

**DRAFT MEETING REPORT  
UTAH WOLF WORKING GROUP (WWG)  
Meeting #3  
24 February 2004  
Lee Kay Center; Salt Lake City**

**PARTICIPANTS:**

Lee Howard (alternate for Jim Bowns, part), Allison Jones, Sterling Brown (alternate for Wes Quinton), Karen Cortis, Trey Simmons, Clark Willis, Bill Christensen, Jerry Mason (alternate for Bill Burbridge), Debbie Goodman, Byron Bateman (alternate for Don Peay), Mike Wolfe (alternate for Robert Schmidt), Randy Simmons (part), Charles Kay (alternate for Randy Simmons, part)

Missing: Mark Walsh

Technical Advisors: Craig McLaughlin, Laura Romin, Mike Bodenchuk

Others: Becky Johnson, Cindee Jensen, Miles Moretti, Kevin Conway, Richard Warnick, Kirk Robinson, Bill Fenimore

Facilitator: Spencer Amend, Dynamic Solutions Group, LLC

Recorder: Dana Dolson, UDWR

**DECISIONS AND ACTION ITEMS:**

**Re agenda preparation: Agendas will be prepared by DSG facilitators [who will alternate meetings] and incorporate suggestions by WWG members and UDWR where possible. Suggestions for agenda items are to be submitted to DSG facilitators [both Spencer and Walt], 2 weeks prior to the next meeting date. Draft agendas will be distributed by DSG via email one week prior to the meeting date.**

**Miles Moretti will look into setting up a list serve, or other technology, to help communications.**

**Cindee Jensen will see to it that double-sided tent card name tags are available at the next meeting.**

**Craig McLaughlin will be responsible for needed changes to the charter and for reissuing the charter to WWG members.**

**WWG members need to respond to facilitators as soon as possible when they note needed changes to meeting reports – at least by the same time frame for agenda suggestions (2 weeks prior to meeting date).**

**UDWR was approved to make needed changes [as approved by the group] to the charter and the last meeting record and to post the changed versions to the web site without further WWG action.**

**UDWR will revise the charter to include 3 alternatives related to livestock depredation, as APHIS is constrained by NEPA.**

**Craig will either append his current plan outline to the meeting report, or will send it separately to WWG members and alternates.**

**The WWG Charter will be changed to reflect that the WWG will work with DWR after the RAC process is completed, to prepare a revised Management Plan for delivery to the Wildlife Board.**

**Facilitators will include an every-other-meeting [approximately] review and assessment of timeline considerations to help keep the group on track.**

**WWG assignment: By March 16 [2 weeks prior to next meeting], send important issues & possible experts & rationale for why to facilitators for help in building the next agenda.**

**By March 16, send any and all suggestions for the next agenda.**

**The draft agenda for the next meeting will be distributed to WWG on March 23.**

**The group established a set meeting date: the last Tuesday of each month. (unless a good reason dictates change on a case by case basis)**

**The group established a set meeting location: DNR Auditorium (rooms 1040&50), with the Lee Kay Center as backup when the DNR Auditorium is unavailable.**

**Please check your contact information in the attached list; some is incomplete, and some appears to be wrong. Inform the facilitators of needed changes or additions.**

**Craig will provide a draft of the wolf ecology part of the issues summary to the WWG three days prior to the next meeting.**

#### **INTRODUCTION OF RECORDER:**

After reviewing the day's agenda, Spencer introduced Dana Dolson, who explained his role as recorder [writing on flip charts to capture the meeting record], and asked that WWG members watch what is being written to help make the record accurate.

#### **REMARKS/CLARIFICATION BY KEVIN CONWAY:**

Kevin addressed the question/suggestion by Robert Schmidt on the WWG process and use of a professional facilitator for meetings. Kevin explained that the Wildlife Board chose to do so. He also mentioned that as Director, he tries to keep out of the WWG process – and that he supports Spencer's and Walt's approaches & their response to Robert. He went on to encourage WWG members to get out and see what the public has to say, then get into developing the management plan. Kevin mentioned that the Director

of the US Fish & Wildlife Service says that it will be 2.5 years before wolves are delisted, once the de-listing process begins. Kevin indicated that he believes there is latitude under the 4D Rule to address depredation, and he indicated that this rule helps determine damage and compensation regarding depredation on livestock. This may assist the WWG in its progress towards a management plan.

Q: Re the timeline: When are we done; what tasks are to be done when?

A: A discussion on this will be initiated later on today's agenda.

Livestock depredation is the pressing issue and need; however, adverse impacts that create huge problems may be addressed.

Further discussion on Schmidt's email comments:

Development of agendas: Who is doing the agenda development? Re scheduling of "experts": Who, Why, and When, if they are invited or not? The following approach to agenda building was stated: Agendas will be prepared by DSG incorporating suggestions by WWG members and UDWR. The HJ Resolution of creation is very specific and should guide the group's agendas.

**NEW MEMBER [first meeting attended]:**

Karen Corts was present for her first meeting. In keeping with the treatment of other members, Karen was invited to introduce herself and answer: Why are you here? Why would you take the time to participate in this group? Karen is the Ute Tribe biologist. The tribe wants a wolf management plan that is compatible with tribal management objectives.

**IDENTIFYING ALTERNATES:**

Members have been invited to identify one alternate who may sit in when the member is unavailable. We will distribute meeting agendas and reports directly to these individuals. The most up-to-date contact information is contained in the attached list.

Charles Kay [alternate for Randy Simmons] provided his email address.

We still do not have an email address or mailing address for James Gillmor [alternate for Clark Willis]. [And in trying to call Clark, I discovered that neither of his phone numbers provided earlier seem to be working.]

Sterling Brown is the alternate for Wes Quinton.

Jerry Mason is the alternate for Bill Burbridge.

\*\*Miles Moretti will investigate setting up a list serve [or other technology] to help communications within the WWG.

Mike Wolfe is the alternate for Robert Schmidt.

Debbie Goodman introduced her alternate, Bill Fenimore

\*\*Cindee Jensen will see to it that double-sided tent cards [names on both sides] will be available at the next WWG meeting.

**APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING REPORT:**

Craig McLaughlin was requested to collect information on depredation by wolves (as well as other causes) in the Northern Rockies as part of the issues summary, as noted by Trey in the late afternoon. Trey has since indicated that no change need be made to the meeting record.

The first page needs to be modified to indicate who made what remarks during their introduction statements.

Craig McLaughlin will be responsible for getting the charter revised and reissued to WWG members by UDWR.

WWG members should respond to making changes to meeting record ASAP.

The WWG approved that changes to the last meeting record and the charter will be made on the web site by UDWR without the group having to act on the modified items again.

**PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA/PROCESS/ROLES:**

Small group size may dictate a different response, but most of the Group urged the facilitators to follow the agreed upon process wherever & whenever possible – some slack requested.

WWG members requested to not share what the public meeting process will be in advance.

There is not a group consensus on how to run these public meetings.

- Whose meetings are these anyway?

Randy Simmons can't live with the flexibility given to DSG on how to run the public meetings. Jerry Mason agrees that the small group breakouts are more safe or certain. Byron Bateman disagrees with the small group process; would prefer a meeting format more like the RAC meetings. Mike Wolfe would agree that the small group breakouts with DSG flexibility is better. Lee Howard objects that not all public gets to hear what everyone else says.

Two issues: (1) small group breakouts, vs (2) DSG flexibility to modify.

Last WWG meeting had previous agreement on this [small group breakout] format for public meetings. The public meeting format is more a scoping process than a critique on a management plan.

WWG members attending public meetings will help with the synthesis of issues & advice prior to all meeting attendees doing their final dot voting. WWG members will eliminate duplicates and will list top issues coming from each table. They will also act as roving monitors amongst the tables. No information gets lost; all input gets into the report.

**CRAIG’S POWERPOINT SHOW:**

Federal 4D Rule; Federal Wolf Recovery Areas; Federal vs State authorities; No re-introduction is planned – natural re-colonization only. Step-down scale maps from NA to Lower 48 to Utah.

Comments: Northern Rockies wolf population growth; status on WY, ID, MT wolf management plans; present population distribution in North America; legal status in lower 48 states; Utah is under no obligation to have any wolves; current history of USFWS reintroduction [keep as distinct difference from UT]; consider “questions for clarification” after Craig’s presentation – DSG to build this into the agenda.

**WWG MEMBERS WHO PLAN TO ATTEND PUBLIC MEETINGS:**

- 3-8; Roosevelt; KAREN, Trey, Bill C. (name in caps gives opening welcome)
- 3-9; Vernal; BILL C., Trey, Bill B.
- 3-10; SLC; DEBBIE, Trey, Allison, Byron, Clark
- 3-11; Ogden; TREY, Debbie, Bill B., Byron, Clark
- 3-12; Logan; CLARK, Trey, Byron, Bill C.
- 3-15; Cedar City; JIM, Bill C., Randy
- 3-16; Richfield; STERLING, Jim, Randy
- 3-17; Moab; BILL C.
- 3-18; Price; ALLISON
- 3-19; Spanish Fork; ALLISON or TREY; Debbie (?)

**WWG MEMBER TALKING POINTS FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS:**

Members brainstormed the following list of items to be covered by the various WWG members who make the “welcoming” remarks at upcoming public meetings:

- Who WWG is, who individual is & who they represent
- Acknowledge others there: WWG, Legislators, RAC & Board, etc.
- Express appreciation for attendance
- WWG charter elements on purpose & expectations
- Need to hear all public views before start
- Not about wolf reintroduction(?)

**PRESENTATION BY SUZANNE STONE: [Notes provided by Suzanne]**

Suzanne Stone  
Rocky Mountain Field Representative  
Defenders of Wildlife  
P.O. Box 773  
Boise Idaho 83701  
(208) 424-9385

**Presentation Summary:**

Introduction: Defenders of Wildlife was founded in 1947 and represents over 450,000 members and supporters nationally including about 4,000 residents from Utah.

**The wolves of North America have had a difficult time over the last several centuries. Starting from an estimated high of 400,000 when Europeans started settling on North American shores, wolf populations plummeted to approximately 60,000 in the late 1960's and early 1970's. During this time period, poisoning and bounty programs and government-financed trappers effectively removed wolves from all of the lower 48 states except for a few hundred gray wolves in northeastern Minnesota.**

**Wolves were first listed as a protected species under the Endangered Species Act in 1974. In the mid-1980s, recolonizing wolves from Canada gave birth to pups in northwest Montana; the first known reproduction of wolves in the state since the early 1900s. In 1987, the first wolf depredations on livestock occurred and Defenders initiated compensation payments to reimburse livestock owners for these losses. Since that time, Defenders has compensated livestock owners over \$340,000 for livestock losses, most of which has been paid in the northern Rockies. The goal of the Fund is to shift economic responsibility for wolf recovery away from the individual rancher and toward the millions of people who want to see wolf populations restored. However, livestock losses to wolves account for only a small percentage of livestock deaths. According to the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), the highest reported livestock loss rates to wolves in Minnesota are only a fraction of one percent. Livestock loss rates in the Rockies also have been low. In comparison, wolf losses represent one of the lowest causes for livestock losses in general. Statistics offer little consolation, however, to those who suffer losses and can have a significant impact on individual livestock producers.**

**How the process works:**

When livestock owners have a suspected depredation they contact an agency field investigator to confirm the cause of the loss. If it is confirmed as a wolf depredation, the livestock owner sends the depredation investigation report to Defenders for compensation. Defenders pays 100% of the average fall market value and weight for these confirmed losses and 50% of the value for probable losses up to \$2000 per animal. For instance, if a calf is killed weighing less than 100 lbs. in the spring, Defenders' payment is based on the average weight of similar calves sold at market in the fall. The Bailey Wildlife Foundation Wolf Compensation Fund is funded by private donations. The livestock covered by the Fund includes cattle, sheep, goats, horses, mules, llamas and livestock herding or livestock guarding dogs. The Fund does not compensate for hunting dogs, pets, or exotic animals.

**In addition to our Compensation Fund, Defenders has also developed The Bailey Wildlife Foundation Proactive Carnivore Conservation Fund to assist livestock owners with nonlethal methods to prevent or reduce conflicts with wolves and grizzly bears in the region. Working with landowners, resource managers and others to prevent or reduce predator problems has important conservation benefits. Human-caused mortalities, including illegal killings and lethal control by government agencies in response to livestock predation incidents, remains the single leading cause of wolf mortality in the northern Rockies and the American Southwest. Similarly, about one-third of grizzly bear deaths each year are attributable to government control actions in response to conflicts on private lands. If landowners or other entities have repeated predator problems, we ask them to propose projects that will help reduce conflict. If the concept is practical and within our means, we share the cost of the project. Projects can also be proposed by government agencies or by Defenders.**

**This proactive fund has three objectives:**

1. to reduce conflicts between predators and humans;
2. to keep predators from being unnecessarily killed by agencies in response to human conflicts; and
3. to increase general tolerance for carnivores across the landscape. We believe our success at expanding the range of predators across the American West and elsewhere will be directly proportional to our success at reducing conflict between predators and humans.

Some of our projects include:

- Purchase of a first-of-its-kind scare device triggered by a signal from a wolf's radio collar. When a collared wolf approaches a pasture equipped with the scare device, the collar triggers the device to flash lights and blast off sound that scares the wolves and discourages their return. This concept, proposed by a rancher, has become one of the most successful nonlethal methods for dealing with predating wolves.
- Purchase of livestock-guarding dogs with ranchers in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming to provide additional protection for sheep threatened by wolves and constructing secure night pasture with electric fencing to protect llamas in the Nine Mile Valley, Montana.
- Development of the Wolf Guardian Volunteer Program to help monitor wolf and livestock interaction and use aversive control techniques in national forests in the northern Rockies. The program effectively has helped to prevent future depredations and protect several wolf packs from lethal control during the program's duration.
- Assisting ranchers with alternate grazing and feed to avoid a temporary conflict with the Buffalo Ridge wolf pack when the alpha female denned on a hillside above the cattle pastures normally used for spring calving. Within 6 weeks, the wolves moved their pups deeper onto the national forest and ranchers moved their cattle to the pastures. No livestock conflicts occurred for the rest of the grazing season.

Future Ideas:

**The wolf compensation program was designed to compensate for livestock losses while wolves were listed as a federally protected endangered species. Defenders is evaluating new compensation models and ideas that could be implemented after delisting if funding and wolf protection under state management is secured. A group of experts in wolf biology, wildlife conservation, ranching, natural resource economics, state fish and wildlife, environmental ethics, public policy and healthcare met in 2003 to consider a**

**novel program to help further resolve wolf-rancher conflict. This “think tank” resulted in an organizational framework for a risk sharing collaborative partnership between ranchers and environmentalists designed to promote sustainable ranching, provide social and economic value to rural western ranching communities, to protect wolves and their habitat, and to enhance the economic viability of rural western community-based food systems. The proposed program was modeled after a health maintenance organization (HMO), joining rural ranching economy and ecology as partners for mutual benefit.**

This HMO framework was designed to achieve four measurable outcomes with risk and benefit sharing between partners:

- Economic, educational, and health benefits for rural western ranching communities adjacent to wolf country;
- Preservation and sustainability of rural western ranching, their agricultural food sources, and protection of large tracts of ranchlands from being lost to development;
- Preservation and sustainability of wolves, other wildlife and their habitat by making wolves an economic benefit to these communities;
- Philosophical, cultural, and educational shifts towards wildlife, habitat, ranching, and the ranching way of life.

In addition to addressing the economic concerns of livestock owners, one of the most important benefits of nonlethal predator management programs is the ability to build bridges between polarized groups and to allow opportunities for an interactive participation process that is collaborative in nature. It’s not easy to bring ranchers and wolf conservationists together to work cooperatively, but the ultimate reward is an atmosphere of increased trust, mutual understanding, and greater tolerance.

### **Separating Myth and Fact**

Wolves are one of the most misunderstood and misrepresented species in our culture. They do not pose a significant risk to human safety in comparison with normal risks that humans encounter. They do not pose a significant threat to elk and deer herds as these species co-evolved interactively over thousands of years. Wolves do provide a benefit to the ecosystem, which researchers are now documenting in study areas where wolves have been recently restored. These researchers have determined that ripple effect from the wolf’s return even includes regeneration of native plants resulting in greater diversity of plant and animal species. Additionally, increased tourism related to wolf watching in the Yellowstone area has produced millions of dollars annually that significantly benefits local communities.

It should be noted that Suzanne informed the group that if Defenders is not satisfied with the Utah plan, they reserve the right to terminate their livestock depredation compensation program in Utah.

### **PRESENTATION BY MIKE BODENCHUK: [Notes provided by Mike]**

Mike Bodenchuk briefed the WWG regarding the Wildlife Services (WS) program. At the request of one of the WWG members (Bill B.), the current Section 7 consultation for WS was passed out. Bodenchuk noted that some of the terms ("occupied range" and "incidental take") were probably outdated and WS is re-consulting with the Service regarding wolves. However, for now, if wolves are known to be in an area, WS is



obligated to remove neck snares and M-44 devices and check traps every 24 hours, making coyote damage management more expensive.

Bodenchuk also discussed the relationship between the WS program and the current planning effort. Assuming that the WS program is going to be involved in wolf damage management, some components of the Management Plan may need refinement. Bodenchuk passed out sections of Utah Code describing role of the Agricultural and Wildlife Damage Prevention Board (AWDPB) and a copy of the current joint (the Wildlife Board and AWDPB) policy on control of cougar and bear damage management as examples of how the WS program interfaces with the Division.

If APHIS is going to be involved in post-delisting wolf damage management, a separate NEPA process will be needed, including a full range of alternatives. If the Committee offers only one alternative, APHIS' decision would be limited. Further, if the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) were to be involved, the AWDPB would need to be involved and the UDAF would need to examine their resources separately from the WWG.

Kevin Conway recognized that many changes would be necessary for complete implementation of the wolf plan, such as legislative authority for compensation payments, etc. Kevin directed a change in the charter for the WWG to allow for multiple alternatives for a damage management program to preclude painting WS into a corner. It is understood that the AWDPB will have the opportunity to review the damage management component of the Plan.

If I missed something or misstated anything please give me a call. My office is (801) 975-3315.

#### **LIVESTOCK DEPREDATION DISCUSSION:**

APHIS is required to develop 3 management alternatives for NEPA consideration. Kevin suggested that for this topic, the charter should be revised to include 3 management alternatives [not the one only as currently stated]. Also, the State Ag & Wildlife Damage Prevention Boards of Utah and the Utah Wildlife Board need to jointly approve any livestock depredation proposals.

#### **TIMELINE REVIEW:**

Spencer presented the following timeline draft for the group's consideration, explaining that he thought it may have been presented earlier – but perhaps not:

November 2003:	WWG1 meeting
December 2003:	Information provided on UDWR web site
January 2004:	WWG2 meeting; legislature begins; publicity for public meetings
February 2004:	WWG3 meeting
March 2004:	10 public meetings; USU survey results (?)
April 2004:	Summary of public meetings completed by DSG
May 2004:	Biological & social assessment completed; work begins on goals, strategies, etc.
June 2004:	
July 2004:	Workshop/conference to examine information/develop strategies

August 2004:	
September 2004:	
October 2004:	
November 2004:	Draft goals, objectives, strategies done
December 2004:	Draft plan to WWG
January 2005:	Suggested changes; re-draft plan
February 2005:	Suggested changes; final draft to WWG
March 2005:	Final draft approved by WWG, posted on website
April 2005:	WWG reviews public comment, makes revisions
May 2005:	Plan to RACs for review and comment
June 2005:	WWG considers RAC comments, drafts final plan
July 2005:	Final plan to Wildlife Board

Discuss & choose a plan format or structure so assignments can be made; look at cougar, bear, MT wolf plan, other species of concern that have potential relevance.

Craig's Assessment has used a combination of such management plans and these might have potential (e.g., MT, UT species).

WWG could assess potential plan formats, including Craig's current version. [Craig to append to meeting report, or send out separately.]

Post May 2005: Following the RAC's, DWR and WWG will make changes to the Plan prior to bringing a revised Management Plan to the Wildlife Board. [Charter to be changed to reflect this agreement.]

Request to also add a secondary record to act as a verification source (tape recorder a possibility).

Keep flexibility – perhaps do an every other meeting review and assessment of timeline considerations.

Controversial parts of the Plan need to be addressed together:

- habitat/ecosystem/conservation
- livestock depredation
- wildlife – big game depredation

Experts may be needed for certain issues, but they need to be identified early on, the nature of the issues needs to define who will be invited. The group needs to agree on the rationale for issues/experts.

WWG assignment: To identify important issues and possible experts and rationale for why by March 16 [2 weeks prior to the next meeting].

Draft agendas will be sent to WWG members & alternates one week prior to the next meeting. The next agenda will include compiled issues, the reasons why the issue is important & who could be the expert on this issue, plus why the expert is appropriate.

By March 16 send any and all suggestions for the next agenda, including those items in the previous paragraph.

### **BRAINSTORM:**

Following the afternoon break, the WWG brainstormed the following list [somewhat in priority order] of their top issues regarding wolf management:

- conservation/recovery (including habitat)
- extent of management plan allowing wolves in Utah
- number of wolves in Utah
- impacts to big game populations
- sufficient wilderness to sustain wolf populations
- impacts on wildlife/livestock relative to numbers of wolves
- existing predation rates on livestock in Utah
- no new loss of big game numbers and hunter opportunity
- effect of wolves on entire ecosystem (diversity and function)
- adequate and timely compensation for depredation
- cost of wolf management and who is paying
- identification and protection of ungulate and wolf habitats
- dealing with livestock depredation deemed as emergency (timely enforcement)
- how does the size of the areas of wolves increasing impact livestock/wildlife
- new tourism and economic potential arising from wolf population establishment
- no breeding pairs/packs south of the Idaho/Wyoming borders
- conservation ethic issues involving wolves
- economic loss to agriculture besides depredation
- economic impacts to guides, outfitters, retailers & manufacturers
- beneficial impact to migratory bird populations
- negative impacts to threatened and endangered species

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

No members of the public were available to speak during the allotted time.

### **NEXT MEETINGS: DATE & PLACE**

The group agreed with the suggestion to establish a set meeting date [the last Tuesday of each month] and a set meeting location [the DNR auditorium – Room 1040&50] unless some good reason indicates the need for a change. The backup location will be the Lee Kay Center if the DNR auditorium is unavailable.

- April 27
- May 25
- June 29

### **FEEDBACK/FINAL THOUGHTS:**

Craig plans to provide the wolf ecology text previously mentioned at least three days before the next meeting.

Where is the representative from the Utah Association of Counties?

What is the correct procedure for replacing a representative member who is always absent?

Prepared and distributed by:  
Walt Gasson & Spencer Amend  
Dynamic Solutions Group LLC  
03/12/04