



TETON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING

February 18, 2025
4:30 p.m.
First Floor Commissioners' Meeting Room
150 Courthouse Dr, Driggs, ID 83422

Commissioners Present: Michael Whitfield
Brad Wolfe
Ron James

Staff: Dan Reyes, County Manager
Kim Keeley, Clerk
Burkley Rudd

- 1. MEETING CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. SPECIAL TOPICS**

- 1. Joint BoCC/WAC work session to discuss the Wildlife Advisory Committee

Also present:

Wildlife Advisory Committee (WAC) Board Members - Wray Landon, Rene Seidler, Linda Unland, Kathy O'Neill, Mike Lien, Jeff Klausmann

Each Board Member gave a very brief introduction on their area of expertise or interest in the WAC.

Mike Lien - Restoration Director at Friends' of the Teton River, hydrologist with 30 years of water science and restoration experience

Wray Landon - Retired engineer, representing the recreation community

Jeff Klausmann - 30 years experience in wildlife habitat restoration and fisheries habitat restoration

Linda Unland - Environmental education background

Cathy O'Neill, Chair - Retired physician, founder and chair of the Idaho Master Naturalist Program. Worker bee on this committee.

Rene Seidler - Executive Director JH Wildlife Foundation, wildlife biologist of thirty years

Matthew Ward - works for Nature Conservancy, former cattle ranch manager, currently working on forest management.

Commissioner Whitfield gave a history of the creation of the committee. He created an ad-hoc group that was education focused to discuss a wide array of issues around wildlife. The WAC was formed out of that group through a formal resolution by the Board of Commissioners. The County had not updated the Natural Resource Overlay (NRO) as required by State Statute in a timely manner so the Board charged this committee with gathering data and making recommendations.

Commissioner James asked for confirmation that the formation of the Committee was done legally. Commissioner Whitfield confirmed that. Commissioner James commented that he believes that the Committee is important but would like to see the membership re-tooled. He would like to see a focus on wildlife/auto collision mitigation.

Commissioner Wolfe agreed with a lot of what Commissioner James said and commented that the NRO seemed to have expanded a lot and is wondering specifically why.

In response to Commissioner Wolfe, Mr. Klausmann stated that the foundational data for the NRO came from the Fish & Game report that was given to the Committee, as well as data from the Teton Valley Land Trust on Sandhill Cranes. The big change was due to the wealth of new information that the updated F&G report provided. He further explained that the purpose of the NRO is to identify the most likely places where there will be conflict based on the data.

The group briefly discussed the second SS4A grant (\$250,000) that will create a plan to mitigate wildlife collisions. The agreement has not been signed and it is unclear if the grant will be funded with the new Federal Administration. The WAC is working on a system to collect data on the location of wildlife collision hotspots through an informal survey system. The group discussed potential short term efforts including wildlife crossing signs.

The Board expressed interest in continuing the planning process for mitigating wildlife collisions.

MOVER: Michael Whitfield

SECONDER: Ron James

Adjourn the meeting.

AYES (3): Michael Whitfield, Brad Wolfe, and Ron James

Adopted (3 to 0)

3. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourn the meeting.

Cindy Riegel, Chairperson

County Clerk or Deputy