



ODFW LIVESTOCK DEPREDAATION INVESTIGATION REPORT

Investigation ID: 131025 Umatilla

Date Investigated: 10/25/2013

General Area: Weston Mountain area – private land

General situation and animal information: A livestock producer found a dead lamb near a sheep pen on the morning of 10/25/2013. The Suffolk lamb was estimated to have weighed around 120 lbs and got outside the protective fenced area the evening prior. Wolf predation was suspected and ODFW investigated the same day. The carcass was located approximately 8 yards from the pen in a recently created clearing, though there was evidence that the site of death was at the fence line. The lamb was estimated to have died the previous evening and had been partially consumed and all injuries and consumption occurred on the hind half of the lamb. Additional investigation of the carcass was also made on 10/28. The owner reported last observing the animals the evening of 10/24/2013. The owner also reported a second sheep, which had gotten out of the pen at the same time, to be missing.

Physical evidence of attack by a predator: The location of the carcass near the pen indicated that very little chase occurred. Blood and wool patches were observed in a scuffed area at the fenceline, identifying the spot as the likely kill site. Premortem injuries were observed on two portions of the carcass. 1) A bite mark with associated hemorrhage on the hide was observed on the upper right rear leg. 2) Muscle tissues of the hind end showed evidence of premortem trauma, several hematomas within the tissue. Entrails were removed during predator's feeding on the carcass (though not all of the heart and lungs were removed) and much of the hind end muscle tissue was consumed.

Evidence that the predator was a wolf: No clear evidence. The size and spacing of the premortem bite wounds could not be clearly identified as wolf – one bite had spacing located in the hide with a 1.5" spacing. The torso, front legs, head and neck showed no injuries of any kind.

Evidence of wolf presence near the time of the animal(s) death/injury: A fresh track set from a single wolf was observed in a muddy section of road approximately 80 yards from the carcass. No radio collar locations were near the site of the dead lamb. However, OR 14 was shown to be in the area much of the day on 10/26.

Recent wolf depredation in the same or nearby area: ODFW confirmed sheep predation by the Umatilla River wolves on this property in 2012. More recently a confirmed depredation of a goat occurred approximately 3.25 miles west of this site on 8/23/13.

Cause of death/injury:

Confirmed Wolf

Probable Wolf

Possible/Unknown

Other

Summary: Bite wounds, including some with hemorrhage, is evidence that the lamb died as a result of predation. Though the wounds could not be clearly identified as wolf-caused, there was evidence of wolf presence (a single track set 80 yards distant) in the immediate area. This producer had experienced confirmed wolf depredation in this same pasture in 2012. More recently, wolves of the Umatilla River pack area recently depredated a goat in the general area. These factors, combined, warrant a probable determination.