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On Behalf Of:

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The predator control district for Douglas County has been a successful mechanism for livestock owners to self-fund a program that is vital to raising livestock. It has also been successful in Coos County and my understanding is that there are other counties that are interested in the model. There has been much discussion regarding lethal control of predators. There are many methods of reducing predation non-lethally including penning animals, guard dogs, electric fencing, bells, flashing lights, etc. Decision makers need to understand that these practices are already incorporated into the daily management of livestock. Sometimes they work, sometimes they don't. Lethal control is a tool. Non-lethal controls are tools. I'm a big believer in the right tool for the right job. You don't use a hammer when a screwdriver will do.

When I was starting my current flock of sheep, I had twelve of fifteen sheep killed by a cougar. None of the animals were eaten, they were killed and left. No amount of non-lethal actions fixed the recurring problem with that particular cougar. Lethal action was the only option left. The predator control district ensures that there is funding to have trained personnel that are well versed in animal behavior, identifying problem predators and confirming the type of animal that has killed livestock. These skills are in short demand. Having a program funded that keeps these individuals trained and knowledgeable is crucial.