

Submitter: Mary Anne Ericson
On Behalf Of: self
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, and Water
Measure: HB4127

I am opposed to HB 4127 because its funding of "missing livestock" enables poor animal husbandry and does little or nothing to promote tolerance for the presence of wolves on the landscape. Lax oversight by producers of their wandering livestock, encouraged by the possibility of financial compensation, puts their livestock at risk of all kinds of harm and is practically an invitation to predators, including wolves, to eat them.

The first time I hiked in a remote area of the Wallowas and encountered a cow on the trail I was shocked; subsequent encounters with cows on remote hiking trails were less of a surprise but no less disturbing. And then there was this Nov. 22nd update on the Wolf Home Page of ODFW's website: "A producer with a lethal take [killing] permit that was set to expire today will have their permit extended through Friday, Dec. 3. The producer is actively removing livestock from their pastures for the season and needs additional time to search canyons and timber." I have no doubt that cattle can be difficult to locate in canyons and timber, but do they even belong there in the first place, and should producers be compensated if they go missing in those areas?

ODFW's annual wolf report will not appear for at least another month, but it will likely show that 2020 was a terrible year for Oregon's wolves. There was rampant poaching, including the poisoning of an entire pack. ODFW shot eight out of the eleven wolves from the Lookout Mt. wolf family, including the breeding male and most of the pups. Resources that should be devoted to building tolerance for wolves have instead been subsidizing practices that result in more predation, which in turn has led to more killing of wolves. HB 4127 will not help this situation and may only make it worse.