

Chair Golden and Members of the Committee,

This is the face of predator damage. March 12 of last year I found three dead lambs in my field north of Sutherlin. They suffered puncture wounds to their necks and base of the head consistent with cougar attack. Based on the location and conditions of the bodies it was evident that the cougar killed one lamb while it was asleep, walked 100 feet, killed another lamb while it slept and walked another 100 feet and repeated the process. It seems that the rest of the herd never knew what happened. It wasn't until I was taking pictures of the lambs and examining the wounds more closely, that I realized the second lamb in the line was still alive.



That moment is a hard decision for every rancher. Do you dispatch it to relieve its suffering or do you start work on what you know to be a hopeless cause? I picked the lamb up and packed it to the barn where I gave it a shot of antibiotic and placed it in a pen. I decided that if it was still alive in two hours, I would do all that I could to help it survive. Even at that point, I assumed it would be dead in the allotted two hours. It was not.



The loss of the other two lambs is easy to quantify. I lost about \$150 of income from each of them. Quantifying the time, effort and supplies to bring a lamb back to life is impossible, certainly it was more costly than the \$150 I eventually sold it for. I gave the lamb many shots of antibiotics, used iodine to clean the wound, fed it juice with a syringe to give it energy boosts, gave it several different vitamin and mineral supplements (both orally and by injection) to boost its immune system and had to teach it to drink from a bottle. Its injuries were such that it couldn't stand, let alone nurse from its mother. I had to do physical therapy with it three times each day as I was feeding it, trying to get it to stand and regain use of its front legs. I kept grain in front of it, hoping it would learn to eat something that it had never seen before because it needed any kind of nutrition it could get to fight infection and regain strength. Bite



Figure 1: This lamb is alive 2 hours after I retrieved it from the field.

wounds are especially nasty – the cougar that killed my lambs was seen just down the road feeding on a rotting roadkill deer carcass.

My lamb was not able to be with its mother and sister because its awkward movements as it tried to learn to walk again were lurching and scary to other sheep. It is extremely difficult to get sheep to recover in isolation. They are herd animals and need other animals with them. Eventually, I was able to bring it's family in the barn and house them in a separate pen but next to the lamb. When the lamb finally got steady enough to walk on its own, the family was put in a small enclosure together. After initially rejecting the lamb and butting it to the ground, the mother began to at least tolerate her lamb. She never did let it nurse again. By April 2, I was able to turn them out in the field together.

What does all of this have to do with SB 199? The Fish and Wildlife Commission has no experience or background to make decisions regarding controlling predators to livestock, agricultural crops or forests. They have no concern about agriculture. Ag producers need the ability to deal with predators without another layer of bureaucracy. It is hard enough to get trappers to respond to problem animals.

In my case, the trapper had a day off when all of this happened. The cougar killed sheep and goats on a neighboring property and it was several weeks before the cougar was killed.

Please oppose SB 199.

Sarah Schartz



Figure 2: The lamb couldn't stand on its own.

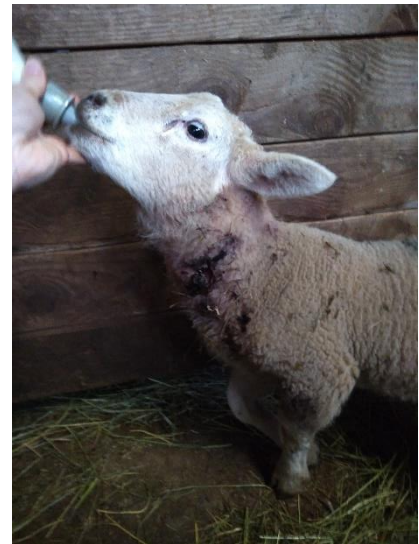


Figure 4: When I fed it, I would stand it up and hold it. Eventually it could stand for a few minutes at a time on its own.



Figure 3: Lamb with its twin sister which grew substantially in the time that the lamb was in the sick ward. Even at this point you can see the difference in the development of the front leg muscles and that it doesn't stand correctly.