjects to each group member.

RECRUITMENT OF NEW WRAP MEMBERS

Tricia asked if the group wanted to start recruiting new members to the WRAP. The Charter states that formal recruitment take place in spring of each year. We would like more representation from the public at large however at least two-thirds of the members must be permitted wildlife rehabilitators, principle veterinarians, or subpermittees.

Members are recruited from the Washington wildlife rehabilitation community by requests for applications through email or postal mail. Members of the public are recruited through press releases and social media. Potential members must submit written application to the WDFW contact person. Applications are reviewed and sent to the Director for approval and appointment.

(Tricia dropped by Teams at this point in meeting)

At readmittance Craig was stating that it's a steep learning curve for those who do not have wildlife rehabilitation experience to be on the WRAP therefore should members have some level of experience in wildlife rehabilitation?

Hannah commented that, like on the Wildlife Diversity Advisory Council we would like experience in a breadth of topics and geographic diversity.

A member with marketing experience would be good. Perhaps put into recruitment article we would be particularly interested in veterinarians in private practice and marketers. Last time we called for general public from the east side of the state but got only one who resigned before starting.

Can WDFW staff be on the WRAP? Probably not regularly as they are not assigned the hours or have the time. Everyone was good with WDFW subject expert at WRAP meetings, Enforcement being perhaps the first one – at the next meeting.

Alicia commented that it's good to have outside eyes, also to have outside veterinarians in private practice on the WRAP that have a level of knowledge about wildlife rehabilitation in a veterinary clinic.

WRAP members are encouraged to submit nominations for the WRAP.

ACTION ITEMS

Wildlife Rehabilitation Services - Create the resource packet
Outreach and Education – Complete Charter, complete letter for WDFW web needs; public information announcements, especially on kidnapping wildlife
Endorsement – Solidify who does what, get feedback for special cervid COVID section;
Tricia – Create recruitment criteria for WRAP members

Jennifer asked for **WORKING GROUP GOALS**

Agenda items for next meeting

- Follow-up on mustelids
- Follow-up on spending authority
- Follow-up on illegal wildlife rehabilitation – Invite Enforcement as Subject Expert:
- What has Enforcement done on the illegal wildlife rehabilitators? Fines? Seizure? What's going on? Enforcement should be making the statement that public should be taking wildlife to only permitted wildlife rehabilitators. Hannah agrees that Enforcement should be the next subject expert.
- Reinstate facility check-in at beginning of meeting

Next WRAP regular meeting April 10, 2021. Time TBD.

Meeting adjourned at 10:14 am.

***Working Groups**

- 1) Wildlife Rehabilitation Services
 - Nicky
 - **Emily** CHAIR
 - Jenny
 - Cindy
 - Suzanne
 - Alicia B.
 - Jasmine
 - Irene
 - Alysha E.
 - Jennifer
- 2) Outreach and Public Education
 - **Craig** CHAIR
 - Lynn
 - Jennifer T.
 - Jenny Schlieps
- 3) Endorsements and Training
 - **Alysha E.** CHAIR
 - Jasmine
 - Emily Meredith
 - Jenny S.
 - Alicia B.
 - Cindy
 - Suzanne
 - Irene