

Human/Wildlife Conflict Committee

Hyatt Regency Garden I Room

Newport Beach, California

July 12, 2009

1:00-5:00 PM

Welcome by Chairman Steve Ferrell.

Introductions by attendees.

Mark Konishi (Colorado Division of Wildlife) selected as Committee Vice-Chair.

Additions to agenda. Feral swine update. Bi-annual meeting discussion.

Comments requested from 2008 committee meeting. No comments. Moved by Mike Senn, seconded by Sonke Mastrup. Approved unanimously.

Two action items from 2008. Training in June of 2009 hosted by Wyoming. Begin bi-annual (2009) WAFWA sanctioned workshop.

State reports were requested. This will be an expected agenda item at future committee meetings.

2009 WAFWA Human/Wildlife Conflict sanctioned workshop update. First conflict workshop sanctioned by WAFWA. Travel restrictions made attendance difficult. Held May 30 to June 1 in Sheridan, WY. 78 attendees with good

reviews by participants. 12 agencies represented, including Manitoba and Alaska.

Major topics: Sabino lion case, grizzly bear and black bear case studies. Media training with a media panel was included.

Berryman Institute update by Terry Messmer, Utah State University. Jack Berryman was the first Director of Wildlife Services. 1993 was birth of institute. Renamed Berryman Institute in 1994. Partnership with Mississippi State University and Utah State University. Moving into training, education, outreach, science and conflict management .

Dr. Ben West (Berryman Institute) available to implement workshops. Sample of draft agenda provided.

On-line certification course developed as well.

Journal of Human-Wildlife Conflict available on pertinent topics. May subscribe (\$20.00 for two issues, \$35.00 foreign) or view on-line free of charge (www.BerrymanInstitute.org).

Rabies Outbreak in Wildlife/Conflicts in Urban Interface. Mike Senn, Assistant Director in Arizona. Increases in Arizona and other urbanized localities. Protocols established to protect employees. Goggles, gloves, vaccinations for employees. Protocols also established for research animals. Arizona regulated nuisance/pest control animal operators. Have changed protocols to prevent spreading rabies by capturing and releasing rabid animals.

Dave Bergman, USDA State Director for Arizona. Rabies update. Rabies has specific variants. Others may contact variant rabies, but usually “dies” in that species. In the 1950’s, rabies was considered primarily a domestic disease. Saw an upswing in wildlife since rabies has been almost eradicated in domestics.

2006, first North American Rabies Management Plan meeting. Plan completed in 2008. Seeking partnerships between public, wildlife, and agriculture. Formal signing by Canada, Mexico, USA, and Navajo Nation. Each country to come up with their own plan.

Canadian plan completed in 2008. Part of the North American Rabies Management Plan.

CDC developed new in-house test called the dRIT test, resulting in quicker results. Used only for wildlife testing at this time. Not used for human or domestic animal exposure cases. There are currently three dRIT labs in Arizona.

Only one oral rabies vaccine available in USA. Canada uses ONRAB, hope to have registered in near future for possible use in USA. Concerns because ONRAB uses human adenovirus. Animal self-vaccinates. ONRAB is working on raccoons and skunks. USA product does not work on skunks, thus need to look at potential ONRAB application.

Several cases of imported dogs with rabies has been documented. Trying to prevent a foreign variant being introduced into the country.

Only 5% of tribal dogs are vaccinated against rabies. Looking at oral contraceptives for feral dogs on tribal lands. Rabies is population dependent. GonaCon currently being studied.

USA using over 11 million baits per year to self-vaccinate against rabies.

Arizona, 2001 bat rabies showed up in skunks. Very rare as rabies is usually species-specific. Bat rabies now circulating in Gray fox in the Flagstaff and Parks, Arizona areas.

There is a move to prevent the translocation of potential vector species. Rehabbers, animal control industry workers, wildlife agencies, trash control industry workers (animals in dumpsters and translocation takes place inadvertently), and dog runners are individuals of concern.

No way to vaccinate bats. This is an issue for every state. Arizona is a test state, and are bleeding bats which are trapped. Looking for rabies titers, with the study entering the third summer. 8-14% bats are carriers, with the big brown bat being the most common rabies carrier.

World Rabies Day. This is a worldwide effort.

State/Province Reports

Oregon – Roger Fuhrman. Incident with wounded bear and hunter. Second bear attacked woman at house. Third incident in Yachats, OR. Woman feeding bears, then left for several weeks. Created a public nuisance, acquitted on reckless endangerment charges, but found guilty on wildlife harassment charges, and ordered to vacate home for three years. Had fed \$100,000 + to bears over the years. Continued to feed even during the trial.

California – Sonke Mastrup. Bear and coyote attacks are now routine. Boy Scout attacked this am. Threats from exotics, impacts to boating and fishing due to quagga mussels. Large conflict area of interest. E. Coli outbreaks are of concern. Produce buyers are going to the lettuce fields, and if they see evidence of wildlife, they will not buy produce. Farmers are seeking drastic action. Requesting to kill all wildlife in area.

Many bear problems in Lake Tahoe area. Many residences are seasonal homes. Some individuals do not want bears trapped and are causing difficulties.

Cottontail rabbits are also causing problems. Landscaping damage in Orange County. Many political conflicts.

Coyote attacks, big on education efforts. Work with Wildlife Services to eliminate coyotes which have been involved in the area of the attack.

Colorado-Mark Konishi. Denver metro area has experienced close to a dozen coyote attacks on humans. Coyotes seem to be following a clear pattern seen across the USA which leads to attacks on humans. Working closely with Wildlife Services to target coyotes in identified problem areas. Officers are also being equipped with suppressed rifles and night vision scopes so they may respond immediately when a human is attacked.

Arizona – Mike Senn. Working with Arizona Department of Transportation to research and implement strategies for highway and right-of-way construction or modification to reduce collisions and to increase connectivity for wildlife populations.

Lion study, are not using GPS data to track animals for nuisance situations unless, the particular animal has been involved in a conflict situation. If involved in a conflict situation, then GPS info will be used to take animal. Thoughts that technology may have gotten ahead of research practices.

ACTION ITEM: Present concept to WAFWA Directors to support uniform policies and practices when dealing with research lion projects. AZ and CA (Mike Senn and Sonke Mastrup) to develop a white paper to cover research practices and problem lions, and dealing with human/lion conflicts in general.

Director Ferrell to attempt to get approval at the Business Meeting.

New Mexico – Jim Lane.

Elk and game damage issues. Landowners want elk tags.

Lion/Bear issues continue. NM does not have an attack protocol. At this time, a draft protocol in front of the director. Lion killed man near Santa Fe last year, possible lion attack in the Sandia Mountains outside of Albuquerque.

Wyoming – Steve Ferrell. See written report. Typical year for Wyoming.

Washington – Commissioner Chuck Perry. Pursuit season legislated by State of Washington. Limited kill program has lowered population by targeting females. This has been established in areas of conflict.

Problem bears captured, held for a day, and then adverse conditioning applied. Waiting to see if results are successful. Concerns expressed by committee members about applicability of techniques as described by Commissioner Chuck Perry.

2011 Federal Budget Priorities:

Provide adequate grizzly funding post listing.

Budget to Berryman Institute

Wolf recovery and monitoring/conflicts.

Research and control with feral hogs.

Adequate funding for Wildlife Services .

2009 Funding Suggestions:

Suggested that E. coli funding be sought. Huge issue in many agricultural areas.

Funding for the Berryman Institute.

Funding to find alternative vaccine for Rabies.

Funding for Wildlife Services.

2009 Projects :

Bi-annual WAFWA sanctioned workshop (Topic to include policy). Next workshop to be held in 2011, Arizona and/or California volunteered to host if no other state offers to host.

Survey of states, feeding of wildlife (to be conducted by Terry Messmer).

Paper on uniformity when dealing with large carnivores.

Other Business –

AFWA (Wildlife Resources Policy Committee) to send survey relative to feral swine. Ultimate goal to write a white paper looking at jurisdiction, human health issues, wildlife habitat destruction, passive or active management, hunting seasons, high-fenced hunting opportunities.

Berryman Institute dedicated first issue (Human Wildlife Conflicts) to feral swine.