

Livestock Loss Board
January 13, 2023
Board Meeting
Helena MT
Meeting Minutes

Livestock Loss Board Members Present:

Doreen Gillespie – Chairperson
Elaine Allestad
Dave McEwen
Joe Kipp
Patty Quisno

Staff: George Edwards – Executive Director

Guests: Duane Talcott - Woolgrowers
Clay Vines – Department of Livestock Bison Program
Erika Nunlist – Centennial Valley Association
Kara Maplethorpe - Centennial Valley Association
Nate Owens – Heart of the Rockies
Raylee Honeycutt - Montana Stockgrowers Association
Robert Bruskotter – Senator Daines Office
Neal Barnoski - Rancher
Tana Nulph – Big Whole Watershed Committee
Trina Bradley – Rocky Mountain Ranchlands Group

Call to Order and Administrative Items

Introductions

- Each board member and board staff introduced themselves.

Board Minutes

Mr. Edwards said the March 18, 2022 minutes are the most comprehensive that he has ever prepared. Board members reviewed the March 18, 2022 minutes.

Motion: Dave McEwen made a motion to approve the minutes. Elaine Allestad seconded the motion. **Discussion:** None. **Vote:** All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Reports

2022 Claims Statistics – Mr. Edwards said it is substantially less than 2021. Wildlife Services also did less investigations in 2022. Mr. Kipp brought up that Glacier County is still one of the top counties in the state for loss. Mr. Edwards said animal-wise 2022 has Lewis and Clark's as number one for losses. This county is typically always in the top five, but this is the first time they've been at the top. Mr. McEwen asked if he could pass this along to a federal level. Mr. Edwards said it's public record and on the board's website. Everyone has access to this information.

Board Legislation – Mr. Edwards said as far as the board legislation goes there are two bills. House bill 59 extending our funding dates to 2029 passed out of house executive action yesterday afternoon. It will next go to the house floor for a vote. SB 78 for clarification of our laws as far as confidentiality of claims and registered livestock values has also passed through the senate committees unanimously.

Grant Guidelines – Ms. Gillespie said the next topic is grant guidelines. Everyone has had access to it because it's on our website. She said she had looked it over and thanked Mr. Kipp, Mr. McEwen, Mr. Edwards, and Lieutenant Governor Kristen Juras for their work on this. She asked for a motion.

Motion: Elaine Allestad made a motion to approve the grant guidelines. Dave McEwen seconded the motion. **Discussion:** Mr. Kipp said a third party non-profit can apply but most livestock associations charge dues and are not considered by the IRS to be a non-profit organization. Some are classified as a 501C5 which are not non-profit. They are tax exempt. He said he would like the wording changed. Mr. Edwards said he originally had taken the guidelines to a state attorney but felt their review was unsatisfactory. He then went to Kristen Juras for her review. Ms. Juras did a second legal review. Non-profits are looked at in a generic terms so grazing associations and livestock organizations can apply. It's not looked by tax status. He said there is a section that covers these types of instances. Mr. McEwen asked if it says 501C3 or just says non-profit. Ms. Juras would be the person to ask if we want to be more specific. Mr. Edward read the section of the guidelines referencing grazing association located on page two, four b. Mr. Kipp said this addressed his concern and it doesn't exclude anybody. Mr. Edwards express his appreciation to Kristen Juras for her review and slight changes she had made to the guidelines. Ms. Allestad said voting on these is what we will follow. If we glaringly missed something we can amend them. They are not a rule or a law, they are just guidelines. Ms. Gillespie asked if there was any public comment. Ms. Bradley asked who gauges effectiveness? Is it the people receiving the service or is it the board? Mr. Edwards said in the guidelines

it would be the board. Ms. Bradley asked about grant applications deemed suitable by the board's screening committee being advanced to the full board for review. What does suitable mean? Mr. Edwards said it is screening based on these guidelines. Ms. Honeycutt said she wanted to relay feedback from Stockgrowers on these policies. She said it was much needed and a step in the right direction. Their concerns relate to prevention practices must be consistent with terms as it relates to conservation, easements, zoning leases etc... and the board may request applicants to provide information related to these. At the end of the paragraph, it says these restrictions may not be grounds for disqualification of an application. Her question is how this information would be used and is it necessary to score an application. Both Ms. Bradley and Ms. Honeycutt asked for the screening panel meetings to be public. Mr. Edwards said the scoring criteria will be public and part of the grant process. He said it will be part of the grant application. He addressed the easement question by stating if the easement does not allow Wildlife Services or someone else to come in to help with the problem, that would impact how the board reviews an application. If a problem cannot be addressed, it would reduce the board's desire to fund a project. Mr. McEwen said this covers this. There is no sense providing money for a program where agency authority is prohibited. Ms. Nunlist also commented on the conservation easements use and they should be in the guidelines. Mr. Edwards said it is in the guidelines, so he is confused by Ms. Nunlist's statement. Ms. Gillespie said seeing no further comment and the motion on the floor, it is time to vote. **Vote:** All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Ms. Gillespie said she is appointing Dave McEwen and Joe Kipp as the members of the screening panel.

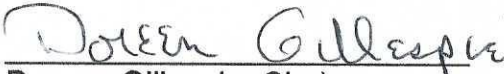
Public Comment – Ms. Gillespie asked if there is any public comment for items not on the agenda. No further public comment was offered.

Motion: Elaine Allestad made to adjourn. Joe Kipp seconded the motion.

Discussion: None. **Vote:** All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Adjourned

DATED this 14th day of August 2023



Doreen Gillespie, Chairman
Montana Livestock Loss Board