

Instrument # 680121

HAILEY, BLAINE, IDAHO
3-10-2021 08:14:14 AM No. of Pages: 2
Recorded for : BLAINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
JOLYNN DRAGE Fee: 0.00
Ex-Officio Recorder Deputy
Index to: RESOLUTIONS

43

RESOLUTION 2021-13

A RESOLUTION OF THE BLAINE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, BLAINE COUNTY, IDAHO, SUPPORTING THE NONLETHAL CONTROL OF WOLVES, THE VALUES OF WILDLIFE CO-EXISTENCE AND RECOGNIZING THE WOOD RIVER WOLF PROJECT

WHEREAS, the key guiding principle of the Blaine County’s updated Chapter 5, Natural Environment, in its Comprehensive Plan declares that the “Natural environmental attributes, including scenic vistas, public open space, healthy forests and sagebrush steppe, clean water and air, and abundant fish and wildlife are the heart and soul of our community”; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 5 of the Comprehensive Plan recognizes that “Gray wolves are no longer listed under the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973, but continue to be at the forefront of management challenges in Idaho. County officials, with the support of the Wood River Wolf Project and many others in the community, have advocated for non-lethal practices that can serve as a model for coexistence of livestock with predators; and

WHEREAS, Blaine County’s policies and the values of wildlife co-existence are not shared by the State of Idaho which passed legislation in 2014 to create the Idaho Wolf Depredation Control Board to propose new programs and incentives exclusively for the killing of wolves, with no new programs and incentives for the mitigation of conflicts between wolves and livestock through non-lethal coexistence practices; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) Commission expanded the wolf hunting season in the Wood River Valley, Unit 48 and 49, from seven months to eleven months; and in 2021, is considering a proposal to introduce a wolf trapping and snaring season on public land, a twelve-month wolf hunting season and a twelve-month trapping season on private land; and

WHEREAS, Blaine County and its District 26 Idaho Legislative representatives have heard from over fifty citizens, the Blaine County Recreation District, the cities of Ketchum and Hailey, the Sun Valley Board of Realtors with its 500 members, the Sun Valley Economic Development, Living with Wolves, local outdoor retailers and outfitters, and recreation groups who are strongly opposed to wolf trapping and a twelve month wolf hunting season in our county; and

WHEREAS, the proposed wolf trapping areas in Blaine County are heavily used by both summer and winter on-trail and off-trail recreationists, including families with young children and their dogs and have seen a record increase in use. Between 2019/20, winter season and 2020/21, the Blaine County Recreation District reported that cross country season pass sales grew by 60% for Nordic skiers; snowshoe passes increased by 250%; and dog winter trail pass sales increased 50%, and daily ski pass sales have increased almost 200 percent over the previous winter. Winter is a popular time to wolf trap, thereby putting all winter recreational users at risk; and

WHEREAS, Blaine County’s economy is based upon tourism and recreation as reported by the U.S. 2019 Bureau of Economics with an estimated \$235 million of its GDP coming from recreation, accommodation, food services, arts, and entertainment; only \$1.45 million from agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting; and

WHEREAS, Blaine County believes in and has witnessed the efficacy of non-lethal measures in reducing wolf/predator conflicts and has funded the Wood River Wolf Project for the past thirteen years and this approach is being adopted by ranchers throughout the Northern Rockies; and

WHEREAS, Blaine County has been an excellent partner with the IDFG Magic Valley region by adopting land use policies to protect wildlife and fisheries, and wildlife and fish habitat; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, County allocated \$40,000 in county property tax money to fund 37% of the IDFG's project to construct 14 stackyards to protect stored hay from elk and mule deer depredation on private lands. In 2019, the County approved a \$90,075 grant to the IDFG, to track pronghorn migration crossings of Highway 20; and

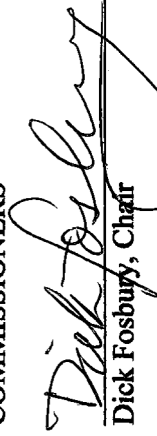
WHEREAS, in 2020, Blaine County and the cities in the Wood River Valley passed resolutions to form the Wildlife Smart Communities Coalition which recognized the intrinsic value and ecological role, and economic benefits of wildlife and formed a partnership with the IDFG to minimize human/pet/wildlife conflicts and lethal control of wildlife; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Blaine County Commissioners, that the Idaho Department of Fish and Game Commission recognize our unique partnership with the IDFG, the importance of recreation, tourism and coexistence with wildlife to our citizens and economy, and that the Commission act to keep wolf trapping out of IDFG designated hunting units 48 and 49, not expand lethal control of wolves, and to work cooperatively with and be a partner with the Wood River Wolf Project to use nonlethal means to reduce wolf and other predator conflicts with livestock; and


FURTHERMORE, the Blaine County Board of Commissioner will transmit a copy of this resolution to the members of Idaho Department of Fish and Game Commission, IDFG Magic Valley, Governor Brad Little, District 26 State Legislative Delegation, Congressman Mike Simpson, the Idaho Department of Commerce, the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, U.S.D.A. Wildlife Services, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Bureau of Land Management to request their support for our tourism economy and to provide for the safety of Wood River Valley residents and backcountry recreation users by prohibiting trapping and snaring seasons, and restricting an extended hunting season of wolves in our county, and endorse the collaborative work of the Wood River Wolf Project;

PASSED AND APPROVED by member of the Blaine County Board of Commissioners on
9 March, 2021.

BOARD OF BLAINE COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS


Dick Fosbury, Chair


Angenie McCleary, Vice Chair


Jacob Greenberg, Commissioner



ATTEST:


J6Lynn Drage, County Clerk