

Attendance:

Brandon Diller, KTOI

Todd Higen, Idaho Water Rights

Darcy Lammers, Landowner

Brian Johnson, Idaho Fish & Game

Scott Soult, KTOI

Wayne Kasworm, US Fish and Wildlife

Norm Merz, Idaho Fish & Game

Mitch Doherty, Vital Ground

Carol Kriebs, KTOI

Jeff Gilberg, Landowner

Tim Dougherty, Idaho Forest Group

Victor Martinez, Bonners Ferry Herald

Brad Smith, Idaho Conservation League

Robert Akins, Idaho Fish & Game

Bob Blanford, KVRI Board Member

Heather Fuller, U.S. Dept of Agriculture

Jessie Grossman, Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative

Shannon Ehlers, KTOI

Merritt Horsman, Idaho Fish & Game

Karen Schumacher, KVRI Recording Secretary & Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI)

Rhonda Vogl, KVRI Facilitator & Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI)

Rhonda Vogl opened the meeting at 1:24 and asked attendees to introduce themselves as called.

Rhonda welcomed Wayne and asked him to share his presentation.

Presentation can be found on our website

<https://www.kvricollaborative.com/grizzly> by scrolling to the October 13th Meeting.

Wayne shared statistics of the 2020 efforts and invited Brian Johnson to give additional information on the Human / Bear conflicts. Brian reviewed the cases and noted that all were on the north bench, located from the area of Three mile north to Port Hill. The 18 reported cases of depredation were from 12 different landowners and involved chicken coops, pig pens and fruit trees. Trapping efforts were unsuccessful.

The presentation concluded and a question and answer period followed.

Q: Are the collars designed to come off or expand as the bear grows?

Collars are preprogrammed with a drop off mechanism. There is a “fail-safe” cotton splice on the collar that is designed to rot and allow the collar to come off in the event the mechanism does not work.

Q: Is the connectivity between the Selkirks and Cabinet/Yaak becoming more evident?

It seems so. Gene flow is being demonstrated and the improvement in technology allowing us to follow is helping.

Q: Are volunteers needed?

Carefully vetted volunteers are welcome. We vet to preserve the integrity of our results.

Q: Are the increased measures to prevent motorized activity in Bear Management Units warranted/effective?

It is sad we need to consider these lengths. It would be preferable if the public acknowledged the reason/need for prohibiting motorized vehicles and abided by those rules.

Q: Are there more bears, an increase in population or is this a trend of less food available to the bears in their natural habitat resulting in more instances of them coming down here for food?

It depends on the area. It is seen more in the Selkirk's due to increased population. Young (predominantly male) bears are separated from mom and disperse into unfamiliar territory leading to a greater probability of getting into

trouble. There are more people and more unsecured attractants. The goal is to educate to increase prevention.

Q: Is it possible some bears are making the lower areas home?

It is possible that there are some that are making that area home as well as an increase of number of bears just passing through.

Rhonda introduced Scott Soult who followed up on our February meeting at which a phone tree protocol was indicated as a good idea in conjunction with Nixle. Nixle is a Community Information Service that can be gotten via the website at <https://local.nixle.com/register/> or through text on your phone by:

Step 1: Select the Messages icon.

Step 2: Select the Add New Message icon.

Step 3: Enter 888777 in the To field.

Step 4: Enter the **Zip** Code in the Message field.

Step 5: Press Send.

Brian Johnson advised the group that they are, in fact, already in the process of developing the phone tree and that there are 6 involved at this point. Brian stressed the importance of having community members contact his office with concerns or problem involving bear to allow his office to then pass on needed Nixle alert needs to the sheriff's office.

Scott shared helpful information about how other communities are learning how to determine if a bear is "problem" or "non-problem".

Question was asked of Brian: Are people reacting differently now to Bear sightings and information?

Brian answered: There is no question that knowledge is much higher. Nixle is working to spread the word.

Brad Smith asked Brian if he could supply the contact/counter part for Bonner county that may be willing to consider implementing a similar protocol. Brian supported that idea and agreed to get the information to Brad.

Scott brought up the idea of helping to increase community awareness and use of Nixle through advertising and media articles.

Rhonda agreed with the importance of this and asked Victor Martinez to include that (Nixle access) information in the article he would be writing.

The meeting was concluded with a discussion on the possible avenues for funding a Liaison person that would work to increase community education and awareness. The grant via RAC mentioned has a due date of November 20. Although this is too tight for this year, it was agreed that efforts should begin now for possibly submitting next year if funds are available. Heather Fuller and Jesse Grossman were asked to participate in discussing possible avenues for the grant and funding.

Rhonda Vogl extended an invitation to Darcy Lammers to be involved in the discussions as many of the details are worked out. Darcy agreed.

The next meeting date was set to further discuss this. The Grizzly Bear subcommittee will meet on November 19th at 1:15 pm.