

ODFW Wolf Depredation Investigation Summary

Date: 11/21/2012

County: Harney

General Area: S. Malheur Lake Area – Private Land

Situation: A livestock producer found a dead 600 lb steer in an irrigated pasture on 11/21/12. Though no wolves are known to occur in Harney County, wolf depredation was suspected and ODFW was asked to look at the carcass. The carcass was investigated the same afternoon.

ODFW finding: Other

Evidence of wolf presence in the area: No evidence of wolves was observed at or near the scene.

Summary of evidence: No evidence of a struggle or kill scene was found during the investigation. Other cattle in the pasture appeared calm and indicated no recent disturbance. The carcass was mostly intact, but had some scavenging on both hind quarters and entrails. Only dog and coyote scat were found in the vicinity of the carcass. The carcass was skinned and no evidence of bite marks or bite trauma was observed. Investigators observed that the 600 lb steer had been recently castrated, and this was confirmed by a neighbor who stated the animal had been castrated on the 16th. Upon skinning, investigators discovered large amounts of swelling and associated yellow fluid in the entire ventral portion of the animal (brisket area to the hocks), and especially in the groin area – clear indication that the animal suffered widespread infection. No evidence of predation of any kind was observed and though the specific cause of death was unknown, it was likely related to systemic infection.