

WILDLIFE COMMITTEE

May 30, 2025

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

NOTES:

Attendees:

Joy O'Keefe
Mike Eichholz
Scott Meister
Liza Leher
Katie Baughman
John Lough

Welcome from Joy.

Key things to be covered today:

How to move forward on suggestions to the state.

Mike's bullet point comments, the committee's view. Add that this is a significant issue that has not received enough attention, efforts to fill in gaps in knowledge would be helpful with this issue.

Joy's illustration should be included.

Damage Potential – it is hard to put a value number on this because it is not clear what the cat population is. John – there are benefits and drawbacks (more drawbacks than benefits) but it is hard to know without better data.

Trap and Release: Should we include information on current efforts? At least point out that trap and release programs exist and the population continues to exist on the landscape.

Economic Impact:

Is it important to state that there is a diversion of resources (food and time) to care for these invasive animals? Is it a change to cultural practice? Would time be better spent supporting desirable species? Maybe we put in a comment about this.

Environmental Impact:

A new threatened and endangered species list has not been approved yet. Katie will put a note about species determinations that might change.

Score: Risk is high but ability to control it is limited hence the reason for the score. (Put under Conclusion and Rating Justification)

Uncertainty text:

Options for controlling species are not great.
Strong need for education.

Recommendations:

Information on management options, costs and effectiveness.

Challenges - people releasing cats for rodent control, etc.

There needs to be better education as to the impacts these actions cause.

A survey would help to get a better understanding of why people release their cats, motivations, etc. This information would make the education more effective.

Need collaboration with social scientists to understand people's motivation and who should be included in a survey.

A research study would be recommended.

The committee would recommend an educational effort based on the outcomes of the survey.

Need a cultural shift.

We should look at other state's programs and actions they take.

Assignments:

1. Mike to complete and refine his text.
2. Joy to add a sentence about how there are missed opportunities in the Economic section.
3. Katie to add some symbology for the Environment section for species to be delisted.
4. Joy to clean up the text in Uncertainty. What other states are doing, etc.
5. Joy to add text to conclusion and rating recommendations and why.
6. Liza to add text under Uncertainty.
7. Joy to add text regarding the need for education.
8. Everyone to take a look at their citations to make sure they are complete.
9. Scott will review the references to make sure they are correct and complete.