



ODFW LIVESTOCK DEPREDATION INVESTIGATION REPORT

Investigation ID: 171125 Union

Date Investigated: 11/25/2017

General Area: Five Points Creek area - private land

General situation and animal information: On late afternoon 11/24/17, a landowner found a dead, 250 pound, adult llama in a forested pasture about 200 yards from the residence. The owner suspected wolf depredation; ODFW was notified and investigated on 11/25/17. The carcass was intact except most of the hide and muscle tissue of the right rear leg above the hock and around the anus was consumed. The llama was estimated to have died between late 11/22/17 and before dark on 11/23/17. The owner also found a dead llama on 11/13/17 (Investigation 171114 Union).

Physical evidence of attack by a predator: Multiple scuff marks were found along a trail for 50 yards leading to the carcass indicating a large animal running. Premortem bite scrapes, muscle tissue trauma and hemorrhaging were found indicating an attack by a predator.

Evidence that the predator was a wolf: Two patches of blood-stained llama hair and intestinal contents were found along the trail indicating either a wolf chase and kill scene or feeding activity. Most of the tissue and hide remained on the carcass for examination. The number of bite scrapes and depth of tissue trauma was less than usually seen on wolf depredations. The bite scrape sizes ($\frac{1}{8}$ - $\frac{1}{4}$ inch width and up to 3 inch length) are consistent with wolf and other large predators. Though the wounds were not consistent with extensive wolf-caused injuries, there were premortem bite scrapes above the right hock (3), on the left rump (2), and on the throat (~15). There was hemorrhage and muscle tissue damage on the throat and 1 inch deep on the rump on the left and right side of the tail.

Evidence of wolf presence near the time of the animal(s) death/injury: At least two sets of tracks (both 1 - 2 days old) with one set looking older than the other were found in the mud on a road 20 yards from the carcass. ODFW documented trail camera photos about 300 yards from the carcass, of one wolf 11/23/17 at 11 am moving towards where the carcass was found.

Recent wolf depredation in the same or nearby area: Four depredations were attributed to the Meacham Pack in August, 2017 about ten miles away. This incident was located near the edge of the Meacham Pack AKWA (mapped Area of Known Wolf Activity).

Cause of death/injury:

Confirmed Wolf

Probable Wolf

Possible/Unknown

Other

Summary: There was sufficient evidence to confirm predation on the llama by a large predator, but not enough evidence to confirm which predator. The possible chase scene, premortem injuries on the hindquarters and neck, and the presence of at least one wolf near the time of death warrants a probable wolf depredation determination.

Addendum (2/6/2018): Since this investigation was completed in November, additional data has been collected causing ODFW to reassess the earlier determination of probable.

Since 11/25/17, ODFW biologists have confirmed wolves in the pasture with the llamas, and near the residence, six times. On 12/21/17 and 1/29/18 ODFW documented wolf/llama conflict events as seen by tracks in the snow. On 1/31/18, ODFW confirmed wolves again chased one of the llamas, killing it within 140 yards of the llama killed on 11/25/17. The OR52 group (3 wolves) was verified on the property on 11/30/17. Generally, there have been 3 wolves traveling together, based on tracks.

When investigating the llama killed on 11/25/17, ODFW was able to determine that a large predator killed the llama, but was not able to confirm that it was caused by wolves. Though the injuries were dissimilar to the attack locations used by wolves on some other similarly-sized prey, ODFW acknowledges that the shape and behavior of llamas are quite different from cattle and sheep. The injuries on the head, ears, neck and throat of the llama that was killed on 11/25/17 had marked similarities to the confirmed wolf attack on a llama on 1/30/18 in the same pasture and an unrelated confirmed attack by different wolves on an alpaca on 12/10/17.

This new evidence warrants a change from probable wolf depredation to confirmed wolf depredation.