

Hunter Stakeholder Group

Community Background

The setting is a large town of 10,000 people in a Central Idaho valley that has been expanding rapidly in recent years. Along the valley bottom, ranchers and farmers make a living much as their families have done for generations. Surrounding the town, in the mountains, there is ample National Forest land that provides for ever-popular elk hunting, seasonal grazing and even attracts tourists from nearby states for winter recreation, sport hunting and wildlife viewing. Given the quaint small town feel and easy access to the mountains, the town has seen a recent influx of out-of-staters moving in more permanently. Over the past few years the wolf population has also increased exponentially both in and around the town. Tensions are running high as different people have opposing views about what to do regarding wolves.

Stakeholder: Hunter

I've been hunting elk in northern Idaho for the past thirty years. When I first started hunting, I would get an elk every year. Every couple of years I would even get a nice-sized bull. Each of my buddies from out-of-state paid over \$800 a year for their tag and license. That may seem like a lot of money, but, in those days, a good hunter could pretty much count on getting an animal. That was all before the Canadian wolves were introduced into Idaho. You should see what those wolves are doing to the elk population! Every year it is harder to get your elk. Population numbers are so low that out-of-state hunters are buying fewer tags, costing the state of Idaho valuable revenue. We need to start hunting wolves and protecting the elk. Wolves are generally bad for the local economy. I went to school with a rancher and he is always telling us stories about how the wolves are killing off his cattle. Of course the environmentalists in Boise and D.C. love the wolves and think that they are a natural part of the forests. However, those folks don't have to live with the wolves.



Videos to Watch Before Class

General overview: <http://youtu.be/mm5xKa9qNwU>

Hunter point-of-view: <http://youtu.be/BuUeK1kPnHE>

Questions

1. What are the major issues—economic, safety, animal rights, civil rights—for hunters as a group? What are your most important priorities?
2. Taking all factors into consideration, what, in your opinions, is the best management plan for the gray wolf population?
3. How would you advise and help guide the thinking of California's officials when wolves inevitably get established in that state?

Rancher Stakeholder Group

Community Background

The setting is a large town of 10,000 people in a Central Idaho valley that has been expanding rapidly in recent years. Along the valley bottom, ranchers and farmers make a living much as their families have done for generations. Surrounding the town, in the mountains, there is ample National Forest land that provides for ever-popular elk hunting, seasonal grazing and even attracts tourists from nearby states for winter recreation, sport hunting and wildlife viewing. Given the quaint small town feel and easy access to the mountains, the town has seen a recent influx of out-of-staters moving in more permanently. Over the past few years the wolf population has also increased exponentially both in and around the town. Tensions are running high as different people have opposing views about what to do regarding wolves.

Stakeholder: Rancher

I'm a third generation rancher in Idaho. My family has successfully raised cattle on private and National Forest Service land for fifty-three years. Our ranch feeds people, creates jobs, and stimulates the local economy. These days are hard economic times and the wolf problem just makes life more difficult. We invest a lot of money into each cow and are finding more and more dead, wolf-maimed carcasses on our grazing allotment. Some packs get a taste for cattle and start preying almost exclusively on farm animals. We get reimbursed for some of the "depredation" but we have to prove that the death was wolf-caused and reimbursement takes time. The damage from these large Canadian timber wolves goes beyond ranching—hunters and the hunting-based economy are hurt too. Idaho simply can't afford to have such a large wolf population. Of course, environmentalists love the wolves and think that wolves belong in Idaho, but they don't have to live with wolves.



Videos to Watch Before Class

General overview: <http://youtu.be/mm5xKa9qNwU>

Rancher point-of-view: <http://youtu.be/csJyKq34a9w>

Questions

1. What are the major issues—economic, safety, animal rights, civil rights—for ranchers as a group? What are your most important priorities?
2. Taking all factors into consideration, what, in your opinions, is the best management plan for the gray wolf population?
3. How would you advise and help guide the thinking of California's officials when wolves inevitably get established in that state?

Environmental Enthusiast Stakeholder Group

Community Background

The setting is a large town of 10,000 people in a Central Idaho valley that has been expanding rapidly in recent years. Along the valley bottom, ranchers and farmers make a living much as their families have done for generations. Surrounding the town, in the mountains, there is ample National Forest land that provides for ever-popular elk hunting, seasonal grazing and even attracts tourists from nearby states for winter recreation, sport hunting and wildlife viewing. Given the quaint small town feel and easy access to the mountains, the town has seen a recent influx of out-of-staters moving in more permanently. Over the past few years the wolf population has also increased exponentially both in and around the town. Tensions are running high as different people have opposing views about what to do regarding wolves.

Stakeholder: Environmental Enthusiast

As an avid hiker and backpacker, I am thrilled to have wolves back in the state of Idaho. Wolves are a natural part of the ecosystem and deserve to be here as much as, or more than, us. These majestic animals are a symbol of the American wilderness and need to be protected. There are no historical records of wolves harming people in the United States. In fact, wolves help people by stimulating the local economy through ecotourism. Elk populations are unnaturally high, causing over-browsing of vegetation and changes in the ecosystem. Wolves lower elk and other prey numbers to a natural state, and there is evidence that they strengthen elk herds—why would they want to decimate their prey base altogether? Some hunters say that wolves make hunting too difficult, but I say that hunting has been unnaturally easy. Ranchers complain about wolf depredation, however, non-profit organizations and the government reimburse ranchers for farm animals that are killed, and I know some ranchers that are finding ways to live sustainably with wolves.



Videos to Watch Before Class

General overview: <http://youtu.be/mm5xKa9qNwU>

Environmental Enthusiast point-of-view: <http://youtu.be/qK1mZ4fL6Pk>

Questions

1. What are the major issues—economic, safety, animal rights, civil rights—for environmental enthusiasts as a group? What are your most important priorities?
2. Taking all factors into consideration, what, in your opinion, is the best management plan for the gray wolf population?
3. How would you advise and help guide the thinking of California's officials when wolves inevitably get established in that state?