

Submitter: Jayna and Justin Ferrell  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and  
Wildfire  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB777

With our two kids, we are third-generation cow/calf producers. Last Wednesday we lost three of our calves to confirmed wolf kills, one probable wolf kill, and one unknown. Three of these calves were found dead after a collared wolf had been documented, via GPS collar, in the middle of our calving cows for 4+ hours (1/2 mile north of our house), the fourth calf died later that day. The unknown calf was in the same specific location but was found to be unknown due to the lack of evidence (see discussion below). The other confirmed kill was documented west in another herd of our calving cows. The same wolf also was confirmed to killing a neighbor's calf and has a history of livestock depredation. This wolf, OR-158, also displayed non-typical behavior shown by his proximity to residences and businesses, his lack of response to non-lethal methods, and his presents across most of our community and surrounding areas according to his GPS locations and personal interactions.

I am writing to express my deep concern about the ongoing challenges faced by livestock owners in regions affected by wolf depredation and to support SB-007. The resurgence of wolf populations has led to significant economic, emotional, and logistical hardships for ranchers. As a livestock owner/rancher, community member, and effected party, I urge you to support SB 007.

The depredation of livestock by wolves has been a persistent issue for ranchers. Confirming kills caused by wolves is often a difficult and time-consuming process, which only adds to the burden faced by livestock owners. Wolves are not only killing livestock for food but have been observed killing for sport, which further exacerbates the financial losses suffered. This unprovoked killing of livestock, particularly young or breeding animals, significantly disrupts herds, decreases conception rates, and increases genetic losses that will have lasting consequences on the overall health and productivity of future generations of livestock.

The loss of valuable animals directly impacts the income of ranchers, who rely on their livestock for their livelihoods. Furthermore, the loss of livestock means a loss of future income from their offspring, disrupting long-term business planning and financial stability.

In many instances, the responsibility of confirming a wolf kill falls squarely on the shoulders of livestock producers. This requires both time and resources to gather evidence, often involving costly investigations, expert assessments, and a delay in financial compensation or relief. The current system places a heavy and often unrealistic expectation on ranchers. For many, the resources and time required to confirm a wolf depredation event are simply unavailable or unachievable.

Moreover, the process to prove the loss was caused by wolves can be complex and confusing. In some cases, the evidence has quite literally been eaten, leaving the

cause of death unknown. We have witnessed firsthand how a lack of evidence produces an “unknown” cause of death even when the wolf was GPS-ed in the location, and the calf dead right beside it was determined to a probable wolf kill. This burden is an emotional one as well. Livestock owners are already under considerable stress due to the potential loss of their animals, which are often a primary source of income. Having to prove that a kill was caused by wolves creates additional frustration. The resulting stress can have lasting impacts on their mental health and overall well-being. We have experienced first-hand the emotional strain of losing animals that we have raised with care, only to have them taken by predators is profoundly demoralizing.

Additionally, the ripple effect of wolf depredation on local economies is significant. The financial losses experienced by livestock owners often extend to those who rely on the ranching industry for work. The broader economic consequences are felt by entire communities.

Given these challenges, support SB 077.