



# Requesting lethal removal of wolves in eastern Oregon

## What does a livestock producer need to do?

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**Information in this document only pertains to lethal removal authorized by ODFW to address chronic depredation under Phase III management in the East Wolf Management Zone in the federally delisted area east of Highways 395/78/95.**

The purpose of this document is to help producers understand when ODFW may consider lethal removal as an option to reduce wolf-livestock conflict and what ODFW requires from producers to process a lethal removal request consistent with the Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan (Plan) and Oregon Administrative Rules (Rules). The Plan and Rules 635-110-0020 and -0030 lay out the process in more detail. The most common questions regarding this process include:

**What is the intent of lethally removing wolves?** Lethal removal is a tool that ODFW may authorize to reduce the near-term risk of additional depredation in an area where chronic depredation is occurring. Lethal removal is not done preemptively because wolves are in an area near livestock, and it is not a form of punishment or retribution against wolves.

**When does my situation qualify for lethal removal consideration?** ODFW can only consider a lethal removal request from a livestock producer when chronic depredation is occurring and where no identified attractants are present. Chronic depredation is a minimum of two depredation events confirmed by the same wolves in a consecutive nine-month period. It is important to recognize that when these criteria are met, it does not mean that removal will be authorized automatically. ODFW will evaluate information provided by the affected producers and other considerations to determine whether lethal removal is an appropriate action. Rules allow for lethal removal through direct action taken by ODFW and/or a limited duration kill permit issued to the affected producer(s) for land they own or lawfully occupy.

**Do I have to implement non-lethal measures prior to ODFW authorizing lethal removal?** Yes. The Plan emphasizes the implementation of appropriate non-lethal tools and techniques to prevent conflict before lethal can be considered. Staff are available to discuss recommended non-lethal techniques. Rules require that livestock producers (or their representative) submit documentation to ODFW describing the non-lethal efforts implemented to reduce the risk of depredation. ODFW will assess if non-lethal methods deployed by the producer are adequate and appropriate for the pasture situation.

**What other factors are considered when deciding whether to authorize lethal removal?** ODFW considers numerous factors to better understand the nature and severity of the current situation and the likelihood of continued conflict. Situational factors may include the number and severity of depredations (injuries and deaths), time and distance between depredations, and the presence of attractants near the depredation site(s). To assess the likelihood that depredations may continue, ODFW will evaluate the evidence to determine whether additional available non-lethal measures may be effective, the near-term increased availability of vulnerable natural prey (e.g., elk calves), and whether livestock will be moved out of the area soon (e.g., as a grazing permit expires).

**If I believe my situation meets the criteria above, how do I request lethal removal?** Producers affected by chronic depredation can request lethal removal by submitting a letter or talking with their local ODFW biologist. ODFW recommends producers work with the biologist to ensure that ODFW has the necessary information to process the request quickly. For more detailed guidance on what to include in a lethal removal request, see below.

ODFW's goal is to process lethal removal requests in an efficient manner and to ensure that requests are evaluated consistent with requirements specified in the Plan and Rules. When submitting a lethal removal request, ODFW encourages producers to share the following elements:

**Measures to reduce wolf-livestock conflict:** For ODFW to consider a lethal removal request, ODFW must have detailed written documentation of impacted livestock producer(s) efforts to prevent or reduce depredation through non-lethal means which are appropriate for the situation.

- **ODFW needs to know whether, prior to or since the depredation(s), there were any attractants (carcasses or bone piles) near the depredation site.** If attractants have been removed, documentation of that effort is valuable, including the date and how the carcasses or bones were disposed. If ODFW has identified any circumstance on the property that attracts wolf-livestock conflict, the attractant should be removed prior to requesting lethal removal. The removal of attractants may reduce the risk of future wolf-livestock conflict.
- **ODFW needs the specifics of non-lethal measures that would have been expected to reduce livestock conflict and were being implemented at the time and in the same area as the first confirmed depredation.** Include a description of the pasture situation (number/type of livestock and size of pasture). If the depredation occurred in a small pasture, nightpen, winter feeding or calving pasture, the measures could include tools such as fencing, livestock protection dogs, and light and noise scare devices. The non-lethal measures could also be techniques such as human presence (e.g., checking cows/calves at night and hazing wolves) or husbandry changes, such as evening feeding, concentrating livestock, etc.

If the depredation occurred in a large pasture with dispersed cattle, the amount of human presence should be included. Human presence should be conducted in a manner which could reasonably be expected to deter wolf-livestock conflict. Presence around cattle is most effective during the times wolves are active, such as dawn and dusk. In situations such as recent pasture changes, branding or weaning, it may be more effective to have presence at night too. Gathering and settling cattle into small groups in the evening, monitoring cattle behavior to inform where presence is focused, and removing sick or injured cattle are valid human presence actions. Driving around on roads mid-day would not be expected to deter conflict. Please be specific with dates, time spent, number of people, actions taken, transportation method, specific areas monitored, and tools or techniques used.

- **Following the first confirmed depredation, describe which non-lethal measures were continued and any additional tools or actions that were implemented.** It is important to document any increased use of non-lethal tools or techniques, such as increased human presence, or pasture changes.

**Additional content to include in a request for lethal removal:**

- Location information about the specific pasture(s) or properties, including how long the livestock will be present, is important. If a request is for leased land, include the landowner's name, contact information, confirmation that the landowner approves the lethal removal of wolves on their property, and the dates that the lessee's livestock may lawfully occupy that property.
- While not required, it may be helpful to explain other non-lethal efforts that were taken in the past that did not have a direct effect on reducing the current depredation(s) but may have stopped previous depredations from happening (such as waiting until June to turn out).

ODFW is committed to working with producers to minimize livestock depredation. Non-lethal methods are prioritized (options are listed at [www.odfw.com/wolves](http://www.odfw.com/wolves)) but lethal can be an option in chronic situations.