



THE BOARD OF BLAINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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Dick Fosbury, Chairman * Angenie McCleary, Vice-Chair * Jacob Greenberg, Commissioner

January 25, 2021

Dr. Craig White
Greg Cameron
Magic Valley Fish and Game Commissioner
324 South 417 East, Suite 1
Jerome, ID 83338

Subject: Wolf Hunting and Trapping Seasons in Blaine County

Dear Dr. White and Commissioner Cameron,

Thank you for meeting with us on January 19, 2021 to discuss the wolf hunting and trapping seasons in Blaine County and to tell us how the Blaine County Board of Commissioners and the public can have input into your regulatory process. As a follow-up to this meeting, we are writing to specifically ask that the Magic Valley IDFG staff and Commissioner Cameron, support our goals to continue the ban on wolf trapping in Blaine County, Units 48 and 49.

In March 2019, the Blaine County Board of Commissioners wrote to you requesting that the Idaho Fish and Game establish a *collaborative process with us on wolf trapping and hunting issues in our county*. The Board was not informed in 2020, however, when the IDFG Commission enacted an 11-month wolf hunting season in Unit 48 and 49. While we prefer no wolf hunting in Blaine County, we wish to discuss the season at another time.

IDFG policies on these regulations are critical to our economy, our health, safety, and welfare, and the values of our residents and visitors. Blaine County is experiencing the largest increase in summer and winter outdoor recreation ever seen. Our public lands are crowded year-round with people and dogs enjoying hiking, walking, mt. biking, backpacking, backcountry skiing, and Nordic skiing. Our tourism dollars are trying to attract more visitors to our public lands and thousands and thousands of local dollars and hundreds of volunteer hours are spent each year on improving trails for everyone. Wolf hunting and trapping in our county are not compatible with these intense outdoor recreation uses in Unit 48 and 49.

At our January 19, 2021 meeting, we heard from the public that Units 48 and 49 have strong numbers of elk, there is only one outfitter and guide who leads hunts in these areas, livestock depredations are low because of non-lethal practices of the Wood River Wolf Project to work with the sheep industry, and that wolves are not a problem. The

Foundation of Wildlife Management, whom the IDFG funds to give bounties on wolves, offers \$1,000 awards in areas of the state with high depredations. Blaine County, Units 48 and 49, are not listed as meeting these criteria. With these game management realities, we believe that the IDFG Commissioners can support the county's perspective and ban wolf trapping and limit wolf hunting in Units 48 and 49.

The attached packet of letters from Senator Michelle Stennett, the City of Ketchum, our outdoor retailers: Backwoods Mt Sports, the Elephant's Perch, Living with Wolves, Sun Valley Trekking, from the Wood River Wolf Project, and so many other citizens highlight community concerns and outline the real dangers from wolf trapping and an 11-month wolf hunting season. These letters resonate and align with the views of the members of this Board of Commissioners.

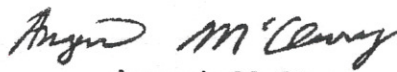
In your review of this material, we hope that the Magic Valley IDFG will consider the negative impact of the current and proposed wolf kill policies on the public's opinion and the relationship between the department and citizens in Blaine County. The argument that all wolf trapping and hunting season needs to be the same throughout the state holds no weight with the Board of Commissioners and residents in Blaine County.

Blaine County values its partnership with the Magic Valley IDFG which spans decades. Please let us know if you will support our request to continue the ban on wolf trapping in Blaine County and to further discuss the wolf hunting season in Unit 48 and 49.

Thank you for meeting with us and for your consideration of our position.

Sincerely,


Dick Fosbury
Chair


Angenie McCleary
Vice Chair


Jacob Greenberg
Commissioner

cc. Senator Michelle Stennett, Representatives Muffy Davis and Sally Toone
Ed Schriever, Director, Idaho Fish and Game
Mike McDonald, Wildlife Biologist