



For Immediate Release

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Oregon's First Wolf Depredation

Oregon has experienced its first wolf depredation since wolves have moved into the state last year. As Idaho's wolf population has grown over the past 14 years, there has been a corresponding increase in wolf sightings in adjoining Oregon and the confirmed presence of several wolves there. Last summer, wildlife officials confirmed the presence of a pair of wolves with pups – the first such pack since wolves were eliminated from Oregon in the first half of the 20th century. On April 9th, 17 lambs of a Baker County rancher in northeast Oregon were found dead. Suspecting that wolves were the culprits, wildlife officials installed a motion activated camera which caught 2 wolves on camera standing over a pair of dead lambs. The rancher lost a total of 23 lambs. There have also been reports of a third depredation on a cattle ranch about 3 miles from the ranch where the sheep were killed. Wolves, probably the same wolves, are thought to have been the culprits.

Because wolves in the portion of Oregon where the depredation occurred are federally endangered until May 4, the rancher is eligible for compensation from Defenders of Wildlife for the value of the lost sheep. The rancher was also provided with a deterrent called "turbo fladry", which is essentially caution tape tied to an electrified wire, plus another deterrent called a RAG box. A RAG (radio-activated guard) box has lights and loud noises that are activated by the close proximity of a radio-collared wolf. After failing to trap wolves near the ranch, wildlife officials are continuing their efforts to radio-collar the wolves.

Livestock depredation is the most contentious issue that both advocates of wolf restoration and local livestock producers affected by the influx of new predators must deal with together. In the years since the Rocky Mountains wolf reintroductions, steps have been taken to work together and progress is being made. Many lessons have been learned in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming that can now be applied to Oregon and Washington as citizens experience the return of wolves.

As an apex predator, wolves will depredate on livestock when they are hungry and when livestock is easily accessible. As a conservation organization which promotes the co-existence of humans and wildlife, Wolf Haven will continue to support balanced wolf management plans that address critical issues of wolf sustainability, livestock depredation, and rancher compensation.

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Wolf Haven Intl. has been working for wolf conservation around the Northwest and throughout the world since 1982. In addition to providing sanctuary for captive-born wolves, Wolf Haven educates over 30,000 visitors each year on the role of the wolf in the wild. Wolf Haven offers educational guided walking tours of its wolf sanctuary in Tenino Washington as well as off-site presentations to schools, community groups, and professional organizations.

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