**Wildlife Resources Policy Committee-September 2017**

**Meeting Notes**

Attending: Diann eggman, brian wakeling, maria Davidson, marik TN, Todd bishop, mithc marcus, mylea, bard howeard, terry messmer, Janet buckner, bill clay, david reinhold, elsao houbol, john )MN,0, keith Norris.

The meeting was convened at 10:10am. Jim Douglas welcomed the participants and asked if any changes were need to the agenda. Brian Wakeling requested that the bear diversionary feeding policy be discussed prior to the update by the Wildlife and Human Conflict Working Group update.

**Wildlife Services Report**

Bill Clay-Reported there was an aircraft accident in Wyoming where a Wildlife Services (WS) staff member was lost. I review of the aircraft program was conducted by an outside entity and several recommendations were made. Flights by WS were shutdown for a month. A full-time flight monitor was hired and software will be used to monitor all flights. The accident occurred when temperatures were below zero and it took three hours to find the crew. Two crew were found alive and a trainee passed away. With the new system, we will know immediately if a flight goes down. There was an accident when using M44 (sodium cyanide). Mistakes were made when it was placed on private lands. A teenage boy was encountered the poison while walking a dog. The dog was killed and poison was spread to the teenager but he is OK. There was misinformation about the incident which resulted in WS examining their M44 use. It is rare for a pet to be killed. This usually happens when dogs range free. Human contamination is very rare. More visible signage has been developed. We are making good progress with feral swine. Eight states are free of feral swine. The state agency makes the call when eradication is achieved. NY, ID, MN and NV could be swine free soon. The cormorants …monitor for two years…MN and NV may be feral free soon…cormorants judge vacated rule

Janet Bucknall-A judge has vacated the cormorant rule because NEPA was not updated. WS still has permits to help with aquaculture. We expect NEPA to go out in the next month or two. After the EA is approved, producers will be allowed to continue taking cormorants. Everying thing except free swimming fish will be eligible.

Bill Clay-I would like to defer a couple of minutes for some comments by Terry Mesmer.

Terry Mesmer-Mike Conover has stepped down at the Berryman Institute. The Berryman Institute sponsors conferences, most recently one on wildlife horses. They also sponsor scholarships and an online journal. The Human Wildlife Interactions Journal is published three times a year. The next issue will be on cosmopolitan coyotes. We are asking states about agency wide subscriptions and have received a good response. We are inviting agency biologists with good stories to tell. We will waive the fees for publication. Managers are doing some unique things. For example Alaska has been using tasers for 30 years. We are working to get that published. We want to become a repository for work by managers. The journal is an open journal that survives on page charges by authors.

Jim Douglas-How would you describe the current distribution of the journal to the states.

Terry Mesmer-It is available to all states. We have offered to send hard copies to the states.

Jim Douglas-It’s a great publication and I appreciate your leadership. NE has cosmopolitan coyote issues too.

Terry Mesmer-NV has had a huge spike with coyotes.

Jim Douglas-I am interested in the use of tasers. NE has used this technique as well.

Terry Mesmer-We need to know more about the physiological response of wildlife.

Bill Clay-WS is non-regulatory agency and try to keep the federal bureaucracy to a minimum. We’ve been trying to get a new Aircraft-Wildlife strike MOU completed with eight agencies to coordinate on bird strikes. The previous MOU expired three years ago. We didn’t have AFWA or the aviators association as part of the first one. We revised the MOU and circulated it but it got hung up with FAA and the FWS. These two agencies can’t agree on language regarding threatened and endangered species. We don’t want any birds on airport runways. In WY there is habitat for sage grouse at airports and a threatened horned lark is found in the Pacific NW. WS is trying to get FWS and FAA to meet. The FWS is unable to meet because of workload. We reengaged with them and offered at the North American to provide AFWA language. We will do that soon.

Keith Norris-Are day-to-day operations being impacted?

Bill Clay-No, the old MOU has expired but work is still going on. Nothing has been shut down. Most issues are on smaller municipal airports.

Jim Douglas-Is there value in the MOU?

Bill-FAA is a key partner. We need to resolve their issues, we need everyone on board. WS does not have much presence on small airports.

Jim Douglas-I appreciate the work of the Human Wildlife Conflict Working Group on bear diversionary feeding. The AFWA Executive Committee thought that additional work was needed. There was another round of revisions and the Executive Committee decided not to approve the policy statement. The issues surrounding black bears have become politicized and Directors are cautious that we not tie the hands of their peers or dictate policy. They were not receptive to taking action now but do think this is good work. I think we should continue working on these types of issues but it gets into realm of what kind of policy we work on.

Keith Norris-Is this something The Wildlife Society could take up?

Jim Douglas-It is also possible these types of position statements could be taken up by the regions.

Brian Wakeling-We used the TWS policy for the policy statement.

Diane Eggeman.-Does SEAFWA have a policy on this?

Maria Davidson-SEAFWA may have something on feeding.

Terry Messmer-In the document the reference to TWS policy expires in 2017.

Keith Norris-TWS Council is looking at expiring position statements, I don’t expect it to lapse.

Brian Wakeling-The working group is also working on a technical review of BMP’s. We want to make sure we don’t get headed down a road the Executive Committee does not want us to follow. Our intent is not to be prescriptive, just ID strengths of techniques.

Jim Douglas-I intend to discuss this issue with the incoming president and make sure we create products with utility and that are informative but don’t cross boundaries on policy. We need to walk a fine line. I expect to get some direction. Don’t stop your work.

Brian Wakeling-Our intent is to share the outlines for your feedback.

Jim Douglas-There is room for approving but not making it a policy of AFWA.

Brian Wakeling-We are trying to do as much review as possible. We can consider AFWA or peer review.

Jim Douglas-We may try and schedule a discussion of this topic at the AFWA Executive Committee.

Brian Wakeling-I will communicate this to the working group.

**Human/Wildlife Conflicts Working Group Report**

Brian Wakeling-The Human Wildlife Conflict Working Group met on September 12, 2017 from 10:00a–12:00p. About 45 working group members and guests attended. The working group did not have work planning on the agenda. I have the work plan form from Mark and will complete it. We identified several review products on deer, beaver and wolves. We have not selected the next one but will make a recommendation in March. We did not want to start new ones before we have success with the current ones. We discussed that the committee may form a feral swine working group. We don’t have a good sense of the ongoing work.

Bill Clay-There are a couple of steering committees and working group on feral swine. There is AFWA representation. It may make sense to have a working group. We need to keep people on the same page. There could be an ad hoc group.

Jim Douglas-MAFWA has a working group.

Bill Clay-There is a national steering committee and feral swine working group.

Jim D-Bill, can you tell us more.

Bill-One is internal to APHIS.

Jim D-In the Midwest the states dealing with feral swing are communicating what they are doing, not doing and what is going on at the federal level. They don’t bring many recommendations. It’s an information exchange.

Bill Clay-Does SEAFWA have a feral swine group?

Diane Eggeman-Yes

Brian Wakeling-The working group could put out a request for information.

Jim LaCour-I was the first chair of the SEAFWA Working Group. We created a summary of state regulations and came up with a toolkit and recommendations. It was a compilation and dissemination document. We meet with the SEAFWA Wildlife Resources Committee each year. There is a national feral pig task force. I will be the be incoming chair. There is a lot of information that is exchanged. The Kaput issue pointed to the need for fast channels. The wild pig task force compiled all the information on warfarin and shared with SEAFWA.

Jim Douglas-Do you think the national wild pig task force would be interested in reporting to this committee and would that be helpful

Jim LaCour-The national task force is set up to be a clearing house.

Jim Douglas-This might be a good start for Jim to give a report from the task force at the North American.

Bill Clay-Brian, I can get you information about the steering committee.

Jim LaCour-We can play it by ear. If not now, maybe we can consider the need for a working group in the future.

Brian Wakeling-A report was given on Human Wildlife Interactions Journal. There were a number of reports from other jurisdictions. We will distribute in our final minutes.

**Update on Registration of Kaput® Feral Hog Bait**

Jim Douglas-Last year when Kaput was brought to the attention of this committee and regarding the potential for non-target affects, the committee took the message forward that a letter from AFWA was needed. It pointed out the need for quick communication and information sharing. The letter was signed by the AFWA president and sent to the EPA. EPA responded and said due diligence was done. A message went out to Directors encouraging them to work with their Department of Agriculture.

Jim LaCour-We received the label for Kaput in January. We did not know about it. Louisiana suggested language for their legislation to give agency authority for testing. We met with the Department of Agriculture and they did not have concerns about non-targets like LA black bear. The label requires signs be posted and for carcass collection. It was registered on March 17 in LA but was not available. We tested a feeder and found bears could be impacted. We shot a video and then registration was pulled. Public pressure worked. This allowed us to get back up and do testing on the hog stomper, hand feeder and wild pig feeder. All three feeder types have failed with bears. We would have had dead bears. We are not letting our guard down. The justification is that it is already used for rodents. For rodents, small amounts are used, whereas for hogs, hundred pound blocks are used. The literature from the 1950’s document lots of non-target impacts. We looked at a database to see how long it takes to clear an animal’s system. We could not say specifically but it is reported that people on Coumadin should not consume meat that contains Kaput. This issue is not dead. States should be looking into cost and benefits and potential impacts to non-targets.

Jim Douglas-When looking at a legislative solution, what language was used.

Jim LaCour-Any toxicant brought to the state for approval would be tested by the fish and wildlife agency, university or agriculture

Jim Douglas-A wide array of critters could harmed. As you look at delivery, how about the ones used for sodium nitrate.

Bill Clay-We won’t use Kaput because of the hazards.

Jim LaCour-In Australia, testing showed lots of impacts such as animals moaning for days, high level of pain. Sodium nitrate is more humane.

Bill Clay-Sodium nitrate takes about 3 hours. Kaput does not meet the standard of being humane.

Jim LaCour-I encourage states to comment and support sodium nitrate.

Bill Clay-We are still several years away from registration.

Jim D-We will submit our full report to the business committee. Are there two or three messages we should send up. Maybe one is that the letter sent to EPA did result in any significant action and encourage states to communicate with their Department of Agriculture.

Bill Clay-Sept 30 is the deadline for public comment on sodium nitrate.

Jim LaCour-I will provide a link.

Maria Davidson-This points out the need for EPA to work more closely with states through AFWA. Is there a mechanism to reach out to EPA?

Jim LaCour-We may want to consider taking a position on warfarin and the need to give state agencies an opportunity to review.

Jim Douglas-Maybe we can consider this for the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference.

Terry Messmer-The level of registration data is minimal.

Jim LaCour-There was very little information from manufactures on efficacy because it was in peer review.

Jim Douglas-I will put in meeting notes that reply from EPA was not adequate and the committee may bring forward recommendations on communication with EPA in the future.

Jim LaCour-I will have Maria send a link. [https://www.regulations.gov/docket?D=APHIS-2017-0067](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__www.regulations.gov_docket-3FD-3DAPHIS-2D2017-2D0067&d=DwMFAg&c=xlPCXuHzMdaH2Flc1sgyicYpGQbQbU9KDEmgNF3_wI0&r=NYgWdhTslxcSx6K9p_qb6wMpiKdViJUSBLCgm1CHDZU&m=kOgnztN7NFIEilZv91I3iG4BlozPyFXOsAlpyjbFHpU&s=mu70yXyOYUF-ZA8Q4RZ6IKq78qv4FCS08iwvZk1Gkpw&e=)

**Update on the North American Bat Monitoring Program**

Mylea Bayless-Thanked the committee for its continued interest. USGS hired a coordinator in January for NA Bats and have an active website and can accept data. A meeting was held last week to come up with solutions for processing data and workflow through USGS. Two competitive State Wildlife Grants were completed that provided funding for testing in 12 states. We will have copies of a report in March. In March we hope to show some graphics on progress. We have handouts with contact information for USGS coordinators. White-nosed syndrome has expanded to WA and to a new species. It has also emerged in TX and MS. In TX two new species were found his winter we the disease. We expect field trials on management solutions to be done soon. Experimental vaccination is being conducted in several states. There is an AFWA task force that has been reconvened. New funding for management bats being made available through a fund created by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Forest Service and Shell. There has also been news about bat deterrents on wind turbines.

Jim Douglas-There is interest in white-nosed syndrome and mitigation. Do you find that the management and monitoring efforts can evolve into work for this committee or can it be a conduit for information?

Mylea Bayless-I appreciate this committee as a venue for exchanging information. The states may have a role in implementation of monitoring of bats through NA bats.

Jim Douglas-Do you see any calls of action for this committee such as communication, letters or a policy statement? We are open to this if needed. There needs to be a home for bats.

Mylea Bayless-As we look at threats to bats we may be need to bring some things through the committee.

**The Future of Landscape Conservation Cooperatives**

Elsa Haubold-I have been in my as LCC coordinator for 4 years. I have three products I want to report on for discussion. The National Academy of Sciences recommended clear guidance on landscape design. It will be publishing a report in the next few weeks. A framework for largescale collaboratives is being developed. We would like to send a draft framework out but it has been paused. This week LCC’s are gathering to put all their information into a single USGS database. The LCCs are housed in Science Applications within the FWS. The Administration zeroed out science applications and the House of Representatives included level funding in their budget. The Senate may be marking up its bill soon. The Administration has said they want something else in the future. The FWS is thinking about what partners need. We want your thoughts and advice.

Jim Douglas-Can you tell us more about the development of a framework?

Elsa Haubold-We developed performance measures for goals and objectives for landscape design so partners can use these rather than spend the time developing their own. We are looking for feedback.

Jim Douglas-A survey of Directors on interactions with LCCs was evenly split between positive and negative. LCCs are most positive in the east and most negative in the west. There are a lot of states who feel that LCCs have great value and are important to planning and other states who don’t feel as strongly. MAFWA discussed if not LCCs then what? That is a discussion that needs to continue because the President has zeroed them out. There may be some funding in the future but not enough. We all need to look at the value of LCCs, we should be talking about this. We need to evaluate the value added priorities for research and landscapes conservation. The LCC structure is doing this now. What is another model for getting this work done? We should be thinking about this. Are there messages to report?

Elsa Haubold-I would love to do this.

John Erb-Where is the best place to go for information about LCCs?

Elsa Haubold-You can go to [www.lccnetwork.org](http://www.lccnetwork.org). I’m also happy to talk to you.

Jim Douglas-I am happy to discuss what needs to happen in the future.

**Update on the Alliance for America’s Fish and Wildlife**

Sean Saville-The Alliance for America’s Fish and Wildlife is the new iteration of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America’s Diverse Fish and Wildlife which was formed implement the recommendations of the Panel. There are lots of partners. Seven Blue Ribbon Panel members are on a steering committee. The states have invested in a campaign. We are working with Bond Moroch on communications. We have a website (www.ournatureusa.com). The purpose is to get people to contact Congress. There is no bill yet. We are working with states to produce outreach materials. We will make these available. We have created banners, writing a white paper with industry in partnership with the Wildlife Habitat Council. We are working on a short video. The goal is to pass legislation. We are working with the outdoor recreation industry on the value of the outdoor economy. Legislation was introduced in the House during the last session of Congress. Twenty-three states have passed supportive resolutions. We are updating the AFWA resolution. A Senate bill will be introduced this fall.

John Erb-

Jim D-work plan…form we need to complete to id what we do next year. Amphibian and Reptile subcommittee asked to be full committee and are full committee now…this committee serves a role for discussing issues that do not have home for other committees..we have people that are ready to do work so we need clarity on work that is needed…our challenge is for the committee to tell us what things this committee should do

Mark-I will forward link from Maria on Sodium Nitrate review

Progress on the development of best practices documents for managing human wildlife conflicts with deer in populated areas and black bears.

A first draft of both documents was complete in early June and was subsequently reviewed by HWC, WRP and some outside experts.

A second draft of both documents is expected soon and will be circulated to HWC & WRC for review.

Once a third draft is developed we hope to get approval of the documents from HWC and WRP. Following this approval, we anticipate the document may go before the EX-COM in March and then to the business meeting for approval.

Following full approval, these documents will be submitted to the Human Wildlife Interactions Journal for peer review and publication.

The HWC also discussed potentially developing similar best practices documents for dealing with urban coyotes, deer and agriculture, feral swine, beavers and wolves. Efforts to develop some of these documents may begin as soon as the North American meeting in March.

Some discussion was held about developing an AFWA working group to deal with Feral Swine. Not all issues related to feral swine management are human wildlife conflict issues. A special working group to deal specifically with feral swine might be beneficial to the states.

There was also some discussion on developing a report on how various states manage human wildlife conflicts from caller through resolution. Representatives from both Utah and Nevada gave presentations on how these states are dealing with conflict issues. Texas, which has a fairly unique method of referring some conflict issues to private wildlife control companies, will report on their process in March.

State and federal agencies reported on various human wildlife conflict issues and how they are being handled. These will be in the Minutes that will soon be available on the AFWA website.

Adjourned 11:57

Notes-Distribute Maylea docs, tribue tot bill clay

Update onBear Diversionary Feeding Position Statement

Discuss/Develop Committee Work Plan