

Agencies renew partnership to protect against livestock predators

Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 07 August 2020 04:00



GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. — The Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service-Wildlife Services renewed their partnership for alleviating human-wildlife conflicts on BLM-administered public lands July 29. An updated Memorandum of Understanding clarifies respective roles and responsibilities for wildlife damage management and reducing predation on livestock across more than 245 million acres of public lands, mostly in the West and Alaska. The MOU will remain in effect for five years and replaces the previous agreement, signed in 2012.

“Under the Trump Administration, the BLM has increased access to and recreational opportunities on public lands. Reaffirming our partnership with APHIS-Wildlife Services allows us to take steps to protect the safety and the recreational experience of public land visitors and their pets while helping to ensure abundant wildlife,” BLM Deputy Director for Policy and Programs William Perry Pendley said. “We also recognize the livestock community, as well as those with small children and pets in the urban-rural interface areas, must be protected from attacks by dangerous predators.”

“APHIS-WS and the BLM are federal partners who have collaborated for decades to protect people, livestock, and natural resources on public lands. This newly signed MOU continues and refines that important tradition,” Janet Bucknall, Deputy Administrator for Wildlife Services, said.

“Catron County has a long-standing working relationship with Wildlife Services which provides essential wildlife damage management to our livestock producers as well as our constituents across the county. We applaud the renewed commitment,” Catron County Commissioner Anita A. Hand said. “Living in a rural county with vast wide open spaces negative predator

Agencies renew partnership to protect against livestock predators

Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 07 August 2020 04:00

interactions can be devastating especially for our families with small children. Livestock production is crucial to our economy and the clarification of the respective roles and responsibilities is vital.

“We hope to see this commitment across all public lands throughout our county,” she said.

The MOU recognizes the importance of recreational activities on public lands. Both agencies will carefully evaluate the safety and recreation experiences of public land visitors and their pets prior to undertaking wildlife damage management activities in support of other multiple use management objectives.

Both agencies are committed to ensuring that any wildlife damage management activity on BLM National Conservation Lands will be consistent with the requirements of designating legislation or proclamations and other applicable laws. The BLM will share relevant information for meeting these requirements during its review of APHIS-WS annual plans and will complete a Minimum Requirements Analysis for any activities APHIS-WS proposes to conduct in Wilderness areas.

“With ever increasing predator populations, it is critical that federal land and wildlife management agencies coordinate along with impacted communities to protect people, private property and wildlife like deer and elk,” New Mexico Federal Lands Council President Don L. (Bebo) Lee said.

The BLM and APHIS will continue to coordinate regularly and closely to ensure that wildlife damage management activities are analyzed under the National Environmental Policy Act. APHIS-WS will serve as the lead agency in preparing NEPA analysis of damage-management activities and the BLM as a cooperating agency, except in situations where the BLM specifically requests APHIS-WS assistance in managing wildlife damage on public lands it administers. In these instances, the BLM will serve as lead and APHIS-WS as a cooperating agency. The BLM managers will continue to review APHIS-WS wildlife damage management plans annually and provide information so these plans conform with BLM resource management plans.

APHIS-WS’s mission is to provide federal leadership and expertise to resolve wildlife conflicts to allow people and wildlife to coexist. APHIS-WS is the federal agency with recognized expertise and authority under the Act of March 2, 1931, as amended, and the Act of Dec. 22, 1987, for

Agencies renew partnership to protect against livestock predators

Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 07 August 2020 04:00

providing WDM services, which establish APHIS-WS as the lead agency for wildlife damage management activities.

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land located primarily in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. In fiscal year 2018, the diverse activities authorized on BLM-managed lands generated \$105 billion in economic output across the country. This economic activity supported 471,000 jobs and contributed substantial revenue to the U.S. Treasury and state governments, mostly through royalties on minerals.