

SCIENCE COMMITTEE UPDATE AND RAMBLINGS – JUNE 2020

By Dan Thompson, Science Committee Chair

Not sure if any of you noticed, but we've been in the middle of a worldwide pandemic recently. This is something new to all of us and required a little adaptation and evolutionary skills to shift our realized niches and gain some behavioral plasticity in order to survive, gives a little insight into what wildlife populations are doing every day in our ever-changing ecosystems. In many urban/exurban areas some wildlife are taking advantage of the lack of human activities to “re-inherit the earth”, but in many places in Wyoming it appears that the hominids are the ones taking to the woods, prairies, and valleys to escape the realities of Covid (after they had binge-watched *Tiger King*). Scientists were at the forefront of trying to understand a new virus that spreads like cheatgrass, and uniquely linked to our lives in that it was initially transferred to humans from animals. This is not new or novel (perhaps wrong word usage) but reinforces our place in the larger evolutionary scale of life and our own insignificance.

The Science Committee finalized our comments on the proposed [Raven Solar Energy Project](#) in Southwest Wyoming; this and other projects are likely to be coming up in the future and instances like this are a great opportunity for the Science Committee and WYTWS to use our diversity of experience and expertise to evaluate how projects like this may negatively impact Wyoming's wildlife and wildlife habitats.

Be safe and trust in the science that helps us to better understand these wild times – we are all part of something that is new to humanity and provides insight to ourselves at our most basal state.