



1320 Capitol Street NE Suite 150  
Salem, OR 97301  
(503) 361-8941

## TESTIMONY

### **SB 642 – Appropriates Moneys to Fund Wolf Management Compensation and Proactive Trust Fund**

#### **Senate Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery Committee**

Chair Golden, Vice Chair Heard, Senator Kennemer, Senator Patterson and Senator Prozanski:

The Oregon Cattlemen's Association respectfully offers testimony in support of SB 642.

I am Dennis Sheehy, a rancher in Wallowa County Oregon. I serve as a Chair of the Oregon Cattlemen's Association Wildlife Committee. I am writing in support of Senate Bill 642.

In 2010, I authored the initial draft proposal of the Oregon Wolf Management Compensation Program (WMCP). The legislation establishing the program and providing funding was passed in 2011. At that time, wolves in Oregon consisted of two or three packs concentrated in Wallowa County in Northeast Oregon. At that time, the funds provided by the state for compensation were adequate for compensation to livestock owners and the provision of non-lethal measures attempting to avert or reduce negative wolf-livestock interactions. The overall objective of the compensation fund was mitigating the financial impact of predation by wolves on livestock.

Although northeast Oregon continues to have a large and increasing wolf population as well as high numbers of other large predators (i.e., black bear and cougar), wolves are continuing to expand throughout the state. As a result, funds currently allocated to the WMCP are insufficient to cover compensation for livestock losses and maintaining the most effective non-lethal activities such as the county range riders.

The OCA Wildlife Committee thinks that preventing and mitigating the impacts of predation by wolves on livestock is a constructive approach to reducing the predator-livestock conflict. Although the compensation program does not resolve the problem, it does reduce the financial loss to the producer. However, if adequate funding for compensation and implementing non-lethal prevention measures is not allocated to the OWMCP, the program should be acknowledged as a failure with the expectation that human/livestock – predator conflict will increase, especially as wolves and other large predators look for alternative food sources if Mule deer and Rocky Mountain elk populations decline.

Sincerely,

Dennis P. Sheehy – [sheehycaps@gmail.com](mailto:sheehycaps@gmail.com)