



## ODFW LIVESTOCK DEPREDACTION INVESTIGATION REPORT

Investigation ID: 130603 Umatilla

**Date Investigated:** 6/3/2013

**General Area:** Weston Mountain area – Private land

**General situation and animal information:** A livestock producer found a dead 4 year old ewe in his pasture on the morning of 6/3/13. Wolf predation was suspected and ODFW investigated the same day. The carcass was located within a grass pasture in a partially dried up creek bed. The ewe had been dead for several days and had been partially consumed by scavengers. The owner reported last observing the ewe on 5/23/2013 or 5/24/2013.

**Physical evidence of attack by a predator:** No chase, struggle or kill location could be identified. Premortem injuries were observed on three portions of the carcass. 1) A single puncture in the hide was observed on the inside left rear leg. It appeared to be a bite wound and showed associated hemorrhage. 2) Punctures and associated hemorrhage which appeared to be bite wounds were observed across the back, posterior to the ribs. 3) Five puncture holes which appeared to be bite wounds were observed on the right side of the neck, all averaging 5/16" in diameter and about 2" across for matching bites. One puncture hole was observed on the left side of neck. Overall the neck region had deep bite-caused muscle trauma and premortem hemorrhage affecting the entire neck region from just behind the ear to the base of the neck. The neck had been broken mid-section between the base of the skull and the shoulders.

**Evidence that the predator was a wolf:** The size and spacing of the premortem bite wounds observed are consistent with wolf. The injuries are similar in location and appearance to previous wolf depredations of adult sheep in this area. This, combined with evidence of wolf presence near where the carcass was found is strong evidence that the death of the sheep was wolf caused.

**Evidence of wolf presence near the time of the animal(s) death/injury:** The estimated date of death was on or about 5/28/2013. Radio-collar data shows that OR14, the breeding male of the Umatilla River pack, had 2 GPS locations in the vicinity on 5/26/2013. On 5/28/2013, he was within 550 yards of the carcass location at 3am, 110 yards at 9am and 480 yards at 12pm. Collar data also shows that he was within 100 yards at 6am on 6/3/2013. Two older suspected wolf tracks were inside the fladried pasture (3 feet and 25 feet from the dead ewe). Three fresh verified wolf tracks were found outside the pasture (33, 41 and 105 feet from the dead ewe).

**Recent wolf depredation in the same or nearby area:** This producer had confirmed incident of wolf depredation on 6 sheep on the same property on 5/21/2013.

**Cause of death/injury:**

Confirmed Wolf       Probable Wolf       Possible/Unknown       Other

**Summary:** The cause of death was wolf attack as evidenced by the wolf-sized bite marks combined with hemorrhage and tissue damage in the typical locations found on adult sheep attacked by wolves (neck, back, haunches) and the presence of one or more Umatilla River wolves.