

January 22, 2025

Jack Blattner & Liz Wilder
Idaho Wool Growers Association
2118 West Airport Way
Boise, ID. 83705

Dear Jack Blattner and Liz Wilder,

This letter is in response to the Idaho Wool Growers Association (IWGA)'s comment left on the Federal Register for Docket No. APHIS-2024-0053, "A Survey of Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods." We thank you kindly for your thoughtful comment. Please see our responses:

IWGA appreciates the opportunity to comment on this request for information collection by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). IWGA encourages that commenting be available to producers who have utilized Wildlife Services and nonlethal measures.

- During the 60-day Federal Register Notice period, anyone can submit a comment including livestock producers who have utilized Wildlife Services and nonlethal measures. In addition, there will be a 30-day Federal Register Notice posted sometime in the future to alert the public that this information collection has been submitted to the Office of Management and Budget for approval. When the 30-day Notice is published, the public has 30 calendar days to comment on it.

IWGA is in support of communication relating to only general trends and findings communicated to departments and teams, with no specifics relating to individual producers or operations being shared or disseminated. It is important to the IWGA that risk for bias or retaliatory action be minimized in the effort to encourage livestock producers to openly share feedback within this survey opportunity.

- We will release study results based on summary estimates and results from statistical analyses to protect the privacy of individual respondents. In addition, we will not link survey information with respondents' names or their contact information. All completed questionnaires received will be stored securely in a locked office at the National Wildlife Research Center, a facility with 24-hour security, or on password-protected computers and a secure server accessible only to the Human Dimensions Unit investigators.

One of the biggest deterrents that sheep producers utilize are guard dogs...We would seek the opportunity for these members to provide comment on non-lethal uses.

- Many of those livestock producers whom we plan to sample – i.e., those who received nonlethal assistance from Wildlife Services through a specific congressionally funded initiative – raise sheep and utilize guard dogs to deter large predators. We are confident that we will gain valuable insight from these producers about their perceptions of guard dogs and other nonlethal methods.

Thank you again for the thoughtful feedback.

Sincerely,



Megan M. Cross, PhD
Social Scientist
USDA / APHIS / Wildlife Services
National Wildlife Research Center
4101 Laporte Ave., Fort Collins, CO 80521