



ODFW LIVESTOCK DEPREDATION INVESTIGATION REPORTS

July 2020

This document lists livestock depredation investigations completed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife since July 1, 2020. Investigations are done at the request of the owner of injured or dead livestock when they suspect wolf depredation. The goal of these investigations is to determine if the livestock was attacked by a predator and if that predator was a wolf. The goal is not necessarily to determine the cause of death, as in some cases that would require a veterinary pathologist (e.g. illness, injury, age, poisonous plants). In some areas of Oregon, USDA Wildlife Services assists ODFW when wolves are suspected and is the lead agency to investigate when other predators such as coyotes, bear, or cougar are suspected. In areas where wolves are federally protected, the USFWS may choose to assist at investigations. In some counties, the local Sheriff's office deputies also attend investigations. ODFW needs to make the determination for lethal removal of chronically depredating wolves to be considered or if the livestock producer wants financial compensation from the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

There is information about methods to minimize conflict at https://www.dfw.state.or.us/Wolves/non-lethal_methods.asp. The investigation determination criteria and previous investigations are listed at https://www.dfw.state.or.us/Wolves/depredation_investigations.asp. Additional information about Oregon wolves and answers to frequently asked questions are provided at www.odfw.com/wolves.

July 31, 2020 – Klamath County (Fort Klamath area)

Date Investigated: 7/31/2020

Cause of death/injury: Confirmed

General situation and animal information: On the morning of 7/31/20, a ranch manager found a dead, approximately 800 lb. yearling steer in a 160-acre private-land grass pasture. The carcass was entirely intact, and it was estimated the steer died within 12 hours of the investigation.

Physical evidence and summary of findings: The entire carcass was skinned and examined. Numerous pre-mortem tooth scrapes up to ¼ inch wide and several inches long were found behind the elbows of both front legs and along the flanks. There were also similarly sized pre-mortem bite scrapes on the inner hind legs from the tail down to the hock. Associated trauma extended up to 2 inches into underlying muscle tissues. The pre-mortem bite scrapes and tissue trauma are clear signs of predator attack and the size, number, and location of the bite injuries are similar to injuries observed on other cattle attacked by wolves. This depredation is attributed to wolves of the Rogue Pack.

July 30, 2020 – Klamath County (Fort Klamath area)

Date Investigated: 7/30/2020

Cause of death/injury: Confirmed

General situation and animal information: On the morning of 7/30/20, a landowner found an injured, approximately 725 lb. yearling steer in a 430-acre private-land grass pasture while following up on a report of disturbance in the pasture. The injuries on the flanks and hindquarters were fresh and still bleeding when ODFW arrived. The yearling died later that afternoon.

Physical evidence and summary of findings: Because the yearling was difficult to approach, it was not skinned or shaved, but was examined from a short distance. Multiple tooth scrapes up to ¼ inch wide and 6 inches long were observed behind the elbows of both front legs, along the flanks, and on the hindquarters from the tail down to the hocks. Fresh wolf tracks were found in the pasture within 6 feet of the injured yearling. The pre-mortem bite scrapes and tissue trauma are clear signs of predator attack and the size, number, and location of the bite injuries are similar to injuries observed on other cattle attacked by wolves. This depredation is attributed to wolves of the Rogue Pack.

July 27, 2020 – Wallowa County A (Braham Meadows area)

Date Investigated: 7/27/20

Cause of death/injury: Other

General situation and animal information: Late in the morning of 7/26/20, the property owners of a leased private pasture noticed a four-month-old, 400 lb. calf that was having trouble walking. The calf died later that day and the livestock owner contacted ODFW to schedule an investigation for the morning of 7/27/20. The calf carcass was whole and hauled to the producer's house prior to the investigation.

Physical evidence and summary of findings: The calf was partially shaved, then skinned and examined. One abrasion was found on the hide behind the left ear, there was pre-mortem hemorrhage in the tissue below it. Several other scratches and abrasions were found in the hide, but no hemorrhaging was found in the underlying tissues. A large area of subdermal pre-mortem hemorrhage was found between back muscle tissues and hide along the spine and withers. No evidence was found to indicate a predator attack. The cause of death is unknown, but is not wolf related.

July 27, 2020 – Wallowa County B (Peavine Creek area)

Date Investigated: 7/27/20

Cause of death/injury: Confirmed

General situation and animal information: On 7/26/20 a dead, 4-month-old, 300 lb. calf was found by recreationists in a large, timbered, USFS pasture. The owner contacted ODFW on 7/27/20 for an investigation. The calf was intact with little scavenging. The calf was estimated to have died around 7/23-24/20.

Physical evidence and summary of findings: The entire carcass was skinned and examined. Multiple pre-mortem tooth scrapes measuring 1/8 to 1/4-inch wide were found on the inside and outside of the back of both rear legs above the hocks. The tooth scrapes were angled back and down and hemorrhaging was found up to 2 inches deep in the corresponding muscle tissue. Several puncture holes and open wounds measuring 1/4 inch to 1-1/2 inches wide were found on the inside and back of both rear legs. These wounds overlaid hemorrhaging found in the muscle tissues, the open wounds had an approximately 2-inch diameter area of muscle tissue missing from under the hide. These injuries are consistent with wolf attack injuries. The calf appeared to have died sometime after the initial wolf attack. The depredation is attributed to the Chesnimnus Pack.

July 27, 2020 – Wallowa County C (Upper Broady Creek area)

Date Investigated: 7/27/20

Cause of death/injury: Possible/Unknown

General situation and animal information: On the afternoon of 7/26/20, a producer found a dead, 5-month-old, 400 lb. calf in a large, timbered, USFS pasture. An investigation was requested on 7/27/20. The carcass had been heavily scavenged removing nearly all of the muscle tissue from the back half of the calf. The majority of hide remained except the groin area. The front half remained largely intact through the front shoulders and head. The calf was estimated to have died approximately six days earlier.

Physical evidence and summary of findings: The remaining hide was skinned from the carcass and examined. There were several puncture holes, tears through the hide, and tooth scrapes up to 3/16 inch wide and 4 inches long near the feeding margin on the rear legs. The extent of tissue decomposition and scavenging prevented determining if these were pre- or postmortem. No definitive pre-mortem bite marks or hemorrhaging was found on the carcass. Due to the extent of scavenging and tissue decomposition, the determination is possible/unknown.

July 24, 2020 – Wallowa County (Three Lakes area)

Date Investigated: 7/24/20

Cause of death/injury: Possible/Unknown

General situation and animal information: A day rider found the remains of a 4-month-old, 350 lb. calf in a large, private, grassland pasture late in the morning on 7/23/20. ODFW was contacted later and an investigation was scheduled for early 7/24/20. Hide remained on the head, down portions of both sides of the barrel, over the rump, and down the outside of the rear left leg. The date of death was estimated to be between 7/20/20 and 7/21/20.

Physical evidence and summary of findings: The remaining hide was skinned, and the surrounding area searched. No attack or struggle scene was found. There were no pre-mortem bite marks or hemorrhage on the remaining carcass or hide. No evidence was found to suggest the death was wolf-related. However, due to the lack of muscle tissue and hide the determination is possible/unknown.

July 18, 2020 – Morrow County (Rhea Creek area)

Date Investigated: 7/18/20

Cause of death/injury: Other

General situation and animal information: On the morning of 7/18/20, a ranch manager found a dead adult cow on the edge of a large, open private-land pasture. The carcass was intact, with advanced decomposition and some consumption by maggots and scavengers at the abdomen and anus. It was estimated the cow died approximately 4 days prior to the investigation.

Physical evidence and summary of findings:

The carcass was examined and the majority of the left side was skinned. No pre-mortem wounds to the hide or tissue were observed. The cause of death is unknown but not wolf related.

July 17, 2020 – Klamath County (Fort Klamath area)

Date Investigated: 7/17/2020

Cause of death/injury: Confirmed

General situation and animal information: On the afternoon of 7/17/2020, the remains of a 725 lb. yearling steer were found in a 750-acre private-land grass pasture. Portions of the left front leg and rear flank had hide and soft tissue consumed, but the carcass was otherwise intact. The yearling was estimated to have died within 18 hours of the investigation.

Physical evidence and summary of findings: Fresh wolf tracks were present at the scene but no attack scene was found. The carcass was skinned and portions were shaved. Numerous pre-mortem tooth scrapes 1/8 to 3/8 inch wide and up to 4 inches long were present on the hide of both hind legs above the hocks, inner hind legs and groin, and right front leg near the elbow. There was pre-mortem hemorrhaging and tissue trauma extending up to 2 inches into the soft tissues of all four legs. The pre-mortem injuries are clear signs of predator attack and the size, location, and severity of the bite injuries are similar to injuries observed on other cattle attacked by wolves. This depredation is attributed to wolves of the Rogue Pack.

July 15, 2020 – Baker County (Alder Creek area)

Date Investigated: 7/15/20

Cause of death/injury: Other

General situation and animal information: On the morning of 7/15/20 a livestock producer found a dead, 1-month-old calf in a fenced private-land pasture. Most of the muscle tissue and hide around the anus and upper right leg had been consumed, but the carcass was otherwise intact. The calf was estimated to have died the evening of 7/14/20.

Physical evidence and summary of findings: The carcass was skinned and examined and the surrounding area searched for an attack scene. Multiple sets of coyote tracks were found at carcass and surrounding

area. No clear attack or struggle scene was found. There were pre-mortem bite and tooth marks with associated tissue hemorrhaging up to 3/8 inch deep on the legs and back. Paired canine puncture spacing ranged from 7/8 to 1 inch with tooth diameter of 1/16 to 1/8 inch. Tooth spacing and diameter of pre-mortem bite marks and depth of associated hemorrhaging are consistent with coyote predation. The death of this calf was not wolf related.

July 14, 2020 – Union County A&B (Rocky Ridge area)

Date Investigated: 7/14/20

Cause of death/injury: Other (2)

General situation and animal information: On the morning of 7/14/20, a sheep herder found a dead adult ewe (Sheep A) on a US Forest Service allotment. During the investigation, staff were notified that a dead lamb (Sheep B) was discovered on the same allotment approximately 0.7 miles from Sheep A. Both animals had died within 24 hours of investigation. On sheep A, viscera and most muscle tissue in front of the hind quarters was consumed; hind quarters were largely intact. The rumen and intestines remained on scene. Most of the hide and bones were present and intact except the left front leg was missing. The hide had been peeled back over the right front leg. On sheep B, all bones and hide remained. The entrails and most muscle tissue from the front and rear legs was consumed. The hide had been peeled back over the right rear leg.

Physical evidence and summary of findings: Both carcasses were skinned and examined. There were bite punctures and pre-mortem hemorrhage on both animals indicating they had been attacked by a predator. On sheep A, pre-mortem tooth punctures up to ¼ inch in width with associated hemorrhaging up to 2 inches deep were found on the neck, back, and hind quarters. The flank and abdomen exhibited pre-mortem muscle bruising up to ½ inch deep with no associated bite marks. The location and severity of bites and non-bite injuries are consistent with black bear predation. On sheep B, there were several pre-mortem canine punctures 3/16" to ¼" diameter on the hide of the skull, several of which penetrated the skull. No other pre-mortem injuries were observed. The location of bites on sheep B are not consistent with wolf predation.

July 10, 2020 – Morrow County (Summerfield Ridge area)

Date Investigated: 7/10/20

Cause of death/injury: Other

General situation and animal information: On the morning of 7/10/20, a landowner's agent found a dead adult cow in a narrow riparian area in a large, mostly grassland private pasture. There was advanced decomposition and heavy consumption by maggots. A majority of the hide was intact as well as muscle tissue from the hindquarters and right front leg. It was estimated that the cow died at least five days prior to the investigation.

Physical evidence and summary of findings: The remaining carcass was skinned and examined. No pre-mortem bite marks on the hide or underlying pre-mortem tissue damage was found. There was no evidence of a predator attack on the carcass or at the scene. The cause of death is unknown, but was not wolf related.