

Submitter: Susan Strauss

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, and Water

Measure: HB4127

Dear House Committee on Land Use, Agriculture and Water,

We own livestock. We live in a rural community. Both my daughter and husband are hunters. They would never kill a wolf or a coyote. They hunt to eat, not to destroy life. I have stopped eating beef because I have become so disgusted with the political pressure of the livestock industry to use state tax dollars to fight against the science of wolf predation--instead of using the success stories of non-lethal methods for coexistence. I know of several predator-friendly ranchers and when my family asks for beef, I am happy to support them with my purchases. "Thank you for buying beef." a gentleman standing near the butcher counter approached me and handed me a leaflet from Country Natural Beef: A Cooperative of Family Ranchers. I asked how his ranchers think about wolves. To paraphrase, he said, "Oregonians have voted to keep wolves on the landscape. We have not had any issues with wolves. If we do, we intend to use non-lethal methods for deterring them. We recognize that they are actually a very small threat to our livestock and we intend to coexist with them."

Research, in several states, has proven that if wolf family structure is left undisturbed, wolves prefer to eat wild game. Somehow our state agency, either didn't understand the science or crumbled under political pressure when they took out an entire pack last year in the Wallows — leaving a single female and two newly weened nursing pups! How was that single mother going to feed herself and her pups without going for an easy take?

Ranchers who are serious about coexisting have found that non-lethal methods combined with watchmen alerts have proven more cost effect than "wolf compensation funds" --see link to film: <https://wildlifecoexistence.org/the-wood-river-wolf-project/>. For Oregon tax payers, this is the best bang for our buck. Funds from ODFW's "livestock compensation program" (sometimes called the "coexistence program") should NOT be used to supply livestock managers with "tools" like telemetry equipment tuned to wolf radio collars and ATV's to be used in state issued kill orders. "Coexistence" doesn't mean deputizing those same livestock managers to hunt down state protected wildlife.

Near Klamath, we had a situation where a California rancher brought his cows up to finish them on some fields. Wolves from neighboring Forest Service lands came sniffing around. In discussion about the potential problem, I actually heard an ODFW employee say that they should go up into the FS land and kill some of the wolves as

a solution. First of all, going into the wild is not addressing any specific threat to livestock. Secondly, damaging wolf pack structure is scientifically proven to increase livestock predation. Within a few weeks, the California rancher took his cows to market without any damage and the issue was void. Ranchers, like those I buy beef from, have proven success. Before handing out any tax candy, the livestock industry needs to prove that same success and work in harmony with the science and will of the Oregon voter.

Supporting Science for protecting healthy family predation structures:

<https://news.wsu.edu/press-release/2014/12/03/research-finds-lethal-wolf-control-backfires-on-livestock/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4254458/>

https://www.humanesociety.org/sites/default/files/docs/HSUS-Wolf-Livestock-6.Mar_.19Final.pdf

If family is a particularly American traditional value, then the wolf should be our mascot - guarded and admired — the genetic grandparent of “Man’s Best Friend.” A monument of our living American cultural heritage. Thank you Country Natural Beef.

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