



HUMAN WILDLIFE CONFLICT WORKING GROUP

Meeting Minutes

Chair: Brian Wakeling (Montana)
Vice-Chair: Doug Brimeyer (Wyoming)

September 20th, 2022

1:15 PM – 3:15 PM (CDT)

Texas Ballroom H

[Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies 112th Annual Conference \(in person/virtual\)](#)

Agenda

- **Call to Order/Review Agenda/Introductions (B. Wakeling/D. Brimeyer)**
 - Chairman Wakeling opened the meeting
 - The meeting had ~55 participants including those who attended in person and virtually
 - In-person attendees introduced themselves

- **Approval of Minutes from the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference (B. Wakeling)**
 - Doug Brimeyer asked for a correction to the minutes from the previous meeting. The number of Grizzly Bears reported to have been collared was incorrectly noted in the minutes as 1000, but the actual number is ~70. This change has been made. Otherwise, the minutes were approved.

- **National survey on how agencies manage and fund wildlife conflicts (Lou Cornicelli/Terry Messmer/Bryant White)**
 - The idea to conduct such a survey was first brought up by WAFWA with an interest in how other agencies fund conflicts with wildlife. Subsequently, this topic was discussed with member agencies in the other three regional associations, and strong support for a formal survey was expressed.
 - HWCWG developed a proposal to seek funding through a multi-state grant to develop and conduct a survey of all 50 states. Due to the funding source, Canadian provinces could not be included in this survey.
 - HWCWG was informed at the meeting that the grant was recommended for funding. Southwick, Berryman Institute, and HWCWG will begin work on drafting the survey and preparing to initiate the survey in 2023.

- **Report on progress toward the development of a peer reviewed publication on human-wildlife conflicts with coyotes in urban areas (B. Wakeling)**
 - This project has suffered from logistical challenges resulting from the pandemic. Progress is back on track and a first draft has been circulated to the Wildlife Resources Policy Committee (WRP) and HWCWG. We are asking for any

comments or edits be shared with Brian Wakeling (brian.wakeling@mt.gov) or Bryant White (bwhite@fishwildlife.org) by January 1, 2023.

- Edits will be addressed and sent back to WRP and HWCWG prior to meeting in March 2023. We will be seeking approval from WRP at that meeting. As a reminder, so long as the report is not prescriptive in nature, AFWA has delegated approval of the report to WRP. If aspects of the report are prescriptive, they may be changed so that it is not prescriptive, or it may be forwarded for Executive approval if necessary. On approval, the report will be submitted to the Human Wildlife Interactions Monograph series for publication.

- **USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services (Janet Bucknall)**

- Deputy Administrator Janet Bucknall gave an update from USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services on several important initiatives and programs including:
 - Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) A(H5N1)
 - This virus occurs mainly in birds and has been detected in both wild and domestic populations. Surveillance for the virus has been ongoing for 16 years in all flyways. It has been detected in all 4 flyways in North America. Was also detected in commercial domestic flocks and an indemnity of \$300 million has been paid out. It has been detected in over 45 states, 86 wild bird species, 9 species of mammals and surveillance continues because early detection is critical. Increased surveillance is being conducted in Alaska (only 1 detection in ~1,800 samples). APHIS-WS wishes to thank state agencies and hunters for their partnerships in collecting samples.
 - Chronic Wasting Disease
 - CWD Task Force- CWD Task Force representatives include individuals from US FWS, USGS, and the USDA. Each state will have the option to select up to two individuals that represent the relevant wildlife and/or agriculture agencies overseeing the surveillance and management of CWD. In addition, the CWD Task Force will include two representatives from tribal organizations and five representatives from non-governmental organizations. The CWD Task Force is responsible for highlighting resource requirements needed to effectively address CWD, updating identified best management practices, and detailing the latest CWD research. The National Wildlife Research Center received \$4 million and is working through various universities on early detection and how to prevent the spread of CWD.
 - American Rescue Plan
 - USDA received \$300 million to address One Health and future pandemics. Dr. Tom DeLiberto is instrumental in this effort. The focus is on detecting SARS-CoV-2 in wildlife and building capacity for potential future pandemics.
 - Livestock Protection
 - USDA has been conducting predator management for 100 years, but methods have changed greatly over time. Most efforts are conducted in cooperation with state and federal agency partners. In FY22 USDA assisted some 9,000 producers and conducted 182 workshops. Control focus on many species including black vultures, golden eagles, wolves. There is now a USDA Wolf Group which provides indemnities in cooperation with various partners. The Wolf Group may expand to include FWS and BLM members. Nonlethal initiatives are being explored for various conflict species and projects are being conducted in 13 states at this time. Nonlethal techniques include physical barriers, flagging, etc.
 - National Rabies Program
 - This program is conducted in the Eastern US to prevent the spread of the raccoon strain of rabies virus westward and is coordinated with many partners. Other activities are conducted along the Texas/Mexico border to prevent canine rabies

from Mexico from entering the US. Surveillance continues for vampire bats but vampire bats have not been detected in the US.

- **Berryman Institute: Managing Cougars in North America update, Cougar Book, Monographs, Human-Wildlife Interactions, Free-roaming Equids and Wild Pig Conferences (Terry Messmer)**
 - Please see the report provided by Dr. Messmer in the Appendix
- **BearWise Program: Update (Dan Gibbs/John Lord)**
 - AFWA has taken over the administration of the BearWise program to expand it to the national level. 34 states have signed on to participate with the cost being \$2,200/year/agency. The funding is used to manage the website. Biologists create and review content and there is an oversight committee that reviews all content being produced and disseminated.
 - This program has been very successful in the SE Region of the US and many citizens are involved. Informational flyers have been created that discuss how to attract birds without using feeders (that also attract bears) and to help avoid conflicts between pets (dogs) and bears.
 - Some confusion was recently noted due to similar but not identical programs that are being used in grizzly bear country. The Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC) has been working to certify products that are grizzly bear resistant, which is included in some USFS regulations for camping and recreating in some areas. Efforts to gain a similar resistance rating for black bears may confuse recreational users if bear resistant containers differ for black and grizzly bears. It is possible that black bears may be able to access some container that a grizzly cannot or vice versa.
 - There is merit in a single brand (BearWise vs BearSmart or others), but it is important that a single brand is appropriately representative. Similarly, a single brand could incorporate some economies of scale.
 - In the short term, there may be some value in establishing some coordination meetings between BearWise and IGBC to ensure that there is a common understanding, relationships are fostered, and needs are expressed
- **Wildlife Management Institute (Chris Smith)**
 - WMI works with the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee relative to minimizing conflicts with GBs. There is a subcommittee in each GB recovery zone. Funding is being provided to NGO partners to minimize conflicts in areas that may attract bears. The IGBC has a bear resistant testing and approval program that has some 950 products and the list of these products is available on the website: http://igbconline.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/211116_Certified_Products_List.pdf
 - a project to test black bear resistant containers recently began with SEAFWA
 - need cross testing for both species and information on black bear resistant containers will be available on the WMI website
 - evaluating hog toxicant delivery systems that will avoid bears
 - under a Multistate Conservation Grant WMI is compiling information on translocation of feral swine to standardize and minimize issues
- **Development of an AFWA document on “humane dispatch of wildlife by agency personnel” (Colin Gillin, Tom DeLiberto)**
 - This project has similarly been delayed due to logistical challenges presented by the pandemic.
 - Dr. DeLiberto presented an outline of the intended project and provided a visual

presentation describing the scope. Progress is being made on this project, recognizing that there may be prescriptive aspects of this report. This is being led by the Fish and Wildlife Health Committee. Ultimately agency personnel need guidelines that address the welfare of animals at the highest standard for various situations. This document will address “humane killing” of wildlife, which is not the same as highly controlled euthanasia. The goal will be to offer techniques that avoid pain, stress and suffering for animals that need to be terminated.

- There is an ad hoc committee of about 14 individuals (Humane Killing and Euthanasia of Wildlife Working Group) working on the document. Writing assignments will be assigned this fall.
- **USGS National Climate Adaptation Science Center: Impacts of Climate Change to Wildlife Conflicts (Kate Malpeli)**
 - Dr. Malpeli gave an update on the effort to develop a bear focused synthesis document that will discuss the effects of climate change on conflicts with bears. The experts involved in this process are reviewing 125 papers and plan to submit this for a publication in spring of 2023.
 - A fact sheet is also being developed on wild pigs and climate change, based on a survey of interest from the HWCWG. Fact sheets will also be developed for Black Bears and Grizzly Bears and climate change effects relative to conflicts. She asked the group to review these using species experts, especially related to management implications, when these fact sheets are ready.
- Roundtable: State/Federal/Tribal/Provincial/Regional Associations/AFWA Members
- Wrap-up Discussion and Assignments for Next Meeting (B. Wakeling/D. Brimeyer)
 - Review of urban coyote conflict paper
 - Potential to develop a conflict paper on beavers (similar to that on deer, bears and coyotes)

Appendix

Berryman Institute Report

Berryman Institute Update – September 20, 2022

Presented to AFWA Human-Wildlife Conflict Working Group

The Berryman Institute (BI, berrymaninstitute.org) is an international organization based in the Department of Wildland Resources, Quinney College of Natural Resources, at Utah State University. It is named after Jack H. Berryman to honor his distinguished career in wildlife management. The BI is dedicated to improving human-wildlife relationships and resolving human-wildlife conflicts through teaching, research, outreach, and extension. The BI mission remains to promote a dialogue among wildlife professionals and their stakeholders concerning contemporary human-wildlife management issues. This year marks the 28th year of the BI's existence.

Berryman Staff

Dr. Terry Messmer, Professor, Director (terry.messmer@usu.edu)
Dr. David Dahlgren, Associate Professor
Dr. Shandra Frey (Nicki), Extension Associate Professor
Dr. Jessica Tegt, Engagement and Outreach Coordinator (Jessica.tegt@usu.edu)
Dr. Simona Picardi, Research Assistant Professor
Lorien Belton, Program Coordinator
Angie Jensen, Staff Assistant
Rosanna Vail, Human-Wildlife Interactions Managing Editor

Research and Publication

The BI is celebrating our 16th year of publishing Human-Wildlife Interactions (HWI) <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/hwi/>. HWI is the only scientific journal dedicated specifically to publishing manuscripts that report research, management case studies, and policy perspectives designed to enhance the professional management of human-wildlife conflicts.

In 2021-2022 HWI articles were downloaded 89,000 times. Numbers of Human Fatalities, Injuries, and Illnesses in the United States Due to Wildlife is the most downloaded article of all USU journals published on DigitalCommons with over 40,000 downloads. We have published 673 papers with a current impact factor of 2.119. Specials topic issues in the period include Wild Pigs, Ravens, Free-roaming equids, and islands invaders. Special issues in planning are One Health – Zoonotic Surveillance.

Monographs and Books

The BI through HWI publishes books, monographs, and reports on all aspects of human-wildlife interactions. The Human-Wildlife Interactions Monograph Series can be found on Digital Commons along with information on how submit a monograph for consideration and to order copies of previous monographs. We have published three monographs (deer, wild pigs, and bears) and have one in press (Toolkit to Address Free-ranging Domestic Cats (*Felis catus*) on Agency Lands Managed for Native Wildlife and Ecosystem Health), and one in preparation

(coyote management). We are in press with the second edition of the book “Managing Cougars in North America.” This book is slated for release this winter.

Education and Outreach

The BI continues to excel at organizing, hosting, coordinating, and sponsoring international, national, state, and local conferences, meetings, local working groups, and workshops.

Aug. 8-Aug. 12, 2022, The International Wild Pig Conference (virtual), over 300 participants
<https://web.cvent.com/event/5429cfa7-7c44-4948-9273-2617f7b66961/summary>

October 12-14, 2022, St. George, Utah. Free-roaming Equid and Ecosystem Sustainability: Community Connections <https://web.cvent.com/event/0eef2ba7-2069-4e01-9a5b-449e975f3f86/summary>

April 17-20, 2023. 20th Wildlife Damage Management Conference, Logan, Utah.

July 17-21, 2023, Wildlife Across America (WAA) - Madison, Wisconsin. WAA is a National Institute for Food and Agriculture supported clearinghouse initiative that will improve the transfer of information about wildlife management and wildlife damage management to landowners by improving the relevancy of the information through assessing their current needs and addressing technical shortcomings of legacy/traditional information delivery through national collaborative efforts.

Social Media

<https://www.wildawareutah.org/> Utah’s Hogle Zoo, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources and Utah State University Extension have partnered to develop a clearinghouse to educate individuals and communities about how to live, work and recreate safely in wildlife habitats in Utah.

<https://www.upr.org/people/terry-messmer> - Monthly Utah Public Radio series – living with wildlife

HWI Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/hwijournal>

HWI Twitter: https://twitter.com/HWI_Journal

Berryman Institute Facebook- <https://www.facebook.com/USUBerrymanInstitute>

BI Twitter- <https://twitter.com/home?lang=en>

YouTube Channels- <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeMVIFLYRL-uPMYaej9hbVA>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpzNKfCPdg5om8PFmRRNUUA>

Podcasts-



A podcast series on human-wildlife interactions topics will launch on the Berryman website in the fall of 2022.