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On Behalf Of:  
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Wildfire  
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As a seventh-generation rancher in Oregon, I've spent my life working to maintain the balance between productive ranching and wildlife conservation. Wolves are a public resource—part of the broader biodiversity we all value—yet the costs of managing their presence fall disproportionately on landowners like me. Engaging in wolf-livestock conflict reduction requires significant labor, time, and infrastructure. We must invest in non-lethal measures, from protective fencing to monitoring systems, to try to minimize the risk to our livestock. These efforts, while necessary, add layers of expense and stress that are not always reflected in the public discussion about wolves in our state.

Beyond these direct costs, ranchers face hidden expenses as well. We bear the burden of production losses when wolves kill our livestock. However, the financial impacts go deeper, affecting our ability to maintain operations and sustain our livelihoods. Managing the habitat for these animals, even when they cause harm to our herds, takes time away from our work on the ranch and puts additional strain on our resources. It's not just a matter of replacing lost livestock; it's about the hidden, ongoing costs of protecting our operations from further damage, as well as providing habitat for wildlife without losing the economic viability of our family businesses.

To truly protect wildlife and support landowners, compensation for production losses must be fair and reflect the full scope of the costs we bear. A 7:1 compensation rate for livestock killed by wolves in Oregon would provide the necessary support for ranchers to continue to operate while helping to sustain our state's diverse ecosystems. Federal, state, and private funding should be expanded to ensure we have the resources to both recover losses and implement conflict reduction strategies. This approach would help distribute the costs of maintaining healthy wildlife populations and the habitats that support them, while also ensuring the long-term economic viability of working landscapes like mine.