

Submitter: D Torres  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and  
Wildfire  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB777

Chair & Committee Members,

I SUPPORT SB 777. I am a member of the Oregon Cattlemen's Association and have been listening to the stories of ranchers across this state that have had to deal with wolf depredations to their livestock. In many instances, especially in rugged country, by the time they find the deceased livestock, there may not be enough left of some of the animals to identify the means of it's demise and near impossible to prove that they were all killed by wolves.

Missing livestock has never been paid at full value. Compensation does not pay for increased management costs and reduced production costs such as:

1. Reduced weaning weight of calf
2. Reduced conception rate or delayed breeding (less cows pregnant)
3. Reduced body condition of cows (cows are thin at the beginning of winter)
4. Increased management costs:
  - a. Cost of non-lethal implementation of protection
  - b. Cattle behavior becomes unmanageable, cattle fighting cow dogs, increased checking on the animals

The losses are not just economic, they are also emotional and social. The time issue becomes critical as ranchers work to protect their herds, losing family time and time away from their normal ranching activities.

Many ranchers have not been participating in the compensation program for many reasons to include:

1. They don't trust the process of investigations to confirm the carcass as a wolf kill
2. The cost of implementing non-lethal
3. Missing livestock are not paid even close to their value.

The cost and time to participate is not enough for them to participate. This bill would help improve the rancher's participation by streamlining the process; increasing the amount received if a depredation is confirmed, helping pay for those missing livestock, production losses and increased management costs. Science supports that ranchers' costs far exceed the 7 to 1 ratio.

In 2009, a heavy wolf-predation year, Casey Anderson, manager of the OX Ranch participated in a Wolf-Cattle Interaction study by Oregon State University and the

Agricultural Research Service. They tracked a radio-collared wolf that was running in a pack of 12 animals and 10 radio-collared cattle in a herd of 450. The study documented 783 encounters between that radio-collared wolf and the radio-collared cattle from June to November.

That year, the OX had 17 confirmed kills of mother cows, yearlings and a bull, plus wolves injured several horses and killed an expensive border collie. By the end of the season, an additional 65 head of cattle were found dead or missing that couldn't be confirmed.

All of those impacts cost money.

“You add all of that up – \$80,000. Our cattle were coming off the range at least 100 pounds lighter than normal. Those cows had to be put directly on hay. Our conception rate went down to 80 percent.”

Please SUPPORT this bill.

I encourage you to continue reading this study and the effects that wolf depredations have on the herds and this industry.

<https://idrange.org/range-stories/north-central-idaho/unforeseen-impacts-caused-by-wolves-in-idaho/>