

Jaguar Conservation Team (JAGCT) Final Summary Notes
Cowbelle's Hall, Douglas, Arizona
October 15, 1997

Introduction

Meeting called to order by Bill Van Pelt, Arizona Game and Fish Department at 9:10 am, Arizona time. Bill welcomed everyone and asked each person to introduce themselves and the organization they represented.

A. Opening comments and ground rules

Ground rules were the same as at the second meeting. Anyone with a question was asked to raise their hand to ask their question or state an opinion. This would allow each person to be heard and keep the meeting moving through the agenda.

Sign-in sheets were circulated. People were asked to sign in if they were not on the jaguar mailing list or if there had been a change of address. Phone numbers were not necessary.

We agreed to take a census at 11:45 a.m. to see if a lunch break should be taken.

Packets of information were handed out. There were 50 copies available and attendance was approximately 53. People shared copies.

There were no further comments or questions, and we moved on to Item B.

B. Agenda Review/Additional Discussion Points

Bill read through the agenda and asked for additions for Other Business.

Bill asked for two items to be added to the agenda. Items added to the Other Business portion of the agenda:

1. An update from Raul Valdez on activities in Mexico.
2. A review of tasks to be completed under the conservation agreement.

There were no further comments or questions, and we moved onto Item C.

C. Discussion of summary notes from second JAGCT meeting

A brief discussion of summary notes from second JAGCT meeting took place. Participants wanted to know why the letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) from the Conservation Chair was not included in the final summary notes for July. Bill explained that discussions regarding the changes in the Conservation Agreement initially occurred over the phone. Then the USFWS sent a letter on August 12. Discussion of the letter was the next agenda item.

There were no further comments or questions, and we moved on to Item D.

D. Discussion of changing the definition of "Take" in the Conservation Agreement to match the Final Rule

The USFWS letter requesting the modification of the Conservation Agreement was distributed with the meeting packet. Bruce Palmer and Steve Spangle of USFWS were in attendance to present the USFWS request and to answer questions.

Steve Spangle explained the reason for the request to change the Conservation Agreement was due to the fact the final rule clearly defines "take" for the species. Because the definition is vested in the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and is therefore the law, people need to recognize the legal definition. This would include having a permit to handle or to do "hands on" research on the jaguar. The USFWS considered "Similarity of Appearance" under the ESA but deemed it inappropriate.

The USFWS views the purpose of the agreement as a way to conserve the jaguar, and minimize the impacts of those actions to the local communities. It is more efficient to follow the process that was started by the states. One of the goals of the agreement was to preclude listing, but another was to start the recovery process. Because the USFWS said in the final rule they wanted to work with the JAGCT, members have a direct avenue for providing local input, which will serve to balance the impacts of listing with community needs. At the same time information on the jaguar itself can be collected. The process is moving faster than it ever could using the recovery process alone. The USFWS wants to work with the process, but they have to do so under the definition of the law. By amending the agreement, and recognizing the definition outlined in the final rule, the USFWS would be able to sign the agreement. The floor was then opened for discussion.

Participants voiced their displeasure at not having seen the letter prior to the meeting. Some participants represented cooperating entities and did not have the authority to make a decision on changing the definition of take within the Conservation Agreement. They needed to discuss it with their constituents.

Participants were told that they were not expected to make a decision today regarding the proposed change. The proposed change would be discussed and the participants were to take the information provided at the meeting and present it to the entity they representing.

Participants requested the exact wording of the proposed changes. Bill said he would send the proposed changes with the draft summary notes. This would give cooperating entities time to review the proposed changes and submit their response to the JAGCT within 30 days of receiving the

information.

It was stressed that the JAGCT would strive toward consensus on this issue.

There were no further comments or questions, we took a 10-minute break, and moved on to Item E.1 when we reconvened.

E.1. Compilation of Jaguar Bibliography

Bill Van Pelt reviewed the bibliography with the group. He informed participants that the information in the bibliography was gathered from the state universities and everybody had access to the references. However, due to copyright laws, AGFD would not copy papers to send out.

Bill reminded participants the reason for literature collection was to try to identify potential jaguar habitat and use patterns, and to develop range-wide habitat suitability recommendations. Land management agencies could use this information for assessments on current land uses and their compatibility with jaguar conservation.

Mike Pruss was nominated as the task committees lead to begin reviewing the literature and to come up with guidelines to be used by land managers. Participants were told to contact Mike if they wanted to be included on the Committee.

There were no further comments or questions, and we moved on to Item E.2.

E.2. Contacting experts for Scientific Advisory Group

Participants were informed that Terry was drafting a letter to send to potential members of the Scientific Advisory Group. Copies of the letter were included in the draft summary notes.

There were no further comments or questions, and we moved on to Item E.3.

E.3. Ranking system for jaguar sightings

Bill Van Pelt received one comment on the ranking system for jaguar sightings and incorporated it into the document. This ranking system would be incorporated along with the depredation and compensation information into one booklet, which would assist in standardization of data collection.

There were no further comments or questions, and we moved on to Item E.4.

E.4. Jaguar occurrence map

Bill Van Pelt explained what information was used to develop the map and the interpretation of the

data points. Greg Schmitt compiled occurrences for New Mexico and passed out copies of his document. He emphasized that it was a draft and he is striving to produce a map similar to that for Arizona.

A participant was concerned about whether the "Prock" jaguars were used in the occurrence map. Prock was an individual who had imported jaguars into Arizona for canned hunts. Bill stated the questionable "Prock" jaguars were not used in making the map.

There were no further comments or questions, and we moved on to Item E.5.

E.5. Kill verification procedures

Wendy Glenn reviewed the list of names provided in the packet as individuals who could be contacted for the verification of a jaguar kill. She emphasized the importance of following up on the sighting as soon as possible. Matt Colvin stressed the importance of standardization of data collection in investigating a kill.

A participant recommended including a veterinarian and the local brand inspector on kill verifications. Another participant recommended contacting the University of Montana since they are working on wolf kill verifications.

There were no further comments or questions, and we moved on to Item E.6.

E.6. Handling protocol

Mike Pruss received a few comments on the handling protocol and incorporated them into the document. As with the ranking system for sightings, this information will eventually be incorporated into a booklet for distribution.

There were no further comments or questions, and we moved on to Item F.

E.7. Increasing legal protection in Arizona

Bill once again summarized activities in Arizona to increase legal protection for jaguars through Title 17. Greg Schmitt had nothing new to add for New Mexico. A discussion on the reason for increasing protection occurred. Increased state protection would assist with eventual de-listing of the jaguar. One of the reasons the jaguar was listed was the lack of penalties deterring illegal take. By increasing state penalties to the same as the federal level, illegal take should be deterred.

There were no further comments or questions, and we moved on to Item E.8.

E.8. Educational material activities

Sue Krentz handed out a draft list of materials, which could be used for developing an educational packet. A discussion followed about only listing facts in any educational material for distribution so that interpretation would be left up to the individual reader. Sue voiced her concern about the lack of participation in this committee, at which time additional people volunteered to help.

There were no further comments or questions, and we moved on to Item F.

F. World Wide Web Page

AGFD jaguar page is under construction. Other entities with jaguar pages were asked to send the address of their location so they could be included in the AGFD jaguar page.

There were no further comments or questions, we moved on to Item G.

G. Other Business

Bill Van Pelt read an update from Raul Valdez. Raul is initiating fieldwork in two areas in Sonora. He has secured funding from USFWS and the National Park Service. At least three researchers will be working with Raul in Mexico. It was recommended to contact Alberto Lafon and Jamie Gonzalez about jaguar sightings in Mexico. Craig Miller was asked to provide the information so they could be contacted.

Participants wanted to know when work would begin on the U.S. side. Bill told the participant that there is no work planned at this time. Mexico has the source population of jaguars and we need to see what is happening there. We may have to use the information collected in Mexico for decisions in the United States.

The next Jaguar meeting will be on January 22, 1998 in Animas, New Mexico at 9:00 a.m. Meetings will continue quarterly until the JAGCT deems it unnecessary.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 Arizona time. Bill Van Pelt showed slides taken with the remote sensing cameras in the Peloncillo Mountains. There were approximately 53 people in attendance.

Attendance Roster

Greg Schmitt	New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
Bill Van Pelt	Arizona Game and Fish Department
Bruce Palmer	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Lynn Saline	Bureau of Land Management, Safford
Gilbert Reeves	PFW, Southeast AZ Chapter
Les Thompson	Cochise County
Jack Childs	Depredation Subcommittee
Matt Colvin	Depredation Subcommittee
Gabriel Paz	Arizona Game and Fish Department
Mike Pruss	Arizona Game and Fish Department
Gary Helbing	U.S. Forest Service
John Cook	The Nature Conservancy
Wendy Glenn	Rancher/Hunter/Malpai Borderlands Group
Larry Allen	U.S. Forest Service
Terry Frederick	Arizona Game and Fish Department
Michael Smith	Bureau of Indian Affairs
Bennett A. (Ben) Brown	Gray Ranch/Animas Foundation
Don Cullum	Rancher
Larry Rutherford	Hidalgo County
Craig Miller	Defenders of Wildlife
Jeff Williamson	The Phoenix Zoo
Sue Krentz	Rancher/AZ State Cowbelles
Judy Keeler	Bootheel Association
Walt Saenger	Chiricahua National Monument
Natalie Runyan	New Mexico State Land Office
Chas Erickson	Arizona Cattle Growers
Lee A. Benson	National Park Service
Steve Spangle	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Paul W. Pirtle	New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
Rod Mondt	Wildlands Project
Mira Gault	Rancher
Ron Bemis	NRCS Douglas
Dennis Manning	Arizona Game and Fish Commission
Jim Gacey	Bureau of land Management
Mary Darling	Darling Environmental Surveying LTD
Carl Edminster	USFS Rocky Mtn. Research Station
Anna Magoffin	Rancher/Malpai Borderlands Group
Gloria Fauss	The Nature Conservancy
Cynthia Westfall	White Mtn. Apache Tribe
Dan Huff	National Park Service
Bill Moore	New Mexico Department of Agriculture
Ted Hagen	New Mexico Cattle Growers

Gail Griffin
Cordy Cowan
Nancy Zeirensberg
Jerome Pratt
Harry R. Woodward
Peter Friederici

Arizona State Representative
Cloverdale Cattle Co.
Wildlife Damage Review
Arizona Wildlife Federation
Cochise Conservation Council
Arizona Game and Fish Department

Attachment

Proposed amendment to the Jaguar Conservation Agreement

1. It is recognized by the members of the Jaguar Conservation Team, that due to the listing of the jaguar as endangered on July 22, 1997 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the working definition for "take" within the Conservation Agreement does not supersede the federal definition as described in the final rule. Any actions regarding "take" must comply with the definition outlined within the final rule.

2. To address inadequate penalties for take of a non-listed jaguar in the United States, the Service considered listing the jaguar under the "Similarity of Appearance" provision of the Endangered Species Act. This provision affords protection to a species only from take, based on an inability to distinguish the non-listed species from a similar listed entity (species or population). The Act's civil and criminal penalties would apply in the United States for take of jaguars of unknown origin and those known to be from Mexico (a previously fully listed population). However, those penalties would not apply to jaguars which were known to be taken from within the United States. Consequently, the Service deemed "Similarity of Appearance" in appropriate and pursued listing the jaguar as fully endangered.