

Dan & Cynthia Warnock

59297 Upper Imnaha Road
Imnaha, OR 97842

February 19, 2017

Dear Senator Lew Frederick and Representative Brad Witt,

We are writing this letter to support the continuation of funding for the Wolf Program. As ranchers, we support this funding because of the losses we incur from the wolf. There are other predators, such as coyote, cougar and bear, that we have lost livestock to, but we have the tools to control these predators. There is not a tool for us to control the predation of a wolf. Sure we have tried non-lethal practices to discourage the wolves from preying on our livestock, but if they are hungry it does not matter what we do. The funding from the Wolf Program helps compensate some for our loss.

The funding from the Wolf Program also is used to help with non-lethal actions. Wallowa County has used that money to pay for a range rider. Though this person does not usually keep the wolves from killing livestock, he is the best tool we have in knowing where the wolves are. Our range rider works well with ODFW and visits areas that the collared wolves are shown to be in. He alerts livestock owners when he sees wolves in or close to their property that is occupied by livestock. Often the range rider is the person that finds livestock that has been killed by wolves and then he contacts the owner, ODFW, Wildlife Services and the Sheriff so there can be an investigation. This range rider has a very large area to cover. We would like to have two, but the funding does not allow this. We would hate to lose the one that we have and hope that the Wolf Program will continue to be funded to help us with the one tool we have to work with.

Most of the livestock killed are on private land. We did not ask for the wolves and yet we are the ones suffering the loss from these animals. There are some ranchers that get hit time and time again from one pack. There are direct losses (dead livestock that we find) and indirect loss such as:

- livestock we never are able to find
- calves that have been injured, may heal, but will never be normal
- cattle that are hard to move and work because of the stress from being chased and bit at
- and the decrease in our livestock's overall health because of stress

The funding for the loss of livestock helps, it will never be enough, but something is better than nothing for something we cannot control.

As the wolves continue to multiply, they are moving to other parts of the state. Since the Wolf Program has been in place, there are more and more counties submitting request for money through the Wolf Program. It would be beneficial for the funding to be permanent with annual increase made to the program somehow by the number of wolves that are in the state or by the number of counties that are requesting funding.

Dan & Cynthia Warnock

59297 Upper Imnaha Road
Imnaha, OR 97842

Until there is a way to control the wolves, there is going to be an increase in losses and the funding in the Wolf Program, we hope, will also increase.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment. We hope this funding will be included in the state budget again.

Sincerely,



Dan Warnock and Cynthia Warnock