

Submitter: Katie Starr
On Behalf Of: Desert Creek Ranch
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Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB777

As a rancher and steward of the land, I strive to co exist with wildlife and nature. We have been able to efficiently co exist with many other predator species that threaten our livestock without completely removing those animals from the landscape. When it comes to wolves, our hands are tied. We use the non-lethal methods, provide more human presence, watch cattle closely, pay attention to wolf patterns and everything else in our power. On a small scale operation these things can make a difference. On a large scale operation these methods are expensive and difficult to execute in a manner which provides full protection from wolf predation.

I manage the cattle on a large ranch in SE Oregon. Recently I ran some numbers on non-lethal method costs pertaining to us. Fox lights cost approx \$100 each and it is recommended they are placed no farther than 150' apart. We had some wolf harassment last summer, that particular pasture has almost 10 miles of fence line. It would take 352 lights and cost \$35,200 just for that one pasture. We have cattle in 4 different places at any one time, so times that by 4. It isn't a feasible option.

Another method is range riders, while I do feel that more human presence is helpful there is no way we can provide constant human presence to protect cattle at all times. I would need 3 people working 8 hour shifts, 24 hours a day. At 4 herds to protect that's 12 people, at minimum wage that's \$352 a day per herd and \$10,600 a month. Now we have to find enough people proficient enough to handle this job and willing to work for low wages. Then they will need somewhere to live, a vehicle to drive, trailers to haul horses, pasture and feed for horses. It's simply not an option to provided constant human presence. These non-lethal methods are clearly not a good long term solution. Wolves are intelligent, they learn quickly that humans, flags, lights and noise pose no threat. Wolf depredations are going to become more common as they grow in numbers and become bolder.

Many of us have huge losses that are never compensated for. The only compensation received is in the event of a confirmed kill. Many wolf kills are unable to be confirmed because they aren't found, found too late, scene wasn't preserved before other animals contaminated it and even because the wolf ate so much there wasn't enough carcass left to investigate.

We also deal with low breed up due to stress and harassment, weight loss in calves and cattle that are so terrified they become uncontrollable and have to be sold. I have personally witnessed terrified cattle smashing together in a tight bunch and ultimately killing and trampling other cattle.

None of these things have any reimbursement. My loss was approx \$38,000 worth of potential calves from the cows that didn't get bred due to wolf activity and stress from

that. If one animal had gotten killed, the mere market price for that animal at the time wouldn't come close to actual loss. Plus consider future income loss from that animal. I don't feel like throwing more money at the problem is going to make it go away or appease anyone. I do however feel like it will help ease the loss of those who have confirmed kills for a period until we are able to delist these animals and remove problem wolves.

This is just a very expensive bandaid, as is the non-lethal methods. There isn't enough money out there to cover ranchers actual losses or provide enough non-lethal methods to protect everyone.

It's easy to look up confirmed kills, but those not dealing with wolves directly have a hard time understanding how difficult, stressful and heartbreaking this is for us. Also the only time any other data is collected on wolf activity is January to March. Nothing that happens the other 9 months goes into any decision making on rising wolf activity and numbers. The numbers don't tell the full story.

Katie Starr
Cattle Manager
Desert Creek Ranch