

III. WOLF-LIVESTOCK CONFLICTS

With the return of gray wolves to Oregon, conflicts with livestock²⁶ were expected and have occurred (The term “livestock”, when used here in relation to response to wolf-related conflict, means those animals listed in footnote 33). Addressing conflicts between wolves and livestock is an essential part of this Plan. Many comments received at the town hall meetings and during the 2010 five-year review centered on concerns related to wolf-livestock conflicts. The ranching and farming industry are important components of the Oregon economy. In some areas of the state, concerns have been raised regarding the effect wolves will have on this important industry. As in other western states with wolf populations, some livestock producers will be affected financially due to direct losses of livestock from wolf depredations. Where and when such depredations occur depends on a number of factors, including the number and distribution of wolves and the distribution of livestock in areas occupied by wolves.

Private lands associated with the livestock industry provide important habitat for many wildlife species. Ranches and farms often are located at lower elevation foothills or in large riverine valleys that are seasonally occupied by wintering deer and elk. These private land winter range areas are essential for survival and long-term maintenance of these important ungulate species. Once livestock are gathered in from public lands each autumn, the majority are transferred to private property at lower elevations where they are fed on winter feed grounds. Deer and elk herds generally migrate to lower elevation winter ranges, often in close proximity to livestock, particularly during the more severe winter periods. This close proximity of big game and livestock during winter will increase wolf-livestock interactions as wolves follow deer and elk to winter range.

Meeting the delisting criteria outlined in this Plan will necessitate tolerance for wolves on both public and private lands. Therefore, to achieve conservation of wolves in Oregon as required by the state ESA, this Plan outlines a range of options for livestock producers to deal with problem wolves. As with other wildlife species, many landowners and livestock producers will choose to work cooperatively with wildlife agencies to achieve the goals outlined in this Plan.

A. Livestock Depredation and Other Effects

Livestock Status in Oregon

Records indicate that Oregon has approximately 1,389,189 cattle, 217,401 sheep, and 100,000 horses within its borders.²⁷ Land ownership in the state is split evenly between private and public lands.

The federal government owns nearly half the land in Oregon and much of that land provides an important part of the support of the cattle industry in Oregon. Approximately 11 percent of all cattle

²⁶ In this chapter of the Plan, we use “livestock” in a broad sense. We begin with a provision in the state agricultural laws (ORS 609.125) which defines “livestock” to mean: horses, mules, jackasses, cattle, llamas, alpacas, sheep, goats, swine, domesticated fowl and any fur-bearing animal bred and maintained commercially or otherwise, within pens, cages and hutches (ORS 609.125). For purposes of authorizing response to wolf-related conflicts, we add to that definition bison and working dogs (guarding dogs or herding dogs).

²⁷ USDA Census of Agriculture 2007. The horse estimate was based on an earlier e-mail from Oregon Department of Agriculture. No official records are kept for horses.

forage in Oregon comes from federal land through fee grazing permits issued to local livestock producers. In turn, livestock grazing can benefit the land by reducing fire fuels, increasing plant vigor and conditioning the forage for wildlife.²⁸ In 1994, the USFS authorized 85,093 cattle to graze on federal lands within Oregon. In eastern Oregon, it is estimated that two-thirds of the beef cattle spend some of the year on federal lands.²⁹

Current losses of livestock in Oregon to depredation from coyotes, cougars and bears vary by county depending upon the dominant vegetation, the number of carnivores and the number of livestock. The baseline of current livestock losses attributed to these three carnivores can be found in Appendix J. Coyotes, the most abundant of the three, caused the highest numbers of livestock losses per year from 1996 to 2002, killing an average of 222 cattle and 1,408 sheep. Cougars killed the highest number of horses, averaging 16 per year. Data is lacking on a county by county basis to determine the total losses of livestock by carnivores. Data is not available on losses due to other reasons like weather and disease. In 2010, Oregon has 26 counties with Wildlife Service field agents that respond to coyote, cougar and bear depredation complaints from private landowners. In addition, some landowners have their own privately funded programs that are not recorded by Wildlife Services agents as control actions.³⁰

In 1997, a statewide Wildlife Damage Survey was conducted by the Oregon Agricultural Statistics Service for the Oregon Department of Agriculture. Total livestock losses from cougar, black bear, coyote, bobcat, eagles, ravens and dogs for all types of livestock amounted to \$1.5 million. Losses for cattle/calves and sheep/lambs was \$824,000 and \$767,000 respectively. An additional cost to producers for livestock injured by predators was \$214,000. The survey also recorded \$1.3 million spent by producers on non-lethal predator damage prevention. Prevention expenses included fencing, hazing devices, and guardian animals (Oregon Agricultural Statistics Service 1997).

Wolf-livestock Conflicts

Wolf-livestock conflict continues to be a major problem associated with wolf conservation efforts throughout the world. Wolves prey on domestic animals in all parts of the world where the two coexist (Mech and Boitani 2003). However, Mech and Boitani stated, “we know of no place in North America where livestock compose a major portion of wolf prey, or where wolves rely mainly on livestock to survive.” This observation differs from the situation in Europe and Asia where livestock are important components of wolf diets.

Recent data from the Rocky Mountain Recovery Area suggest that individual wolves do not automatically prey on livestock, but members of wolf packs encountering livestock on a regular basis are likely to depredate sporadically (Bangs and Shivik 2001).

The location of livestock depredations varies by state and depends on the distribution of both livestock and wolf packs. In Idaho, about 80 percent and in Wyoming about 50 percent of depredations occurred on public land grazing allotments. In Montana, nearly all confirmed depredations occurred on private lands (USFWS 2003). In Montana, however, where 300,000-

²⁸ Personal communication with Tim Del Curto, Union Agricultural Research Center.

²⁹ Oregon Beef Cattle Industry, *Impact on the Oregon Economy*, 1997.

³⁰ Personal communication with Dave Williams, State Director, Wildlife Services.

400,000 head of livestock graze public land allotments, wolf depredations are expected to increase as wolf numbers increase and distribution expands over time (Montana Wolf Plan 2003).

An analysis of the potential effects of wolves on livestock was developed when the federal government proposed to release gray wolves into Idaho and Yellowstone National Park (USFWS 1994). The analysis predicted the number of livestock that might be killed or wounded as the gray wolf population expanded and the interaction of domestic livestock and wolves became more common. The developers of the federal EIS to reintroduce wolves to Yellowstone National Park and central Idaho attempted to predict the potential effects of wolves on livestock in the recovery area.

The actual depredation rates observed indicates the extreme difficulty in predicting the behavior of wolves in advance of their arrival. The mean rate predicted for Idaho was an annual loss of 10 cattle and 57 sheep with 100 wolves. Actual observed depredation rates in Idaho for 2003 were six cattle and 118 sheep with 345 wolves (USFWS 2003). The lower-than-predicted rate in Idaho is influenced by the few livestock present in the central Idaho wilderness and the extensive efforts to prevent livestock depredation since reintroduction. In Montana, which has similar winter range land use patterns as Oregon, the actual depredation patterns are higher on both cattle and sheep while the prediction was for a lower depredation rate than Idaho. Actual observed depredation rates in Montana for 2003 were recorded at 24 cattle and 86 sheep with 184 wolves (ibid).

In a published report by Wildlife Services, the relative risk of predation on livestock posed by individual wolves was analyzed for Idaho. The author measured the likelihood for depredation to occur from wolves, black bears, mountain lions and coyotes. Although the author only analyzed one year of data for 2005, it showed that individual wolves were more likely to depredate on sheep and cattle than coyotes, bears and mountain lions (Collinge, M. 2008). Livestock owners grazing in wolf country may face a much greater depredation rate from wolves than coyotes, bears and mountain lions. In 2009 the depredation rates by wolves in Idaho and Montana were:

- Idaho – 75 cattle, 324 sheep, 13 dogs and one goat.
- Montana – 97 cattle, 202 sheep, four domestic dogs, two goats and four llamas.

Where and how livestock are managed and where and how wolves are managed will influence depredation rates. In Alberta, Canada, cattle on heavily forested but less intensively managed grazing allotments suffered three times as many depredation incidents as more intensively managed lease areas having less forest cover. In North America and Europe, untended livestock occupying remote pastures suffered the greatest losses from wolves. Newborn livestock held in remote pastures are more vulnerable to wolf predation.

In Oregon, livestock depredation by wolves was confirmed in Baker and Wallowa counties from April 2009 through July 2010. The total confirmed loss was 28 sheep, seven calves and one goat.

Recently there has been increasing interest in the indirect impacts of wolves on the behavior of livestock and the livestock industry. Indirect impacts may include reduced weaning weights, increased cattle aggressiveness, and delayed rebreeding, as well as increased production cost associated increased level vigilance, alteration of pasture rotation and turnout timing, and handling costs.

B. Working Dog and Pet Depredation

As wolves expand their range in Oregon, dog owners will need to be aware of the potential risks to their animals. Areas or situations where wolves and domestic dogs encounter each other can result in dog mortality. In some instances, wolves may alter their regular movements or activities to seek out and confront domestic dogs. In Wisconsin, wolf depredation on hounds used for black bear hunting resulted in more compensation payments than for livestock (Treves et al. 2002). In some regions of the world, dogs are an important food source for wolves, to the extent that wolves reportedly have reduced the number of stray dogs in some areas (Mech and Boitani 2003).

Working dogs used to protect livestock are not immune from wolf depredation. The killing of guard dogs by wolves has been documented in the Rocky Mountain Recovery Area. In Minnesota, 25 dogs were reported killed by wolves in 1998 alone (Bangs and Shivik 2001, Mech and Boitani 2003). Guard dogs appear to be more effective and less at risk when an adequate numbers of dogs per herd are present coupled with the presence of trained herders. Livestock producers using working dogs in conjunction with trained herders face added costs to protect their livestock from potential wolf depredation. Working dogs and trained herders may be more effective for protecting sheep flocks than cattle.

In Oregon, some wolves are likely to occupy areas near human habitation or areas used for recreation which could put pets or working dogs at risk. Dogs running at large or dogs working cattle or sheep could be vulnerable in these situations. Bird hunting dogs or hounds used in forested areas occupied by wolves also could be at risk. Public education will be important in preventing wolf/domestic dog interactions.

No working dogs or pets have been confirmed as lost due to a wolf attack in Oregon.

C. Strategies to Address Livestock Conflict

Objective

- Develop and implement a phased approach based on population objectives for wolves that ensures conservation of the species while minimizing conflicts with livestock.

Strategies

- Implement an adaptive management approach to wolf conflicts for both eastern and western Oregon that: 1) emphasizes non-lethal control techniques while the wolf is in Phase I; and II) transitions to a more flexible approach to depredation control following delisting.
- Actively educate and equip landowners, livestock producers and the public with tools to implement non-lethal wolf management techniques.
- Working with Wildlife Services, allow individuals flexibility to customize wolf management to their situation (particularly with regard to using non-lethal injurious actions).
- Establish a wolf management specialist position within ODFW to monitor wolf movements and work directly with individuals who experience conflicts with wolves in order to resolve those conflicts.
- Provide wolf monitoring information to landowners, livestock producers and the public as needed to keep them informed of wolf activities and movements.

- Notify land management agencies, landowners, livestock producers, and the public of planned or completed wolf management activities.
- Instill fear of human activities in wolves through non-injurious and injurious actions to keep them appropriately wild and minimize potential for conflict with humans.
- Use lethal controls on packs and/or individual wolves that depredate on livestock under specified circumstances as described elsewhere in this Plan.

The intent of these strategies is to resolve wolf-livestock conflicts before they result in losses while ensuring conservation of wolves. While wolves are listed as endangered, non-lethal techniques such as radio-activated guard devices, non-injurious harassment, fladry, husbandry, range riders and others will be the first choice of managers. As the wolf population increases in Oregon, more options for addressing conflicts will be allowed. While multiple non-lethal techniques employed in other states should be used here, adaptations to these techniques and development of new non-lethal techniques will be encouraged as needed to address factors unique to Oregon. In situations where chronic losses are occurring, lethal control actions may be employed to minimize livestock losses regardless of the wolf population status. This combination of strategies is consistent with the conservation of wolves, and is expected to promote delisting efforts. While there are differences in how livestock conflicts are addressed in the three phases, the differences are not great. The Plan endeavors to provide as much flexibility to address conflicts as possible while wolves exist in low numbers, while still remaining focused on achieving wolf conservation goals.

This incremental approach based on the current population status of wolves is designed to provide options to wolf managers, livestock producers and the public while promoting the goal of conservation for wolves. Generally, non-lethal techniques should be the first choice when wolf-livestock conflicts are reported, regardless of the wolf population status. When wolf numbers are low, more emphasis is placed on wolf control techniques that do not involve lethal removal of wolves. Wolf managers and livestock producers are not required to exhaust all non-lethal techniques, but instead, a good faith effort to achieve a non-lethal solution is expected. In order to use the widest array of management tools available in any given management phase, livestock producers will be encouraged to employ management techniques to discourage wolf depredation, and agencies will advise and assist in implementing such techniques.

Wolf managers working with livestock producers are encouraged to employ management techniques that have the highest likelihood of success to resolving the conflicts and that are reasonable for the individual situation. This includes the identification of unreasonable circumstances that may attract wolf-livestock conflict. For the purpose of implementing actions to resolve conflict, ODFW considers that a condition on the landscape is not inherently "unreasonable" if the condition is a common practice, irrespective of the presence of wolves. One example of this is a dead-livestock carcass (or pile), a common practice of many livestock operations, even before the presence of wolves. However, even if not considered inherently unreasonable, a carcass may be identified to be an attractant to wolves and ODFW may recommend removal of the attractant before further control actions are authorized. Conversely, a carcass that is intentionally placed in a location for the purpose of attracting wolves or other scavengers may be considered unreasonable, and under this Plan options for addressing the conflict are reduced. Carcasses of natural prey species (e.g., deer and elk) do not generally attract wolf-livestock conflicts and it is not expected that individual wildlife carcasses, which naturally occur on the landscape (e.g., road kills or wildlife killed by natural causes), will be removed. However, in some cases wildlife carcass disposal sites may be identified as an

attractant which may lead to wolf-livestock conflict. In these cases the carcasses should also be removed and use of the disposal site discontinued.

When Phase III is reached, non-lethal techniques will remain the first choice of managers in dealing with conflicts. However, more emphasis may be put on lethal control to ensure protection of livestock if it can be demonstrated that non-lethal methods are likely to put livestock at substantial risk. In areas where chronic wolf problems are occurring, wolf managers may seek assistance from private citizens through special permits for controlled take to resolve conflict. In addition, liberalized options for lethal control by livestock producers will be considered in consultation with wolf managers in circumstances where such activities can enhance the probability of relief for the livestock producer.

Table III-1. Matrix of Wolf Conflict Management Options.

		PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PHASES		
		Phase I	Phase II	Phase III
ACTION	CURRENT OREGON LAW	STATE ENDANGERED	DELISTED	DELISTED
Non-injurious harassment	Allowed with a permit if conservation finding can be made. ³¹	Allowed without a permit. ³² Reporting required within 48 hours.	Allowed without a permit. ³⁹ Reporting required within 48 hours.	Allowed without a permit. ³⁹ Reporting required within 48 hours.
Non-lethal injurious harassment	Allowed with a permit if conservation finding can be made. ³⁸	Allowed with a permit. Reporting required within 48 hours.	Allowed without a permit on private land and by permit on public land. ³⁹	Allowed without a permit on private land and by permit on public land. ³⁹
Lethal take for wolves found ‘in the act’ of attacking livestock	Allowed with a permit if conservation finding can be made.	Allowed with a state permit	Allowed with a state permit.	Allowed with a state permit.
Lethal take for wolves involved in chronic livestock depredation	Allowed by ODFW and/or Wildlife Services if conservation finding can be made. ³⁸	Allowed by ODFW and/or Wildlife Services only.	Allowed by permit. Reporting required within 48 hours.	Allowed by permit. Reporting required within 48 hours.
Lethal take to defend human	Allowed. See text of Plan for details.	Allowed. See text of Plan for details.	Allowed. See text of Plan for details.	Allowed. See text of Plan for details.
Controlled take	None allowed.	None allowed.	None allowed.	Allowed by special permit, for chronic wolf-livestock depredation or wolf pressure on ungulate populations. Reporting required within 72 hours.

³¹ While a species is state-listed, harassment or take is allowed only upon a finding that such harassment or take is consistent with conserving the species in Oregon. This Plan provides the necessary conservation finding. Without this Plan, the Commission or ODFW (as appropriate) would need to attempt the conservation finding based upon available data.

³² Pursuant to new rules in OAR 635, Division 110.

These proposed actions are intended to promote conservation of wolves while allowing reasonable responses to conflicts with wolves. A brief summary of Oregon harassment and take law (statute and administrative rules) as they existed at the time this Plan was adopted includes:

- The Commission may authorize harassment and take of a listed species only if the Commission finds that such harassment and take is consistent with conservation of the species in Oregon. Thus, so long as it would promote conservation of the species in Oregon, the Commission could include any or all of the following tools: scientific take permits, damage take permits, wildlife removal and holding permits, harassment permits, Federal incidental take statements or state incidental take permits to shield certain activities (e.g., furbearer trapping) from liability for incidentally taken wolves.
- Current harassment rules at OAR 635 Division 043 require a permit be issued by the Commission upon finding that the harassment is consistent with the conservation of the species.
- The damage statute (ORS 498.012) requires a permit for taking game mammals, non-game wildlife, and furbearers (except certain specified species). Take under the damage statutes is subject to certain conditions (i.e., damage is presently occurring, permit is authorized to a landowner or agent, take must be on land where damage is occurring).

Adoption of this Plan and its associated technical rules automatically amends current administrative rules concerning harassment and take. Table III-1 and the text that follows below summarize the types of harassment and take allowed by this Plan. Consult the associated technical rules (OAR 635-110-0010 through-0030, and 635-043-0096) for precise requirements. In the event of a conflict between this Plan and the technical rules, the technical rules govern.

1. Phase I (0-4 breeding pairs)

Non-injurious harassment of wolves is allowed without a permit by livestock producers or their designated agents on their own land or by permittees who are legally using public land under valid livestock grazing allotments. Such actions can include scaring off an animal(s) by firing shots into the air, making loud noises or otherwise confronting the animal(s) without doing bodily harm. Non-injurious harassment is allowed only for wolves in the act of harassing, attempting to harass or in close proximity to livestock. For such action to occur, the following criteria apply:

- No permit is required.
- No prior confirmation of wolf activity in the area is required.
- It must not result in injury to the wolf.
- It is authorized only when a wolf is unintentionally encountered.
- It must be reported to ODFW within 48 hours.

Non-lethal injurious harassment (e.g., rubber bullets, bean bag projectiles, vehicle or other pursuit-oriented hazing) of wolves is allowed by permit issued by ODFW to livestock producers or their designated agents on private lands they lawfully occupy or by permittees who are using public land under valid livestock grazing permits. The permits will be issued following confirmation of wolf depredation on livestock or other wolf-livestock conflict (i.e., loitering, testing, chasing, or

disrupting livestock). The applicant must confer with the agency to determine the most effective tool for harassment. The non-lethal injurious harassment permit shall remain valid for the livestock grazing season in which it is issued provided the livestock operator (on private and public land) is compliant with all applicable laws, including permit conditions. The agency shall inform and assist harassment permit holders (on public and private land) of non-lethal methods for minimizing wolf-livestock conflict, and shall inform permit holders that receiving future lethal control permits will be contingent upon documentation of efforts to use non-lethal methods. For non-lethal injurious harassment to be undertaken, the following criteria apply.

- An ODFW permit is required.
- Wolves may be pursued (without the requirement of an unintentional encounter).
- ODFW will consider locations of known wolf dens before a permit is issued.
- The applicant will work with ODFW to determine appropriate course of action.
- Actions can take place only on private land or public grazing allotment.
- Agencies will assist by providing equipment, staff or both if requested.
- Any incident must be reported to ODFW within 48 hours.
- No identified circumstances exist that are attracting wolf-livestock conflict.

Relocation will occur when a wolf or wolves become inadvertently involved in a situation or are present in an area that could result in conflict with humans or harm to the wolf. Examples could include a wolf caught in a trap set for another animal or a wolf found living within or near communities and causing human safety concerns. This action differs from translocation in that the need is more immediate to solve a particular situation. For such action to occur, four criteria must be met:

- The action must be conducted by state personnel only.
- Wolves will be relocated to suitable habitat at the direction of ODFW.
- The action must be taken to prevent conflict with humans or reduce the possibility of harm to the wolf.
- The wolf is not known or suspected by ODFW to have depredated livestock or pets.

Lethal take of wolves will be authorized in two situations regarding conflict with livestock as described below. Threat to human safety is a third situation in which the use of lethal force is allowed, as discussed in Chapter VI of this Plan.

1. To stop a wolf in the act of attacking livestock: On private and public land, a permit is required for livestock producers, grazing permittees (using public lands), or designated agents to use lethal force to stop a wolf that is in the act of biting, wounding or killing livestock. Such permits are issued only after ODFW has confirmed wolves previously have wounded or killed livestock in the area and efforts to resolve the problem have been deemed ineffective. Efforts to resolve the problem may either be preventative efforts (i.e., documented non-lethal actions implemented specifically to minimize or avoid wolf-livestock conflict before the initial depredation), or non-lethal control efforts (i.e., non-lethal actions implemented specifically to minimize or avoid wolf-livestock conflict after the initial depredation). The permit holder is required to continue implementing non-lethal actions to minimize or avoid wolf-livestock conflicts during the life of the permit and issuance of future permits will be contingent upon this effort. “In the area” means the area known to be used by the depredating wolves. In some cases, the area may be specifically delineated by data (i.e., radio telemetry).

If a wolf is taken under the caught in the act permit, the permit holder must preserve evidence (on site) of an animal(s) freshly (less than 24 hours) wounded or killed by wolves and ODFW -personnel must confirm the livestock loss or wound was caused by wolves.

A permit is required on private and public land.

- The wolf must be found in the act of attacking, not testing or scavenging.
- There must be fresh evidence that an attack occurred (e.g., visible wounds, tracks demonstrating a chase occurred).
- The wolf carcass must not be removed or disturbed.
- Any incident must be reported to ODFW or Wildlife Services within 24 hours.
- No identified circumstances exist that are attracting wolf-livestock conflict.
- Permit holder is required to implement non-lethal actions to minimize or avoid wolf-livestock conflict during the life of the permit.

2. To stop chronic wolf-related depredation on private and public land: State or federal agents are authorized to use lethal force on wolves on public or private land at a property owner's or permittee request if ODFW has confirmed two depredations in the area by wolves on livestock, or one confirmed depredation followed by three attempted depredations (testing or stalking).

For such action to occur, the following criteria apply:

- The action must be conducted by authorized state or federal personnel only.
- Attempts to solve the situation through non-lethal means must be documented.
- No identified circumstances exist that are attracting wolf-livestock conflict.
- Evidence does not exist of non-compliance with applicable laws.

Controlled take of wolves is not allowed.

2. Phase II (5-7 breeding pairs)

Non-injurious harassment of wolves is allowed under the same conditions as in Phase I.

Non-lethal injurious harassment does not require a permit on private land, and therefore is allowed by livestock producers or their designated agents on their own land without permit or preauthorization. Non-injurious techniques should be attempted initially. A permit is required on public land, and shall be issued following confirmation by the department of wolf depredation on livestock or other wolf-livestock conflict (i.e., loitering, testing, chasing, or disrupting livestock) to permittees who are legally using public land under valid livestock grazing allotments. The injurious harassment permit shall remain valid for the duration of the grazing season in which it has been issued provided the grazing permittee is in compliance with applicable laws including permit conditions. For such action to occur, the following criteria apply:

- On private land:
 - no permit is required;
 - agencies will assist by providing equipment or staff; and
- On public land:
 - a state permit is required;
 - the permittee will work with the agency to determine the appropriate course of action; and

- locations of known wolf dens will be considered before issuing a permit.
- Wolves may be pursued.
- Any action must be reported to ODFW within 48 hours.
- No identified circumstances exist that are attracting wolf-livestock conflict.

Relocation of wolves will be considered under the same circumstances as in Phase I.

Lethal take of wolves will be authorized in two situations regarding conflict with livestock as described below. Threat to human safety is a third situation in which the use of lethal force is allowed, as discussed in Chapter VI of this Plan.

1. To stop a wolf in the act of attacking livestock is allowed under the same conditions as in Phase I.
2. To stop chronic depredation on private and public land – State personnel or agents are authorized to use lethal force on wolves under the same conditions as in Phase I. Livestock producers (or their designated agents) on private lands they own or lease, or permittees who are legally using public land may be issued a permit that provides authorization to take a gray wolf if the following two conditions are met: 1) the area or the grazing allotment has had at least two depredations by wolves on livestock that have been confirmed by ODFW; and, 2) ODFW determines that wolves are routinely present on that property and present a significant risk to the livestock. For such action to occur the following criteria apply:
 - A permit is required on private or public land.
 - Wolves taken under these permits are the property of the state and must be reported to ODFW within 48 hours.
 - No identified circumstances exist that are attracting wolf-livestock conflict.
 - Evidence does not exist of non-compliance with applicable laws, including permit conditions.
 - Documentation of efforts to use non-lethal methods is provided.

Controlled take of wolves is not allowed.

3. Phase III (7 breeding pairs)

Non-injurious harassment of wolves is allowed under the same conditions as in Phase I.

Non-lethal injurious harassment is allowed under the same conditions as in Phase II.

Relocation of wolves will be considered under the same circumstances as in Phase I.

Lethal take of wolves will be authorized in two situations regarding conflict with livestock as described below. Threat to human safety is a third situation in which the use of lethal force is allowed, as discussed in Chapter VI of this Plan.

1. To stop a wolf in the act of attacking livestock on private and public land, livestock producers may use lethal force with a permit to stop a wolf that is in the act of biting, wounding or killing livestock. Following the incident, the landowner must preserve evidence of an animal(s) freshly (less than 24 hours) wounded or killed by wolves, and a Wildlife Services or ODFW agent must confirm the wound was caused by wolves. For such action to occur, the following criteria apply:
 - A permit is required on private or public land.
 - The wolf must be found in the act of attacking, not testing or scavenging.
 - There must be fresh evidence that an attack occurred (e.g., visible wounds or tracks).
 - The wolf carcass must not be removed or disturbed.
 - Any action must be reported to ODFW or Wildlife Services within 24 hours.
 - No identified circumstances exist that are attracting wolf-livestock conflict.
 - ODFW or Wildlife Services has confirmed wolf depredation on livestock.
2. To stop chronic depredation on private or public land is allowed under the same conditions as in Phase II with the following exception:
 - Either ODFW or Wildlife Services will be responsible to confirm wolf depredation on livestock while in Phase III.

Public/tribal controlled take of wolves on public lands by special permit may be authorized in specific areas to address chronic wolf-livestock depredation or wolf-related ungulate population or recruitment declines below management objectives in a wildlife management units, or locally. This approach also may be implemented on private lands. Permit holders would be required to obtain permission to hunt or trap wolves on private lands.

D. Agency Response to Wolf Depredation

Objective

- Develop and implement a proactive and effective wolf depredation response program that minimizes the risk of wolf-livestock conflict.

Strategies

- Respond to reports of wolf-livestock complaints in a timely manner (similar to response protocols for cougars and black bears) to prevent further losses.
- Negotiate an amendment to the Wildlife Services contract in Oregon that would include wolves in their area of responsibility.
- Coordinate with the ODA and Wildlife Services to assess the baseline of livestock losses due to depredation.
- Allow take by landowners under certain conditions authorized under the damage statutes (i.e., damage is presently occurring, permit is authorized to the landowner or to the landowner's designated agent, take must be on or near land where damage is occurring).

Wildlife Services agents respond to coyote, cougar, and black bear depredation complaints in 26 counties in Oregon. In northeastern Oregon, where wolves have established packs, agents are available in Wallowa and Umatilla counties, and a shared position is available in Union and Baker Counties. Grant County currently does not have an agent due to lack of funding. Black bear and cougar complaints in these counties are reported to the nearest ODFW office. ODFW biologists investigate these complaints and work with the livestock producers to find solutions. ODFW provides \$220,000 bi-annually to Wildlife Services (\$120,000 from the General Fund and \$100,000 from the State Wildlife Funds) through contracts to address predatory animals cougar, -black bear, furbearers, and wolf depredation. Counties, private entities, ODA and others also fund Wildlife Services activities at varying levels. A map and budget of Wildlife Services participating counties can be found in Appendix K.

While wolves are protected under federal ESA, the USFWS is responsible for investigating reported wolf depredations.

Following federal delisting, ODFW will respond to wolf complaints in a manner similar to the way the agency handles cougar and black bear damage complaints. Livestock owners with a suspected wolf depredation would contact the nearest ODFW, Wildlife Services, OSP or county official office to initiate the investigation process. ODFW would advise Wildlife Services agents of the situation and one or both would proceed to the location. If a depredation is determined to have occurred, the scene would be secured and ODFW or Wildlife Services personnel would cooperatively conduct the investigation. While in Phase I and II, ODFW will make the final determination whether a livestock depredation is a confirmed or probable wolf depredation. ODFW, Wildlife Services agents, and the livestock producer would work cooperatively to determine the appropriate response, including non-lethal or lethal techniques, to prevent further loss of livestock. The specific response to depredation will depend on wolves' legal status and population levels (see section C of this chapter). ODFW will continue to advocate for Wildlife Services to add a federally funded wolf specialist to their staff.

ODFW has amended the current contract with Wildlife Services to include responding to wolf depredations in addition to cougar and black bear. Additional funding will be necessary initially to provide coverage in all counties in northeastern Oregon. Other options will be explored, including creation of an ODFW wolf specialist position. This position would work cooperatively with Wildlife Services personnel during investigations of wolf depredations. Other responsibilities would include radio-collaring wolves, monitoring, education and outreach, research, and working closely with producers operating in areas occupied by wolves.

E. Livestock Producer Assistance

Objective

- Develop and maintain a cooperative livestock producer assistance program that proactively minimizes wolf-livestock conflict and assists livestock producers experiencing wolf-related livestock losses.

Strategies

- Provide education, outreach and technical assistance to landowners and livestock producers to reduce wolf-livestock conflicts.
- Work with livestock producer organizations, county extension services, ODA, conservation organizations, and other appropriate groups and agencies to develop a comprehensive outreach and educational program regarding depredation prevention (e.g., media materials, workshops, website resources, site reviews and evaluations).
- Provide resources necessary to implement non-lethal wolf control techniques [e.g., fladry, hazing supplies (shotgun and rifle shells, rubber bullets and bean bags), radio-activated guard devices, and electric fences] as needed.
- Provide regular training to state and county personnel, volunteers and cooperators. Training should focus on procedures for securing a depredation scene, preserving evidence, and identification of wolf depredation.
- Provide timely response to wolf-related complaints through ODFW district biologists and local OSP personnel.
- Work closely with Wildlife Services to ensure proper handling and investigation of livestock depredation situations.
- Take appropriate actions to prevent additional losses.
- Work with Defenders of Wildlife, through its Carnivore Conservation Fund, to see if their program of assistance to livestock producers will complement state efforts.
- Work with the citizens of Oregon, specifically livestock producers and other entities, to explore alternative funding sources for livestock producer assistance including federal or state appropriations, foundations and other sources.
- Provide landowners and local livestock producers the most current information on areas where wolves are known to be active (e.g., from radio-telemetry).

ODFW has a long history of providing assistance to landowners and citizens affected by the actions of various wildlife species. The department has been granted specific authority by the Oregon Legislature to manage wildlife populations in the state. Guided by the agency's Wildlife Damage Policy, field biologists respond to and provide assistance for a variety of wildlife damage complaints in both rural and urban settings. The type of assistance provided can take many forms including, but not limited to, technical advice, protective barriers, repellants, lethal or non-lethal removal, emergency hunts, hazing permits, kill permits, and forage enhancement programs.

Under Oregon law ODFW is not authorized to use hunting license and tag fee revenue to provide direct compensation (payments) for economic losses resulting from depredations by wildlife. Legislation would be necessary to authorize ODFW to compensate for livestock, working dog and sporting dog losses caused by wolves. .

While directed by the Wildlife Policy to manage wildlife populations at optimum levels, the department also must manage populations in a manner consistent with the primary uses of the lands and waters of the state (ORS 496.012). The policy directs that appropriate measures must be taken to assist farmers, ranchers and others in resolving wildlife damage, and that federal, state, county and local government should cooperate in related efforts to control wildlife damage (ORS.610.055). For damage, wildlife is defined to mean fish, wild birds, amphibians and reptiles, feral swine (as defined by the ODA) and other wild mammals (ORS 496.004).

Working proactively with livestock producers to minimize wolf-livestock conflicts will be an important component of a livestock producer's assistance program. Sharing new information and techniques related to reducing potential wolf-livestock conflicts and making available the necessary tools and equipment will be essential for a successful program. Every effort will be made to take preventive measures through education to help reduce overall wolf-livestock conflicts.

Providing prevention assistance to livestock producers through timely response to wolf depredations will be achieved through direct contact with ODFW field personnel. ODFW personnel currently are available in all counties of Oregon. Affected livestock producers could contact the nearest office of ODFW, Wildlife Services, OSP, or county official to report a suspected wolf depredation situation. ODFW would notify Wildlife Services and OSP of the situation and then proceed to the complaint location. Wildlife Services and ODFW would work cooperatively to assess the situation and recommend appropriate measures to minimize additional losses. While Wildlife Services serves an important role in assessing livestock depredation, the final decision of confirming wolf depredation is with ODFW when wolves are in Phase I and II population levels.

Attaching radio-collars to members of established wolf packs and regularly monitoring the collared wolves will provide important information regarding wolf movements and proximity to areas occupied by livestock. Close coordination between ODFW biologists, Wildlife Services and livestock producers regarding wolf movements will allow wildlife managers to anticipate potential conflict areas and respond appropriately. Livestock producers could make informed decisions regarding changing animal husbandry practices in response to current wolf location information.

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