



Livestock Loss Board Members Present:

Elaine Allestad - Chairperson
Whitney Klasna
Jim Cross
Larry Trexler
John Herman

Staff: George Edwards – Executive Secretary

Guests: Kraig Glazier – USDA Wildlife Services
Nathan Lance - FWP
Abby Nelson – FWP
Peggy Duezabou
Matt Barnes – Keystone Conservation
Dan Boyce – Mt Public Radio

Call to Order and Administrative Items:

Chair Elaine Allestad called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Introductions:

- Each board member and board staff introduced themselves.
- Chair Elaine Allestad asked the audience members to introduce themselves and encouraged public comment.

Board Minutes:

Board members reviewed the December 4, 2013 minutes. **Motion:** Larry Trexler made a motion to approve the minutes. Whitney Klasna seconded the motion. **Discussion:** None. **Vote:** Elaine Allestad, Larry Trexler, Whitney Klasna and John Herman voted to approve. Jim Cross abstained from voting as he was not present at the December 4th meeting. Motion carried.

Luxford Loss Claim:

Mr. Edwards included all of the information Mr. Luxford provided but he did not include his record book that he said he would provide. Mr. Edwards went online

to Banner Sales to determine a sales average. A prior motion by the board was to use the Banner Sales average because this is where Mr. Luxford had sold sheep in the past. Whitney Klasna stated that the law requires values within the past year. All of the information Mr. Luxford provided was from years before. The information Mr. Edwards found is from 2013 and we should use this data. Larry Trexler said he didn't produce receipts and the letters he provided are not true receipts. Elaine Allestad added the board made an exception by going out of state to use the sales where Mr. Luxford normally sold his sheep.

Motion: John Herman made a motion to use the average price from the Banner Sales January, February and March sales in Nevada. Larry Trexler seconded the motion. **Discussion:** None **Vote:** All in favor none opposed. Motion carried.

New Business:

Ward Matt Loss Claim:

Mr. Matt contacted George Edwards about his payment for two ponies killed by wolves. Mr. Edwards used Jann Parker with BLS for an appraisal as had been done with prior horse claims. The total price paid to Mr. Matt for both ponies was only \$525. Mr. Matt said he wanted to appeal this value as both ponies were well broke and even used in parades. He asked that the board reconsider the value used for the payment. In addition Mr. Matt has had one more pony killed by wolves. Mr. Edwards looked at Craiglist to see what people were selling ponies for and reported this to the board. Larry Trexler suggested going back through several month of BLS horse sales to find a value. Elaine Allestad said to go back through the past four sales.

Motion: Larry Trexler made a motion to have George Edwards go through the past four horse sales to determine a value. John Herman seconded the motion. **Discussion:** Board members discussed the issue prior to the motion. No further discussion took place after the motion. **Vote:** All in favor none opposed. Motion carried.

Loss Prevention Grant Reviews:

Board members asked for an overview of each grant before making any determinations.

1. **Madison County** – This county ranks in the top three for wolf predation and grizzly bears are present in this county. They are requesting funds to begin a carcass removal/composting site. Nathan Lance confirmed that grizzlies are present in the area.
2. **Big Hole Watershed Committee** – This area has been the number one county for wolf caused losses. Nathan Lance said he knows of no issues with grizzly bears. Kraig Glazier agreed with Nathan.

3. **Dahl Ranch Inc.** – This ranch is located in the Elkhorn Mountains near Clancy Montana. They have had loss claims in past years due to wolves. Peggy Duezabou helped the Dahl Ranch prepare their application and was present during the board's discussion. Ms. Duezabou said they have a lot of wolf activity up there and it's eating up their lives taking care of things they can't report. She gave examples of disease increase, injured calves, weight loss and greater mortality that could not be confirmed for loss payments. Kraig Glazier added that a neighboring ranch had wolf caused losses in 2011. He had responded to injured calves in prior years but nothing recently. Nathan Lance said there have been grizzlies reported in the general area. Elaine asked how far away from the ranch. Mr. Lance said about 20 miles. Mr. Glazier said it is possible to have grizzlies in the area. Because of the amount of money requested, Elaine Allestad asked if the Dahl Ranch could provide the 50% cost share. Mr. Edwards said they are meticulous with receipts and assured him they can provide the match. Board members were concerned with the small area this grant would cover and the small number of animals (70) that would be protected. Concerns were also expressed over funding for radio tracking collars on guard dogs. Ms. Duezabou said this would enable them to monitor their cows better to determine when a problem exists.
4. **Anderson-Nelson** – This project is within four miles of Yellowstone National Park. The project would cover five ranches with about 2,000 head of stock. Wolves and about 12 grizzlies live in the Tom Miner Basin where this project is located. They are currently using low stress livestock management, fladry and range riders. The grant would allow them to continue current loss prevention methods and to start up a carcass removal/composting project. Mr. Edwards asked Ms. Nelson if wildlife services were allowed on the ranches because he had not received many claims from this area. Ms. Nelson said some of the producers have not allowed wildlife services on their property because they did not want lethal control. She said Ms. Anderson will be working on bringing the ranchers together. Of the five brands listed on the application, some belong to the same families.
5. **Blackfoot Challenge** – This project covers a very large area that contains both wolves and grizzly bears. Their ongoing loss prevention efforts have been going on for over a decade with very positive results. Predation has been reduced by over 95%. They have five wolf packs in the covered area and had no know wolf caused losses in the past year. Mr. Glazier said their carcass pickup program is more effective on grizzly bears than it is on wolves. Nathan Lance added there are a lot of grizzlies in this area.
6. **Lazy Daisy Ranch** – This sheep ranch has submitted loss claims to the board in the past. They are seeking funds to add an additional guard dog. Mr. Glazier said this is not a grizzly bear area. More losses occur due to black bears and coyotes.

7. **Cody McDonald** – Board records do not indicate any losses to Mr. McDonald but there have been claims in the past for Judith Basin County. Mr. Lance said losses typically are due to black bears and coyotes.
8. **Johnny Taber** – Mr. Taber indicated he is looking to add a guard dog to protect his herd from coyotes and bobcats which is outside of the scope of this grant. Ms. Nelson does not know of any confirmed wolf packs in this area.
9. **Lance Pospisil** – This application is similar to Mr. Tabers application. Mr. Glazier said he knows of no confirmed losses near the Pospisil ranch but not everything is reported to wildlife services.
10. **Mark Robinson** – This application had numerous aspects to it so Mr. Edwards asked board members to look at the narrative within the application. Board members shared numerous concerns with this proposal including that Mr. Robinson may be more in the business of selling guard dogs, requested tracking collars would go with pups he sells, and a limited number of goats being protected. Larry Trexler is familiar with the area and indicated that there is a potential for wolves in Mr. Robinson's area but the larger problem is with mountain lions.

Motion: Jim Cross made a motion to drop applications 6 through 10 for the purposes of this grant. Whitney Klasna seconded the motion. **Discussion:** Elaine Allestad asked for clarification of the motion to drop 6 through 10 and to discuss full or partial funding for 1 through 5. Jim Cross added a friendly amendment to drop 6 through 10 with the option to reconsider these if money is available after review of 1 through 5. Whitney Klasna seconded the friendly amendment. **Discussion: Vote:** All in favor none opposed. Motion carried.

Further Discussion:

Elaine Allestad asked for further discussion to prioritize the grant applications. Larry Trexler suggested fully funding numbers 1, 2, 4 and 5 and to partially fund number 3. He is looking at projects covering a large area and several thousand head. Whitney Klasna agreed with Mr. Trexler and stated she is in support of funding numbers 1, 2, 5 and maybe number 4. She also agreed with Mr. Trexler on partial funding for number 3. Jim Cross said number 5 is highly successful but they don't offer anything new. Board members began discussing new criteria for grants. Mr. Edwards asked the board to consider this topic for the next board meeting. Mr. Trexler and Mr. Cross both agreed with discussing a further refinement of the process. Mr. Cross said the board should relook at numbers 6 through 10 and then give number 3 the remaining funds. John Herman agreed. Mr. Herman said he didn't feel number 10 would merit consideration. Ms. Allestad said one of them had wolf problems. Mr. Edwards said that is number 6, the Lazy Daisy Ranch and the board has paid for loss claims on this ranch. Mr. Trexler suggested adding number 6 back into the grants. All board members were concerned with portions of number 3 such as dog collars and buying hay. Mr. Edwards explained to the board that buying hay is in state law 2-15-3111. He

asked if the board is now in favor of funding number 6 and partial funding for number 3 as they fall into the criteria established by the board and state law. Abby Nelson said she sees number 6 as a valid project. John Herman said he is willing to fund number 6 with the remaining funds instead of picking apart their proposal. Ms. Klasna said that would be \$22,200.

Based upon the motion by the board, number 6 will be fully funded and number 3 will receive the remaining \$22,200.

Public Comment

Peggy Duezabou asked if funds are from the Department of Interior how does the board value a wolf pack? George Edwards said that is FWP's area and not under this board's prevue.

Matt Barnes thanked the board for considering the Tom Miner Basin project (number 4) and for pursuing non-lethal projects.

Motion: Larry Trexler made a motion to adjourn. Whitney Klasna seconded the motion. **Adjourned**

DATED this 11 day of April, 2014

Elaine K. Allestad
Elaine Allestad, Chairman
Montana Livestock Loss Board