

To: Oregon House Agriculture and Natural Resource Committee

From: Cynthia Warnock

I urge this committee to pass HB 3514 that continues to allow tax credits for livestock losses caused by wolves. With the increase in the wolf population, there will continue to be livestock losses from wolves and there is not enough funding in the compensation program to help compensate these losses. This past year there were some ranchers in Wallowa County and Baker County that experienced far higher than normal losses. One rancher who usually loses 2-3 calves in the summer pastures experienced a 12-13 calf loss. This is big difference. The tax credit will help with the compensation. This last biennium there was not enough money in the compensation fund to help relieve the financial burden some ranchers experienced because of the wolves.

Putting the money towards non-lethal methods is not the answer either. The non-lethal deterrents do not work as well as thought by some. In a small area maybe, but on the vast summer pastures they do not. We receive information on where a wolf with a GPS collar is, but this information only tells us what polygon it was in and some of these polygons are as big as 625 square miles. That is a big area to know where one wolf is. We are not allowed to know where the wolf is exactly or where dens are so trying to minimize wolf/livestock interactions is hard with the tools we are given to work with.

In reading other comments, the wolves do not eat the weak, the sick and the dying. I would like to ask these people if they would like to eat this kind of animal. Wolves are the same, they know when an animal has a fever and is sick and don't touch it, even the animal dies, they don't touch it. We have seen this for years with sick livestock and coyotes. Us livestock producers have to specifically mark the calves that were sick that received antibiotics so see we don't even eat the sick.

As far as having a 3rd party, such as a sheriff, verify if it is a wolf kill is much better than to have the person who is responsibly for the safety and bound to protect a wolf to verify a kill or injury from a wolf. There is a great bias whether it is intentional or not, it is human nature not to find the bad in something you are to protect. Since ODFW is to protect the wolf, Wildlife Services and sheriffs should make those determinations.

Taking the wolf off the endangered species act (HB3515) is also another bill I would like to see you support. Taking the species off the list will allow for managing the population. They have shown us in Idaho and now in Oregon that it does not take long for the population to expand. I would like to see Oregon be able to keep the population controlled before it gets out of control. This state can't deal with the number that we have now (not enough compensation funding, more livestock/wolf interactions, not able to get wolves collared etc.).

I hope you give both HB3514 and 3415 great consideration and consent to them. It helps the livestock producers who are the ones that experience losses due to the wolves.