



ODFW LIVESTOCK DEPREDATION INVESTIGATION REPORT

Investigation ID: 140716 Wallowa

Date Investigated: 07/16/2014

General Area: Cougar Creek area – Wallowa Whitman N.F.

General situation and animal information: On 07/16/2014 ODFW received a citizen report that a domestic calf (cattle) was found dead on a remote portion of a National Forest allotment in northern Wallowa County – Cougar Creek area. Two wolves were reported to be observed (and howling was heard) in the area, along with abundant sign (tracks and scat) at the site of the carcass. Wolf depredation was suspected and ODFW was contacted at 6:30PM which resulted in an investigation on the same evening. The calf carcass was mostly intact (approximately 30% consumed), and was estimated to have died the previous evening.

Physical evidence of attack by a predator: A struggle scene (approximately 15x30 feet) was observed immediately upstream of the carcass – vegetation trampled, and limbs broken. Blood was also observed on the ground and on branches in several locations near the carcass. Multiple and large bite wounds (see below) were clearly observed on the calf, and the associated hemorrhage in hide and muscle tissues beneath the bites was evidence that this calf was attacked by a large predator, and not scavenged.

Evidence that the predator was a wolf: The location of the most severe pre-mortem bite wounds was in soft tissues behind both front shoulders, and on both hind legs. Bite wounds were in the form of gaping holes in the hide (approx 2" diameter), canine tooth punctures (1/4-3/8" dia.), and tooth scrapes (1/8-3/16" wide). One pair of tooth scrapes that could be accurately measured was 2" apart.

Evidence of wolf presence near the time of the animal(s) death/injury: Fresh wolf tracks (4" long x 3.75" wide) observed within 20 feet of the carcass during the investigation corroborated the initial report of a wolf or wolves at the scene. Scats which had been initially collected by the reporting party also appeared to be wolf scats. The number of wolves could not be specifically determined, but the amount of tissue consumed indicated a small number (est. 2-3) of wolves present.

Recent wolf depredation in the same or nearby area: No confirmed or suspected wolf depredations in this area.

Cause of death/injury:

Confirmed Wolf

Probable Wolf

Possible/Unknown

Other

Summary: ODFW examined the calf carcass on the same day of discovery and found significant hemorrhaging beneath the hide and in muscle tissues behind both front shoulders, and both hind legs. Multiple, large canine-tooth bite marks were ample evidence to indicate the hemorrhaging was the result of predation. In addition, the location and size of the bite wounds, combined with observed wolf tracks and scat is clear evidence that one or more wolves depredated this calf. The cause of death is confirmed as wolf depredation.