

Two-Thirds of Idaho Wolf Carcasses Examined Have Thousands of Hydatid Disease Tapeworms

By George Dovel



Hydatid cysts infect lungs, liver, and other internal organs of big game animals. Michigan DNR Wildlife Disease Lab photo.



Hydatid cysts infecting moose or caribou lungs. Photo courtesy of NW Territories Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

My first *Outdoorsman* article on hydatid disease caused by the tiny *Echinococcus granulosus* tapeworm was published nearly 40 years ago. Back then we had many readers in Alaska and northern Canada where the cysts were present in moose and caribou and my article included statistics on the number of reported human deaths from these cysts over a 50-year period, and the decline in deaths once outdoorsmen learned what precautions were necessary to prevent humans from being infected.

In Alaska alone, over 300 cases of hydatid disease in humans had been reported since 1950 as a result of canids (dog family), primarily wolves, contaminating the landscape with billions of *E. granulosus* eggs in their feces (called “scat” by biologists). These invisible eggs are ingested by grazing animals, both wild and domestic, and occasionally by humans who release clouds of the eggs into the air by kicking the scat or picking it up to see what the wolf had been eating.

As with many other parasites, the eggs are very hardy and reportedly exist in extremes of weather for long periods, virtually blanketing patches of habitat where some are swallowed or inhaled. As Dr. Valerius Geist explained

in his Feb-Mar 2006 *Outdoorsman* article entitled *Information for Outdoorsmen in Areas Where Wolves Have Become Common*, “(once they are ingested by animals or humans) the larvae move into major capillary beds – liver, lung, brain – where they develop into large cysts full of tiny tapeworm heads.”

He continued, “These cysts can kill infected persons unless they are diagnosed and removed surgically. It consequently behooves us (a) to insure that this disease does not become widespread, and (b) that hunters and other outdoorsmen know that wolf scats and coyote scats should never be touched or kicked.”

Dr. Geist’s article also warned, “If we generate dense wolf populations it is inevitable that such lethal diseases as Hydatid disease become established.” Because wolves and other canines perpetuate the disease by eating the organs of animals containing the cysts, and the tapeworms live and lay millions of eggs in their lower intestines, the logical way to insure the disease did not develop was not to import Canadian wolves that were already infected with the parasites.

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Hydatid Disease – *continued from page 1*

Despite Warnings From Experts, FWS and IDFG Ignored Diseases, Parasites Spread by Wolves

This was common knowledge among wildlife biologists in northern Canada and in Alaska where FWS biologist Ed Bangs was stationed prior to being assigned to head the Northern Rocky Mountain Wolf Recovery Team. Yet in the July 1993 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) provided to the public, Bangs chose not to evaluate the impact of wolf recovery on diseases and parasites (1993 DEIS page 1-17).

This alarmed a number of experts on pathogens and parasites, including Will Graves who began his career working to eradicate foot and mouth disease in Mexico. As an interpreter who conducted research of Russian wolf impacts on wildlife, livestock and humans for several decades, Graves provided Bangs with information that wolves in Russia carry 50 types of worms and parasites, including *Echinococcosis* and others with various degrees of danger to both animals and humans.

In his Oct. 3, 1993 written testimony to Bangs, Graves also cited the results of a 10-year Russian control study in which failure to kill almost all of the wolves by each spring resulted in up to 100% parasite infection rate of moose and wild boar with an infection incidence of up to 30-40 per animal. This compared to a 31% infection rate with an incidence of only 3-5 per animal where wolves were nearly eliminated each winter.

Graves' letter emphasized that despite the existence of foxes, raccoons and domestic dogs, wolves were always the basic source of parasite infections in moose and boar. He also emphasized the toll this would take on livestock producers and, along with other expert respondents, requested a detailed study on the potential impact wolves would have in regard to carrying, harboring and spreading disease.

In the final 414-page Gray Wolf EIS (FEIS) dated April 14, 1994, only a third of a page addresses "Diseases and Parasites to and from Wolves" (Chapter 5 Page 55). It states: "Most respondents who commented on this issue expressed concern about diseases and parasites introduced wolves could transfer to other animals in recovery areas."

Bangs' response states, "Wolves will be given vaccinations when they are handled to reduce the chances of them catching diseases from coyotes and other canids. Then Bangs stated, "Wolves will not significantly increase the transmission of rabies and other diseases," yet offered nothing to substantiate his false claim.

FWS Implies Graves' Facts are Only His Opinion

In "Appendices" Page 59, Bangs included a letter from FWS NRM Wolf Recovery Coordinator Steve Fritts to a Russian biology professor (also a member of the IUCN Wolf Specialist Group) asking him whether he thought the information in Mr. Graves' letter is correct. On Page 60, that professor and another "IUCN Wolf

Specialist" responded that Graves' information "represents the opinion of only one side in (a) long and highly speculative discussion of (the) wolf role in Russia."

The two Russian wolf advocates failed to refute anything in Will Graves' testimony yet the inference that his research was speculative rather than factual was apparently the only excuse Bangs used for his failure to heed Graves' warnings. A dozen years earlier Bangs was the lead author of a Kenai Peninsula research report in which he similarly denied the impact of wolf predation on Alaska moose populations.

As Dr. Geist has pointed out, the existence of hydatid disease (and other unique parasites and diseases in wild mammals and fish that some of us are not used to) is a fact of life that you learn to live with in the north country – or in many other places you choose to live or visit. The wildlife management agencies in Alaska and many of the Canadian provinces provide field guides explaining how to protect yourself and your animals from unique wildlife diseases and parasites you may encounter.

But although Idaho has the most wilderness in the lower 48 states, it has 15 times as many people per square mile as Alaska, countless more pets and domestic animals and 150 times as many cattle. Any of these creatures found in areas where wolves traveled at some time of the year are at risk of becoming infected with the cysts – or if dogs – becoming carriers of the worms and distributors of the eggs which infect other animals and humans with hydatid disease.

The highly touted testing of blood and fecal samples from live-trapped deer, elk, etc. does not reveal the existence of hydatid cysts, yet that was the only reported testing performed for 10-1/2 years after the first wolves were released in central Idaho and Yellowstone Park. In a January 2005 *Outdoorsman* article, I provided a photo of hydatid cysts in moose lungs, described the disease, and suggested legislators would benefit from the type of information provided by Alaska and Canada.

IDFG Officially Discovered Hydatid Disease in 2005-06

In mid 2005, state wildlife health officials in Idaho began conducting necropsies (post mortem examinations) of many wildlife species. As in Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin, they found a number of the primary big game species they tested were infected with hydatid cysts – but only the Great Lakes wildlife agencies reported that fact to the public.

As a matter of fact, by the time Dr. Geist's warning about hydatid cysts appeared in the Feb-Mar 2006 *Outdoorsman*, I also published Minnesota's finding that wolves were infecting livestock pastures and moose habitat with *Neospora caninum*, the parasite that causes abortions in cattle and moose and other members of the deer family. The upper left photo of hydatid cysts on the first page of this article was copied from information provided to its citizens by the Michigan DNR.

It is reasonable to assume that Michigan DNR's publication of warnings to use protective gear when handling wolf scat and wolf carcasses and not let your dog eat internal organs from deer, moose, etc. may have saved a significant number of hunters and/or their children from becoming infected with hydatid disease.

It is also reasonable to assume that Idaho Fish and Game's failure to publish similar warnings during the four hunting seasons that have come and gone since the disease was officially discovered in Idaho may have allowed a significant number of Idaho hunters and/or their children to become infected with hydatid disease.

On December 13, 2009 in *Idaho Hunting Today* and other *Black Bear Blog* websites, Tom Remington first revealed the results of the Washington laboratory checking Idaho and Montana wolf intestines for *E. granulosus* tapeworms. Mr. Remington was probably not aware of the 10-page September 2006 IDFG Wildlife Health Laboratory (WHL) Report which included only the following sentence about IDFG's discovery of hydatid disease in mule deer, elk and a mountain goat during necropsy (post mortem) examinations of various species:

"In addition, 1 mountain goat and several mule deer and elk were found to have hydatid cysts in the lungs (*Echinococcus granulosus*), likely with wolves as the definitive host of this previously unrecognized parasite in the state."

The report states: "Wolf necropsies indicated the presence of lice," but makes no mention of finding *E. granulosus* eggs in the wolf feces or adult worms in the wolf intestines. It also mentions examining fecal samples from 10 live wolves that were captured but again there is no mention of the existence of the eggs which resulted in the deer, elk and a goat being infected with hydatid disease.

The report, published by IDFG Director Steve Huffaker, was signed by IDFG Veterinarians Mark Drew and Phil Mamer and approved by IDFG Wildlife Program Coordinator Dale Toweill and IDFG Wildlife Bureau Chief (now Deputy Director) Jim Unsworth.

Yet the September 2007 WHL Report published by new IDFG Director Cal Groen and signed by the same four IDFG officials states:

"Wolf necropsies indicated the continued presence of lice (*Trichodectes canis*) and tape worm (*Echinococcus*), previously detected last year in Idaho. Wolves are most likely the definitive host of this previously unrecognized parasite in the state". (emphasis added)

In other words this 2007 Report admitted the worms were discovered in wolves in 2005-2006 but failed to mention the hydatid cysts that were also discovered in

mule deer, elk and the mountain goat. The 2008 IDFG WHL Report contained exactly the same sentence about tapeworms in wolves as the 2007 report but again failed to mention the diseased deer and elk.

To most of us the announcement of one more tapeworm found in a canine, especially a tiny one whose name we can neither pronounce nor remember, hardly merits a second glance. But when that worm is a new biotype that has never been reported south of the U.S.-Canadian border, is already infecting deer and elk with a disease known to range from benign to debilitating to occasionally fatal in humans, and is obviously being spread by wolves across thousands of square miles, that would raise red flags of concern in most intelligent people.

Most legislators and F&G Commissioners who received a copy of the September 2006 WHL Report that actually mentioned the hydatid cysts being found in deer and elk, did not find the word "disease" and had no clue what the presence of the cysts implied. It was the F&G Department's responsibility to explain the parasite's life cycle and provide the public with precautions that should be taken when skinning or handling wolves or their pelts.



I regularly receive emails with photos like this from successful wolf hunters in Idaho who are "hugging" (posing with) the animals without wearing disposable gloves and face masks to prevent the threat of infection from touching the pelt with bare hands.

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Hydatid Disease – continued from page 3

Funding of the activities reported in the WHL Annual Reports discussed earlier is part hunter and fisherman license funds and part P-R and D-J federal excise taxes paid by those same hunters and fishermen. The projects are approved and the federal funds administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) – the same agency that shares responsibility with IDFG for introducing the non-native wolves and their non-native parasites and diseases.

If Fish and Game officials had told the media, Idaho citizens and their legislators the truth about the spread of hydatid disease by excessive numbers of wolves when they first knew of its existence, the public outcry would almost certainly have prevented managing for up to five times as many wolves as was agreed upon.

In 2008 when IDFG Director Groen and Idaho Fish and Game Commissioner Gary Power informed the Legislature of their intention not to reduce the number of wolves in Idaho, both had known about the rapid spread of *E. granulosus* in wolves and the resulting spread of hydatid disease in elk and deer for several years. In fact, in August of 2006, IDFG Veterinarian Mark Drew made a presentation to the Wildlife Disease Association Annual Meeting at the University of Connecticut titled “Possible introduction of parasites with wolves in Idaho.”

ID, MT F&G Ignored Responsibility to Warn Public

Instead of fulfilling their responsibility to see that hunters and ranchers in Idaho and Montana received instruction on how to protect themselves from becoming infected, from 2006-2008 Drew and two of his counterparts from Montana participated in the evaluation of the lower intestines of 123 more wolves from Idaho and Montana. This is the study reported by Tom Remington on Dec. 13, 2009, in which 62% of Idaho wolves and 63% of Montana wolves contained *E. granulosus* tapeworms, and 71% of all the wolves tested contained *Taenia sp.*, also predicted by Will Graves.

The study report says: “The detection of thousands of tapeworms per wolf was a common finding,” and also said: “Based on our results, the parasite is now well established in wolves in these states and is documented in elk, mule deer, and a mountain goat as intermediate hosts.” Of the wolves that contained *E. granulosus*, more than half contained more than 1,000 worms per wolf.

To put that in perspective, if each tapeworm can produce up to 1,000 eggs every 10 days for two years as is reported, 1,000 wolves with 1,000 tapeworms each are capable of spreading up to 73 billion eggs over the landscape in two years! The study provided a map of wolf locations indicating that areas with the highest known wolf density also have the highest percent of infected wolves (exactly as predicted by Dr. Geist).

The study reported that the prevalence of *E. granulosus* tapeworms in wolves in Canada, Alaska and

Minnesota varied from 14% to 72% and said the 63% rate found in Idaho and Montana was comparable. But if one subtracts the strip across southern Idaho where few wolves exist and only two that were tested had the parasite, the prevalence of tapeworms in the areas with higher wolf densities was almost 90 percent!

During the past 20 years, medical case histories suggest that the course of the northern (sylvatic) strain of Hydatid Disease where wolves infect wild cervids (deer, elk, moose, etc.) is *normally* less severe on most humans than the domestic (pastoral) strain where dogs infect domestic sheep and other ruminants. The authors of the wolf parasite study used this information to try to downplay the potential impact of hydatid disease transmitted by wolves to humans in Idaho and Montana.

They also included the following statement to create the false impression that there is limited chance of Idaho and Montana residents becoming infected: “Most human cases of hydatid disease have been detected in indigenous peoples who hunt wild cervids or are reindeer herders with dogs.” At least part of that statement is accurate because most of the people who live in isolated areas and are more exposed are either Indians or Eskimos.

But they neglect to mention that several hundred thousand people in Idaho and Montana also hunt wild cervids and thousands more work or recreate where wolves have contaminated the land and drinking water with the parasite eggs. Unless the cysts are formed in the brain, heart, spleen or kidneys, infected people may carry them undetected for years, while they slowly grow larger until they eventually create severe problems or death.

Because the death of most people from so-called natural causes is attributed to heart failure, etc., without an autopsy being performed, the actual number of deaths resulting from hydatid disease remains a matter of speculation. Case histories reveal that detection of hydatid disease in living humans often occurs as a result of a CT Scan or Ultrasound performed for another reason.

Dr. Geist’s reply to the lack of concern expressed for humans who will become infected was, “It’s nothing to fool around with. Getting an *Echinococcus* cyst of any kind is no laughing matter as it can grow not only on the liver or the lungs, but also in the brain. And then it’s fatal.”

He also asked if another parasite, *E. multilocularis*, found in Alberta wolves, also exists in the transplanted wolves in Idaho and Montana. “(It’s) much more virulent than *Echinococcus granulosus* of any strain, we cannot encapsulate this cyst, and it grows and buds off like a cancer infecting different parts of the body incessantly.”

(NOTE: Three separate studies conducted over a 10-year period in Minnesota concluded that 87% of moose mortality is related to parasites and infectious diseases. The insanity of pretending to restore “healthy” ecosystems by allowing uncontrolled large carnivores to spread parasites and diseases is becoming painfully obvious – ED)

Who Controls Your State's Fish and Game Management Agency?

By George Dovel

(NOTE: A few days before the last *Outdoorsman* issue was printed and mailed, I received an email from an Idaho outfitter asking several reasonable questions that, in my opinion, deserve answers. Although I received permission to print the entire letter, I have deleted part of the greeting, the final paragraph and the signature to help prevent identification by state or federal agencies that regulate outfitter operations. – ED)

Mr. Dovel:

We had a good hunting season. Unfortunately for the ranchers in my area, their calf survival and cow survival was not good.

Instead of finding dead cow elk in the mountains I found numerous cattle carcasses surrounded by wolf tracks. And on a daily basis the cattle in the area would not graze but would bunch in groups by the gate and just bawl. Most of the cows didn't have calves with them as well. How sad!

Since you know about the Fish and Game so much I wanted to ask you a few things. Who or What in Idaho controls the Fish and Game?

I get a little confused when we have an Idaho law from 2002 that states Idaho accepts approximately 150 wolves and then Mr. Groen comes out and says 500 to 750 wolves are what we want. Since I thought that the state of Idaho owns the wildlife and Fish and Game manage the wildlife doesn't that mean someone in office tells the fish and game what to do?

So, who in office told the Fish and Game to ignore the 2002 law and say we want 500 to 750 wolves now in Idaho? Or am I missing something? Or are the Fish and Game a rogue unity in Idaho and they do as they please?

If there is someone in office who tells the Fish and Game to ignore Idaho Law shouldn't that someone be held accountable for his or her actions? Just how deep does the cover up go?

Name on file

Who Wrote The 2008 IDFG Wolf Plan?

In his May 14, 2008 Declaration "Under Penalty of Perjury" to the U.S. District Court in Montana, IDFG Large Carnivore Coordinator Steve Nadeau wrote. "I was the primary author of the IDFG Wolf Population Management Plan (2008)" (also stated in the Plan page iv)

Who Approved the Increased Wolf Populations?

In his Declaration to Judge Molloy's Court Nadeau also wrote, "IDFG's target wolf population of 518-732 wolves is five to seven times higher than the recovery levels established by the United States Fish and Wildlife

Service. The determination to maintain a higher number of wolves than required by FWS was a discretionary decision by IDFG." (emphasis added)

In other words, this change in both Idaho Wildlife Policy and Idaho Wolf Policy was made by the Idaho Fish & Game Director and approved by the Idaho F&G Commission in direct violation of laws that were enacted to prevent that very thing from happening. But it appears that one or more legal advisors, who do not hold an elected office, may have suggested increasing the minimum.

The First and Most important of These Laws

In 1937 the citizens of Idaho created the Fish and Game Commission and spelled out its limited authority and duties in order to qualify for Idaho's share of "Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act" (P-R) dollars. The Citizen Initiative established Idaho Wildlife Policy – all wildlife within the state is the property of the state and shall be preserved, protected, perpetuated and managed to provide continued supplies for hunting fishing and trapping by Idaho citizens, and as by law permitted to others.

This law was enacted as Idaho Code Sec. 36-103 and has weathered most efforts by activists in the Department to change its intent in recent years. After some urging from me in the mid-1990s, IDFG began publishing subparagraph (a) of 36-103 (about preserving, protecting and managing) but generally ignored subparagraph (b) which spells out its duty and prohibits it from making any policy decisions as follows:

"...because it is inconvenient and impractical for the legislature of the state of Idaho to administer such policy, it shall be the authority, power and duty of the fish and game commission to administer and carry out the policy of the state in accordance with the provisions of the Idaho fish and game code. The commission is not authorized to change such policy but only to administer it." (emphasis added)

This is not the first time IDFG has violated Idaho Law in its zeal to import and build up a huntable population of Canadian wolves. When the Department was first directed by the Legislature to work with FWS Wolf Leader Ed Bangs to provide accurate information for the Wolf Environmental Impact Statement, Idaho Code Sec. 36-715 was re-written as follows:

"36-715 (2) The department of fish and game shall not be authorized to expend funds, transfer assets or enter into a cooperative agreement with any agency, department or entity of the United States government concerning wolves unless expressly authorized by state statute."

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Who Controls F&G? – *continued from page 5*

In other words in order for IDFG to endorse the federal wolf plan, agree to help FWS reintroduce wolves, or issue a permit to FWS authorizing it to transplant wolves into Idaho, the full Legislature had to first pass legislation authorizing the actions. Yet on September 27, 1994, IDFG Director Jerry Conley did all three of those things illegally, in writing, without the Legislature's consent – or even its knowledge.

Did a DAG Authorize Violation of I.C. Sec. 36-715?

Did IDFG suddenly ignore the advice of its legal counsel it had been following so closely or was it advised to submit the signed agreements and permit by that counsel? When newly elected Attorney General Al Lance was given copies of the signed documents in January of 2005, why was the investigation of what happened before he was elected suddenly halted?

One man who may know the answers to these questions is Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Dallas Burkhalter who has been the main legal counsel for IDFG until a second DAG was recently authorized. Another is DAG Clive Strong who served as DAG in 1994 and who remains Chief of the AG Natural Resources Division.

Three DAGs Provided Legal Advice on F&G Wolf Plan

We may not know, or be able to prove, whether or not F&G's violation of the law in 1994 was authorized by a DAG, but we do know the names of the DAG's who are listed as providing legal advice on page iv of the 2008 IDFG Wolf Plan. They are Natural Resources Division Chief Clive Strong, Senior Deputy Steve Strack and DAG Dallas Burkhalter who is assigned full-time at IDFG.

Clive Strong is in charge and thus responsible for the AG input and Gov. Butch Otter's legal Counsel, David Hensley is also listed as providing legal advice in the Plan. After I published the fact that the IDFG Wolf Plan was never sent to the Legislature for approval, amendment or rejection as required by law, one F&G official reportedly claimed they were told it was their responsibility to write the plan with increased wolf goals but not told that the changes must be approved by the Legislature.

One Commissioner who had insisted on setting a 2009 hunter harvest quota of more than 400 wolves, cut that figure in half at the last minute with the claim he was told the court would not approve a hunting season for 400 wolves.

DAGs Have Become F&G Support Group

Relatively few Idahoans are aware that the Natural Resource Division headed by Strong provides full legal representation for IDFG and five other Departments in the State. Fewer still are aware that this support has gone far beyond a normal attorney-client relationship to include acting as yet another support group for IDFG.

For example back in 2000 when the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee (JLOC) asked the Office of Performance Evaluations (OPE) to investigate IDFG's

failure to seek competitive bids for automated licensing, a DAG sent a letter to JLOC attacking OPE and defending IDFG for hiring an unqualified contractor that cost several hundred thousands dollars annually in lost revenue.

And during the past decade, a series of efforts to introduce a right-to-hunt amendment to the Idaho Constitution have included language assuring that wildlife will be managed to provide continued supplies for hunting, fishing and trapping. IDFG and the Commission always claim to support the concept but oppose each amendment with the claim by their mouthpiece in Washington, D.C. that it will have "unintended consequences."

The last three proposed Amendments used exactly the same language that is found in Idaho Wildlife Policy in I.C. Sec. 36-103, yet all were derailed by DAGs with the same claim of unintended consequences. In the first of these tries, a DAG claimed that inserting "providing continued supplies of wildlife" in the Idaho Constitution "might" deprive irrigators of their lawful water right.

In the second attempt two years later a DAG warned that making hunting a right "might" cause Idaho to forfeit collection of child support. And in the most recent attempt, a DAG convinced the sponsor to withdraw the proposal just before the vote because the simple language was "too vague and might damage other natural resource users."

These excuses for not allowing Idaho citizens to vote to protect their diminishing harvest of renewable natural resources were always a last minute surprise when it was too late in the session to amend the proposal. There was never time to get results from other states to disprove the DAG speculation that was not an official AG opinion, and this allowed legislators who traditionally rubber stamp every Fish and game proposal, to torpedo the chance for a meaningful change without their constituents' knowledge..

Clive Strong has remained immune from voters and is highly regarded by some members of both major political parties for his resolution of contentious water rights issues. However some legislators point out that he gave north Idaho irrigators' water rights to the Nez Perce Tribe in a controversial agreement that injured historical water users.

Because tactical discussions between the Commission, Department officials and their DAG Counsel take place in unrecorded executive sessions behind closed doors, the public has no way of knowing whether Strong and his DAGs recommended excessive wolf populations or just tacitly approved their existence. Either way, they share responsibility for the unhealthy, diseased big game populations and declining harvests that have become the legacy of future generations of Idahoans.

The fate of Idaho's unhealthy wildlife resource rests with Legislative Leadership and the members of the Resource and JFAC Committees. They have the authority to chop budgets until desired results exist.

Dear Idaho Legislator

In 1938 when IDFG hired three biologists to design projects to take advantage of the 3-to-1 matching federal excise tax dollars, deer and elk populations were rapidly increasing statewide. In 1951, the number of harvested elk and deer *checked through big game check stations* was the highest ever recorded before or since.

The November 19, 2009 IDFG payroll shows that wages were paid to **135** biologists, which does not include biologists with titles like Regional Wildlife Manager, Natural Resource Program Coordinator and the Benefitted Temps who are also biologists. The more biologists IDFG hires the fewer deer and elk it produces for hunters to harvest.

It should be obvious to even your most trusting colleagues that, regardless of F&G posturing and promises, approving one more budget request to preserve the status quo will guarantee the accelerating systematic destruction of what was formerly a healthy billion dollar wildlife resource. Pretending that IDFG is preserving, protecting, perpetuating and managing our decimated wildlife is living in a dream world that no longer exists.

As you read this letter, IDFG, along with Montana FWP, is continuing to implement the wildlife linkage and connectivity of "wildlands" corridors along the "Idaho-Montana Divide" from Yellowstone Park to the Canadian Border. The "Western Governors' Wildlife Council" has directed these two agencies to work with the Yellowstone to Yukon Initiative, American Wildlands, and other far out

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groups and federal agencies to provide the Yellowstone to Yukon thoroughfare for large carnivores and assorted "at risk" species.

Although Idaho still has some surviving healthy big game herds, if you get beyond the beaten path as I have during recent months, you will get a preview of what you can expect from allowing large carnivores and their parasites and diseases to manage our valuable wildlife.

I urge you to thoroughly read the lead article in this issue and be prepared to tell your constituents why IDFG did not warn them about the very real threat from assorted parasites and diseases spread around our state by the introduction of wolves from the far north. Pretending that a vaccination and a single worming with "Praziquantel" by our former IDFG veterinarian would destroy all of the parasites is an example of the gross ignorance involved in the agenda of restoring large carnivores.

It is only a matter of time until some of us and our children will be taking that same wormer in a daily dose (brand name "Biltricide") in an effort to destroy the multiplying larval stage of the tapeworm living in the fluid-filled cysts in our organs. For some, this can turn into a nightmare of repeat surgeries and even chemotherapy. Others will live for years without knowing the cysts exist unless something triggers an eruption.

It is possible that knowledge of the widespread existence of hydatid disease or of other diseases spread by wolves may have been a factor in the USFS agreeing to the use of helicopters in the wilderness to collar wolves.

In any event, IDFG has amply demonstrated that it cannot be trusted to manage wolves or the diseases they harbor and spread.

Respectfully,
George Dovel

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