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Communication Piece – Poetry

My name is Angie Casini-Ropa, and with my mentor Matthew Collins, I have been researching about the ongoing human-carnivore conflict in the American West, studying the public perception on the effectiveness of preventative strategies to mitigate this conflict. For this research project I have been conducted thematic content analyses on interviews collected by my mentor (Figure 1). These interviews were transcribed and coded looking for patterns.



Figure 1: Map of study area. Red points show the location of where interviews were conducted. Photo Credit: Matthew Collins.

The hypothesis for my research question stated that environmental and sociological factors would have affected the efficiency of the different preventative strategies, which would have been effective depending on the landscape and the community they would be implemented in. The results of my research confirmed this hypothesis, showing that environmental factors like size of herd and pasture, as well as dogs breed, and sociological factors like financial means of rancher and fear of judgement have a strong effect on preventative strategies' efficiency (Figure 2).

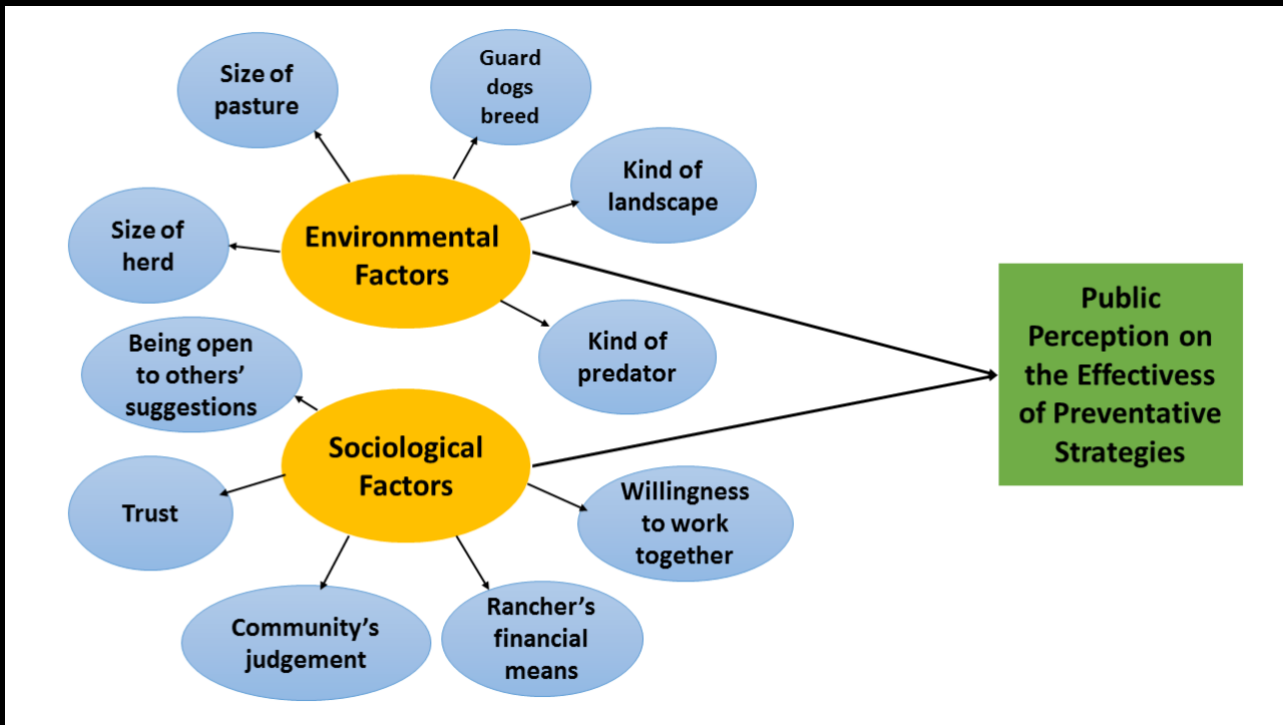


Figure 2: This map shows the environmental and sociological factors that were found to affect public perception on the effectiveness of preventative strategies based on the interviews collected.

I wanted to write a poem, both in Italian, my first language, and English, as I believe it would help the youngest to understand the main points of my study. It would also be a more fun and less formal way for everybody to engage with my study and learn about it.

This piece of poetry has as a protagonist a ranching community and a wolf (Figure 3). It starts with a simplified version of a typical scenario of a wolf attacking a herd, causing conflict with ranchers. It goes on by giving some example of a few preventatives that could be implemented, listing the reasons why they might not be effective on a landscape. The story closes by stating that it might take time, but collaboration and effort are the key factor for a solution to be found, for preventatives to be efficient, and conflict to be mitigated.

Italian

Il vecchio zio Sam ha un po' di terreno
 Lo riempie di mucche e le nutre col fieno
 Mamma lupa ha sei cucciolini
 Che devono metter qualcosa sotto quei denti

Si avvicina al pascolo, silenziosa e svelta
 Si dirige presto verso la mucca prescelta
 Il vecchio zio Sam è ora arrabbiato
 "Il lupo feroce deve esser fermato"

Anche tutti i vicini gridano "Al lupo"
 Sembra che abbian bisogno di aiuto
 Associazioni e agenzie corrono in soccorso
 Si troveranno rimedi per il lupo e per l'orso

English

Old Uncle Sam has a farm he must pay
 He fills it with cows and feeds them with hay
 Mommy wolf takes care of six puppies
 She has to find food for her little fluffies

She gets close to the pasture, silent and fast
 Chasing the cows for her is a blast
 Old Uncle Sam is now very mad,
 "The fierce wolf must stop being bad"

Even the neighbors are screaming "Away"
 Seems like they need some help today
 Collaboratives and agencies respond to the call
 Remedies to wolves are suggested by all

“Costruiamo un recinto, il lupo non entrerà”
“Il pascolo è immenso, quanto tempo ci vorrà?”
“Cerchiamo cavalieri, avvisteranno i predatori”
“Ci costerà troppo assumere quei lavoratori”

“Usiamo dei cani, faranno la guardia.”
“Ma quanti ne servono per tutta la mandria?”
Inoltre è importante fare attenzione alla razza,
Ad esempio un chihuahua non serve a una mazza

Trovare un rimedio non è così semplice
A volte la natura non è una gran complice
Tuttavia le soluzioni esistono e sono efficaci
Bisogna solo essere un pochino audaci

Lavorare insieme accettando consigli
E' il modo migliore per evitare scompigli
Con un po' di impegno, fatica ed esperienza
Il problema sarà risolto con gran efficienza

“Let's build a fence, the wolf can't get in”
“But the pasture is huge, how much time do we need?”

“Let's hire range riders, they'll spot them from afar”

“But hey, do you know how expensive they are?”

“Let's put out some dogs, their barks will be heard”
“But how many do we need for the whole herd?”

Moreover, the breed is too fundamental
For example, a retriever is way too gentle

Finding remedies is definitely challenging
Sometimes nature can be so demanding
Solutions exist and can be effective
Although their efficiency may be subjective

Working together and heeding advice
Would make collaboration very nice
With a bit of effort, experience, and time
Preventative strategies will be sublime



Figure 3: The protagonist of the poetry could be any wolf, like the one in this picture, a wolf in Yellowstone Park. Photo credit Matthew Collins