



ODFW LIVESTOCK DEPREDATION INVESTIGATION REPORT

Investigation ID: 140130 Wallowa

Date Investigated: 1/30/2014

General Area: Upper Prairie Creek, Private Land

General situation and animal information: On the morning of January 30, 2014, an owner of a small band of sheep discovered a dead ewe within his paddock. A fresh snow had fallen overnight and wolf tracks were observed in the area of the dead animal and the paddock. The ewe was partially consumed, still warm, and wolf predation was suspected. ODFW examined the ewe on the same morning.

Physical evidence of attack by a predator: Multiple, large, pre-mortem bite wounds were observed on this animal. Tissue damage with severe hemorrhage was observed on the ewe's flank/groin area. In addition, bite wounds with associated hemorrhage was observed above the left front shoulder, on the right hind leg, on the right rib cage, and on the ewe's neck. All tooth punctures and bite wounds observed were clearly a result of large canine teeth.

Evidence that the predator was a wolf: Numerous wolf tracks were observed both inside and outside the paddock and at the location of the carcass. The large canine tooth marks and the location of the bite wounds (flank/groin, behind front shoulder, neck, and hind legs) are commonly observed attack points for wolves. Severely damaged muscle tissue beneath several of the bite wounds showed evidence of 'shredding' – something commonly observed with sheep depredation by wolves. The shredding of tissue was observed in areas where the hide over the wound was relatively intact. This, combined with deep hemorrhage into the muscle tissues, are clear indicators of very powerful bites with relatively blunt teeth.

Evidence of wolf presence near the time of the animal(s) death/injury: Numerous wolf tracks at the carcass and in the area of the paddock as noted above. Limited location data has shown that wolves of the Imnaha Pack have regularly frequented this portion of their home range over the past two weeks. Importantly, VHF locations of OR4 indicate his presence the day prior to and the day of the depredation in the area near this depredation.

Recent wolf depredation in the same or nearby area: On 8/22/2013 a depredation (cow) by the Imnaha Pack was confirmed at a location approximately 5 miles east of this site.

Cause of death/injury:

Confirmed Wolf

Probable Wolf

Possible/Unknown

Other

Summary: ODFW found that this ewe died as a result of trauma from many large bite wounds. Severe hemorrhage was present showing that the animal was depredated and not simply scavenged. The location and appearance of the bite wounds noted above are similar to those observed on other confirmed sheep depredations. In addition, at least some of the Imnaha Pack members were known to be in the immediate area on the night of this depredation – the scene of the attack and the presence of multiple wolf tracks corroborated this. These factors combined are clear evidence that this ewe was depredated by wolves of the Imnaha Pack.