

ODFW Wolf Depredation Investigation Summary

Date: 9/7/11

County: Wallowa

General Area: Salt Creek Summit area (USFS)

Situation: On 9/7/11, the range rider found a mostly consumed carcass of a dead adult cow while monitoring cattle on a USFS grazing allotment. Wolves were suspected and ODFW examined the cow the same day.

ODFW findings: Probable wolf kill

Evidence of wolf presence in the area? The Imnaha wolf pack uses this area regularly during the summer and fall months. GPS radio collar data places one wolf (Imnaha pack alpha male, OR4) at the location of the cow the nights of September 3-7.

Summary of evidence: The carcass had been mostly consumed by scavengers, with sign of wolves, bear, and coyote present. The carcass consisted mostly of bones and a large piece of hide, with muscle remaining for examination only on the head, neck and lower legs. There was bruising under the skin and tissue damage with muscle hemorrhage down to the leg bone, on the right rear leg below the hock. This is indicative of an injury sustained before death. There were no identifiable tooth marks to be able to confirm this as a bite injury. The underside of the hide from the rear of the hindquarter exhibited dark purple stains suggestive of hemorrhaging. The scene was also examined for evidence of what had happened to the cow. Approximately 35 yards south of the carcass there was evidence in dry dirt of a cow hoofprint scuffs from running and stumbling or sliding down a 5-6 foot high bank into a dry rocky creek bottom. There were seven small scattered patches of black cow hair where the cow fell and scraped against rocks in the creek bottom. Above the bank, 13 feet above the creek bottom, were small tufts of black hair near a rock. This scene indicates a probable wolf chase or attack scene.