

Draft Meeting Record - Grizzly Bear Subcommittee Meeting
April 10, 2024 10:00 AM
Boundary County Annex Building

Attendance:

Austin Terrell, Office of Species Conservation (OSC)
Barb Moore, Idaho Department of Fish & Game (IDFG)
Brad Smith, Idaho Conservation League (ICL)
Brittani Rosas Vital Ground
Chris Bachman Conservation Director, Yaak Valley Forest
Chuck Roady, Landowner/Industry
Ed Atkins, Corp. Ag/Landowner
Eddie Whitcomb, US Fish & Wildlife Services (USFWS)
Heather Fuller, US Forest Service (USFS)
Jeff Abrams, ICL
Jeremy Gaffield IDFG
John O Conner, Landowner
Josh Stanley, IDFG
Kierstin Cox, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, (KTOI), KVRI Reporting Secretary
Merritt Horsmon, IDFG
Nat Gaddy, IDFG
Rick Alanzo, City of Bonners Ferry, KVRI Co-Chair
Rob Morris, IDFG
Robert Akins, IDFG
Rory Trimbo, USFWS
Sandi Fisher, USFWS
Sandy Ashworth, Social, Cultural, Historical
Shelby Therian, KTOI
Tanner Williams, Vital Ground Foundation
Theresa Wheat, KTOI, KVRI Facilitator
Tim Bertling, Boundary County, KVRI Co-Chair
Wayne Kasworm, USFWS
William Barquin, KTOI

- Welcome and introductions at 10:00 a.m.
- Meeting agenda overview presented by Shelby Therrian.
- **Bear Smart Community Presentation by Rory Trimbo:**
 - Rory from USFWS, based in Kalispell, Montana, discussed bear smart community initiatives.
 - Bear smart framework was adapted recently by the IGBC and involves various state and federal agencies across regions.
 - The goal is to foster collaborative strategies for co-existence between human and bear populations to enhance safety and reduce conflicts.
 - **Bear Smart Program Framework:**
 - Community-led efforts with guidelines flexible to local needs.
 - Steps to establish bear smart communities include forming a committee, conducting community assessments, creating and implementing community plans.
 - Discussion on potential committee members, including local government representatives, wildlife biologists, educators, and other community stakeholders.

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- **Community Assessment and Plan Development:**
 - Assessment to identify risks and attractants like garbage and fruit trees.
 - Development of a community plan based on the assessment, focusing on management of attractants, education, and outreach.
- **Bear Spray Recycling Program:**
 - Shelby introduced a bear spray recycling program to manage expired or used bear spray canisters.
 - Discussion of recycling procedures, drop-off locations, and community education on safe disposal.
- **Carcass Removal Program:**
 - Austin Terrell, OSC, provided an update on a carcass removal program to manage animal carcasses in the community, reducing attractants for bears.
 - The program has received more utilization than expected, with 10 pickups, mostly involving cows and a few horses. This indicates strong community need and support.
 - The program started on January 1, 2024, aiming to remove carcasses from the landscape to prevent attracting bears.
 - Funded by Battleground and Safari Club International Foundation, allowing the purchase of a dump trailer.
 - The
- **Total Funding:** The state has allocated a total of \$225,000 to support the depredation and prevention programs.
 - **Management and Implementation:**
 - The Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) will manage the funds.
 - Local agencies are tasked with implementing the programs that these funds will support.
 - **Allocation of Funds:**
 - Out of the total, \$150,000 is earmarked for compensating livestock producers for losses due to depredation by wolves and other predators.
 - The remaining \$75,000 is designated for preventative measures to mitigate future depredations.
 - **Program Goals:**
 - The primary goal is to support livestock producers who face losses due to wildlife, ensuring they receive compensation.

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- Another significant aim is to fund initiatives that prevent such conflicts, such as through the installation of deterrents like fencing or employing range riders.
- **Bear Smart Initiatives and Community Outreach:**
 - Updates on bear smart community initiatives, including the importance of community-driven efforts and starting small (e.g., one trash can at a time).
 - Plans to expand bear spray recycling and carcass removal programs.
 - Encouragement for local engagement and implementation of bear-proof measures.
- **Bear Activity and Research Updates:**
 - Ongoing research including bear collaring and monitoring in the region.
 - Updates on the bear population and their activities as they come out of hibernation.
- **Educational and Outreach Efforts:**
 - Discussion on educational efforts, including workshops and the development of visitor outreach packets.
 - Plans for a Bear Fair event aimed at education and outreach about coexisting with bears.

This KVRI subcommittee meeting successfully gathered community stakeholders to discuss wildlife co-existence strategies, focusing on bear-smart initiatives and education. Key discussions included new state funding for livestock protection and community-led efforts to manage wildlife attractants. Overall, the collaborative approach emphasized enhancing safety and promoting informed interactions between humans and wildlife.

Next Meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for July 11, 2024 10:00 a.m.

Meeting was called at 11:15 a.m.

Meeting Record Prepared by Kierstin Cox