



## ODFW LIVESTOCK DEPREDATION INVESTIGATION REPORT

Investigation ID: 160818 Umatilla

**Date Investigated:** 8/18/2016

**General Area:** Spring Mountain area - public land

**General situation and animal information:** On 8/18/16, while USDA Wildlife Services was working in the area, a sheep herder informed the agent about a wolf encounter. The herder reported that on 8/16/16 at 4:00 PM, he heard a noise coming from a timbered draw near his camp and sheep night-penning area. He saw one of his guard dogs and one black wolf fighting. The herder fired three shots from his rifle in the air causing the wolf to run away. He went to where they were fighting and found a freshly dead ewe sheep. Wildlife Services suspected wolf depredation and ODFW investigated the same day. When examined, the carcass had been heavily consumed with only the skeletal system, small amounts of connective tissue, hide, rumen, and wool remaining.

**Physical evidence of attack by a predator:** There was no evidence of disturbance, a chase, or drag marks at the scene. Seven feet from the carcass were two dried blood pools measuring 4x4 inches, which are consistent with other predation events where a sheep was still alive when attacked by a predator.

**Evidence that the predator was a wolf:** No physical evidence was found. The herder reported seeing a wolf in close proximity to the dead sheep.

**Evidence of wolf presence near the time of the animal(s) death/injury:** No physical wolf evidence was found at the scene, but trail camera and track evidence show a single wolf using the area.

**Recent wolf depredation in the same or nearby area:** None

**Cause of death/injury:**

Confirmed Wolf

Probable Wolf

Possible/Unknown

Other

**Summary:** By the time the investigation was initiated, the carcass had been heavily consumed to the point where the death of the sheep could not be confirmed to a specific predator. The evidence of predation, the confirmed presence of a black wolf near the band, and the herder's eyewitness account of the presence of a black wolf at or near the time of the sheep's death, warrants a probable determination.