

Wolf Conservation and Management Plan Review
Community Meeting - Carmacks
April 11, 2011

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The following summary sets out key points discussed at the evening meeting of the Yukon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan Review Committee and community members in Carmacks. Major points or themes were also reviewed by the facilitator in an oral summary at the conclusion of the meeting.

The discussion focused on proposed changes to the 1992 Yukon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan and current issues associated with Yukon wolf conservation and management.

In addition, the Carmacks Renewable Resources Council distributed a questionnaire and posted questions for meeting participants to respond to. These comments and responses are summarized below as well.

1992 Yukon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan

- The Plan is heavily focused on measures, guidelines and conditions for wolf reduction programs. This is no longer appropriate to the times and public attitudes. (For example, extreme measures like poisoning are not appropriate or acceptable.) A revised plan should be better balanced and provide greater attention to more localized, proactive, small scale measures (e.g. trapping).

Wolf conservation and management – general approach

- A holistic approach to wolf management that considers wolves in the context of other predator and prey species.

- There is no need for active wolf management. Wolves and their prey should be allowed to self-determine their numbers and achieve their own natural balance in the environment.
- Wolf reduction can contribute to undesirable increases in certain prey populations (eg, beaver).
- The new plan should have a better balance between central and local decisions.
- The old approach was too expensive
- It is important to be sensitive to language and the use of terminology: eg. “bounty” vs “incentive”

Management of hunting and trapping of wolves

- It is not economic for trappers to harvest wolves and financial incentives are required to encourage their participation. Wolf pelt handling incentive programs are offered by the Yukon Outfitters Association (\$150/pelt). This type of support, should be funded by government. It would be a small expense compared to aerial wolf reduction programs.
- Need a \$500 per pelt incentive
- There is no ongoing YG funding for wolf management.
- Interest in trapping has greatly declined. Need to revitalize through trapping workshops.

Wolf – human conflict

- Wolves are attracted by dogs and other domestic animals in the community and have taken them. In turn, this has created concerns for people regarding their public safety.
- Management responses to wolf-human conflicts must be timely, otherwise they are not effective.
- Wolves are attracted to the garbage dump. The dump should be moved.

Conditions for wolf population reduction

- Harvesting doesn't have a large effect on ungulate populations, so wolf management to increase ungulates is not an issue

Education and Outreach

- Training and education programs that have been offered in the past should be offered again to encourage participation in trapping.

Other

- Very concerned with bears as a threat to people in communities

Participants who attended the public meeting responded to a questionnaire circulated by the RRC. The comments from 16 responses are summarized below:

What concerns do you have with wolves?

- There are no concerns with wolves. We are living on their territory and natural selection has worked for a long time.
- Wolves coming into the community is a concern expressed by several residents. Wolves come into town at night and try to lure dogs out of the yard. People are concerned that it is dangerous for children to play outside. Also dangerous for people.
- Wolves are feasting at the dump.
- Wolves are killing the moose, especially the cow moose and the calves.
- Wolves are also eating too much caribou, grouse, and rabbits.
- The wolves are overpopulated.
- Wolves are eating horses.

What do you think are the solutions to your concerns?

- People need to be educated about living with wolves.
- Wolves in town limits should be captured (trapped or shot).
- The value of wolf fur should be increased
- If people were at their traplines trapping wolves, there would be less of a wolf problem.
- Poisoning should not be considered under any circumstance.
- Live trapping should be considered.
- People need incentives from government to trap or hunt wolves.
- Wolves should be capture, then spayed or neutered
- Capture the wolves and move them far away from the community.
- People need to keep a close eye on their pets.
- Wolves should be eating wildlife, not horses or domestic dogs.
- Trappers should be allowed to trap more wolves.
- \$500 bounty per pelt for snaring them from government.
- Spay wolves and put them back into the wild.
- Try to keep the population of wolves down to a minimum.

The RRC also posted three questions for participants to indicate the extent of their support for certain approaches to wolf management. These are summarized below.

What are acceptable methods for wolf management in LSCFN traditional territory?
(Based on 48 responses first choice/35 responses second choice)

Poison – 0% first choice/0% second choice
Aerial shooting - 0% first choice/0% second choice
Trapping incentives (e.g. easier rules to trap) - 4% first choice/31% second choice
Sterilization - 5% first choice/3% second choice
Bounty - 15% first choice/11% second choice
Pay trappers - 22% first choice/8% second choice
No management (leave wolves alone) - 2% first choice/0% second choice
Traditional way (cull pups in den) - 2% first choice/2% second choice
Other - 0% first choice/0% second choice

How would you like to see wolf management in LCSFN traditional territory?
(Based on 39 responses)

Community based decision making – 36%
Co-management = community + government – 64%
Yukon government – 0%

Why do you think the moose population could be low in some areas?
(Based on 38 responses first choice/20 responses second choice)

Too many predators (wolf, bear, etc) – 29%/40%
Too many hunters – 29%/5%
Too many hunters take cow moose – 26%/35%
It's natural cycle – 16%/15%
Other – 0/5%