

**From:** Connie Poten <rattlefarm@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 14, 2015 8:02 AM  
**To:** Raszka Shelley  
**Subject:** Please kill bilk 3515

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Dear Members of the A & NR Committee,

Please vote NO on Bill 3515. Here is some very interesting info on the agricultural value of wolves:

# Experts say ranching done right improves the environment and wildlife habitat

By Temple Grandin Feb 26, 2015

**Water sources that ranchers develop for their cattle also provide water for wild animals and endangered species.**

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- 4 steps to coexist with predators

The SRM meeting also featured a half-day session on ways for ranchers to co-exist with [predators](#). One of the most interesting sessions at the conference, Kent Reeves of Whole Picture Consulting; Hillary Zaranek, a Montana cattle rancher; and Matt Barnes, executive director of Keystone Conservation, all discussed ways to co-exist with wolves. These are four basic principles I have summarized from the entire session.

1. All dead carcasses and sick, weak animals must be removed. They should be immediately taken far away from areas where cattle or sheep are grazed.

Everybody agreed on this. Dead carcasses attract predators, and may encourage them to develop a taste for beef or lamb.

2. Indiscriminant **killing of wolves** or coyotes is a bad idea. Wolves and coyotes form stable territories. Individual packs will develop a taste for different specific foods. A wolf pack that dines on elk and leaves cattle alone will keep other wolf packs out. This same principle applies to coyotes.

The best approach is to remove individual problem animals or a male and female pair that are caught in the act of killing cattle or sheep. Years ago, I learned about this same idea from a Colorado rancher named Dayton O. Hyde. In 1970s and '80s, people thought his ideas were crazy. Today, those ideas are being accepted. Killing a predator that avoids cattle is very counterproductive.

3. Cattle need to learn to **herd and flock together** and “stand their ground” when confronted by wolves or coyotes. Isolated animals that are running away become easy prey.

Zaranek explained that wolves prefer elk that run; that’s why cattle need to bunch up in the presence of predators. The great herds of bison that once roamed the Plains would form in a group to provide protection from predators. It is the presence of predators that trigger that instinct.

Reeves and Zaranek both discussed the need to “re-wild” cattle and “rekindle” that herd instinct to bunch together and stand their ground rather than run. An attempt to force cattle into a tight bunch does NOT work, as the cattle will scatter as soon as the cowboys leave. A better approach is to use Bud Williams’ **low-stress methods** to trigger the natural bunching instinct.

When **handlers move back and forth** on the edge of the pressure zone, like a border collie does, it can trigger the innate instinct in cattle to bunch up. Cattle that bunch in “soft bunches” can easily graze. Soft bunching as a herd is not panicked milling where cattle move in a circle and the strongest animals force their way into the center of the milling mob.

Rekindling the natural herding instinct is not forcing the cattle together. The principle is to move back and forth in a straight line on the edge of the collective pressure zone. This is the zone where the handler is close enough

so the cattle are aware of his/her presence but he/she hasn't penetrated the flight zone to make the herd move away. The pressure zone is the area just outside the edge of the flight zone.

4. Human presence is important, as wolves and coyotes will usually avoid areas where people are present. Riding the range is another effective deterrent. Ranchers who have developed a good relationship with wildlife biologists also get information on where wolf packs are located so cattle can be moved to safer areas.

There were also two sessions on protecting sheep from wolves. Brian Bean of Idaho's Lava Lake Land and Livestock, and Dan Macon of Flying Mule Farm in Auburn, Calif., both agree that a herder must be present near the flock. They've also learned that llamas and donkeys are effective for coyotes but do not work for [wolves](#).

Typically, these ranchers will use five or six Great Pyrenees guard dogs. More dogs are not recommended because they fight. The puppies must be raised with the sheep, so they will stay with the sheep.

Every night the flock is moved to a new bed ground and electric fence with dangling plastic flags is put up around it. One innovative herder discussed that marking his territory around the bed area with his own urine helped keep predators out. He was using the same methods wolves and coyotes use to mark their territory.

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