



Minutes Deschutes County Wolf Depredation and Financial Assistance Committee

Meeting #7: Monday, October 8, 2024, 5:30 p.m.

Deschutes Services Building, Allen Room, 1300 NW Wall Street, Bend

This meeting was conducted in person and by video. It was video recorded and can be accessed on the committee website: [Wolf Depredation Compensation and Financial Assistance Committee | Deschutes County Oregon](#).

I. Introductions / Call to Order

This meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m. by Commissioner Phil Chang. Present via Zoom: Sarahlee Lawrence and Dylan O'Leary, Rainshadow Organics. Present in person: Phil Chang, Deschutes County Commissioner; Jen Patterson, Deschutes County Strategic Initiatives Manager; Donna Harris; Johnny Leason; Ethan O'Brien; Stephen Pappa; Aaron Bott, Wolf Biologist, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife; Emily Weidner Fish and Wildlife Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife; and Scott Duggan, OSU Extension, Department of Animal & Rangeland Science.

II. Approval of June 10, 2024, Minutes

Donna Harris moved to approve the minutes. Ethan O'Brien seconded the motion. Minutes approved unanimously.

III. Update on Grant Funds

Jen Patterson briefed the committee that there are \$8,000 in unspent grant funds that either need to be expended by January 30, 2025, or returned to Oregon Department of Agriculture. The committee can consider providing additional preventative measures to the Livestock Owner who have already received grant dollars, work with ODFW to see if they need any preventative measure resources, consider other options, or return the remaining unspent grant dollars. No other grant applications have been received.

Phil Chang asked how the grant opportunity has been communicated. Jen provided an update on the flyer that was produced and distributed to committee members and partner organizations – no grant inquiries resulted from the flyer distribution.

Aaron Bott discussed that the lands in Deschutes County are easier to fortify with preventative measures than other parts of the state. Aaron talked about the success of using fox lights and how effective they are. Fox lights cost about \$140 a piece, they come in two different types: battery and solar polar. An investment of \$2,000 of fox lights for ODFW to have on hand would be a great, effective, and easy way to use the funds.

Stephen Pappa mentioned it would be a great resource to provide to ODFW and one that is effective in instituting preventative measures. Stephen inquired if there were other preventative measures that would be effective for ODFW to have on hand. Do a lot of producers know about the Wolf Committee grant program in the County? Aaron responded that he educates the producers he interacts with about preventative measures and the opportunities available through the committee. Aaron acknowledged that his experience is biased due to his

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interactions being limited to producers who have been affected but he does believe that those who are impacted are aware of the state program.

Aaron said fladry is also a great tool but doesn't think there is a need in Deschutes County at this time. ODFW has a few rolls on hand (each roll is 1 mile) and one roll costs \$5,000-\$7,000 and takes about 6 months to receive after placing an order. Emily Weidner agreed that there is not a real need for Fladry at this time, USFW has some on hand as well, but something to consider in the future.

Donna proposes expending \$2,500 on fox lights to support ODFW.

Johnny proposes having certificates on hand for a deadstock removal contractor to remove carcasses in areas that have a higher risk.

Sarahlee requested the possibility of applying for preventive measures for 2025 and potentially providing more funds for the producer who has had been affected with the remaining 2024 grant funds. The producer has had additional depredations however those depredations were confirmed in Jefferson and Wasco County and not in Deschutes County (the ranch encompasses all 3 counties).

Phil Chang recapped the list of options include fox lights, adding preventative measures for producer that has experienced depredations, and vouchers for carcass removals. Any other options on the table?

Aaron liked the idea of the vouchers and potential equipment purchase such as a trailer for carcass removal.

Johnny posed the question of whether a trailer would be useful from a logistical standpoint. The committee could talk with contractors to see if they are interested in a voucher program and how much they would charge. Stephen and Johnny estimated several hundred dollars per carcass.

Phil would like the committee to do some research into what it will take to get a livestock owner to remove or properly bury a carcass. Is it an education campaign, voucher at the landfill, carcass removal option? How much labor is the livestock producer willing to incur? If the engagement is not expected to be much than the committee should look into a program that provides convenience to removal or burial of carcasses.

Ethan mentioned that the committee could inquire whether the Deschutes County landfill would cover the costs of the dumping of carcasses versus the funds coming from the Wolf Committee grant funds.

Stephen volunteered to reach out to carcass haulers to see if there is an interest in being paid to provide the services. An option could be to create accounts and hold funds in the account for those who would like to access the carcass removal process.

Jen Patterson will check with Wildlife Services to see if they can be a pass through organization for carcass removal program funds and program.

Phil suggested committee members propose grant dollar amounts to a package that include fox lights, deposit with a carcass removal hauler, and additional funds to producer who received preventative measure dollars this year.

Fox lights = \$2,500

Deposit with hauler through Wildlife Services = \$2,000

Producer = \$3,500

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Ethan moved to accept the proposed grant dollar package with the above figures and Johnny seconded the motion. The committee unanimously approved the remaining allocation of grant funds – Sarahlee abstained from voting.

IV. Mitigating Political Impact on Producers and Ranchers

This agenda item will be moved to the next committee meeting.

V. Preventative Measures – Carcass/Bone Pit Programs

Aaron Bott, Wolf Biologist with ODFW, gave a PowerPoint presentation and update on wolf activities in Deschutes County. ODFW monitors wolf population across the state intensively. Wolves have historically been along the northern and southern border, and wolves are expected to always be in that area with an opportunity for potential conflict with livestock. Historically there has been a pair of wolves on the Jefferson/Deschutes County border and this year ODFW has confirmed the pair has surviving pups as of now. The pair had at least 4 pups confirmed in July and potentially those 4 pups are still alive. Typically, only 1-2 of the pups will survive to the end of the calendar year. Their den site was in Jefferson County, but they have on many occasions come down to Deschutes County just north of Sisters and have been frequently spotted by the public. Their den is not in an area with a lot of livestock husbandry.

On the south end of the County is the Upper Deschutes Wolf pack, made up of 6-7 wolves, that have typically been in northern Klamath County and dened in Klamath County. Their den site was disturbed last year, and they have relocated their den site to an unknown location but still believed to be in Klamath County. They have been spotted in the Sunriver area, where there is not a lot of livestock. ODFW does not anticipate a lot of conflict in Deschutes County with this pack.

Any time of year there can be roaming pair or lone wolves in the area. There is a lone roaming wolf in northern Deschutes County that has been radio collared. He should be reaching sexual maturity this winter and is currently in the three-finger Jack area but can roam between 10-40 miles a day.

The best way to prevent conflicts is to reduce attractants. Bone pits and/or carcass pits that have easy access to rotting meat (even one's years old) can create wolf attraction and potentially lead to wolves becoming habituated to that area. Pits act as magnets and wolves can move on from the bones to living stock in the area. Removing or burying carcass with a backhoe is the best way to prevent wolves from being attracted to the pits. Montana has successfully implemented a carcass removal program. Carcass removal programs vary from county to county and can be implemented by the community, county, and/or individuals. In some cases, counties will foot the bill for the cost of carcasses being dropped at the landfills. Producers can request, from their local committee, compensation to remove carcasses – in Crook County the landfill absorbs the cost and does not use the Wolf Committee funds for carcass removals. Producers typically like to keep their livestock loss private so hiring a trusted source to conduct the removal is something to take into consideration. Other options include equipment rentals (backhoes or trailers) to assist in removals.

There are several government agencies involved in managing wildlife services such as ODFW, USFW, and ODA. There are two individuals in Deschutes County to help manage wildlife services, although not specifically for wolf activity, however a non-lethal wolf specialist was just hired who will be stationed out of Madras. The specialist will be working to specifically manage wolf conflict between producers and wolves. The specialist is assigned to several counties including Deschutes County. The specialist along with the other two wildlife services could assist in the preventative measures opportunities and potentially establishing a carcass removal program.

Ethan asked about the ability to dump carcass on BLM land – which could lead people dumping carcasses for free versus paying to take it to the dump.

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Aaron emphasized that all types of animals die on the landscape. The message is not to remove all carcasses it is to remove all carcasses and bones where livestock congregate.

Stephen asked whether some people would participate if the committee paid for it and mentioned that some carcasses are so far gone that would not be removable by a backhoe. There are two services in the area that could potentially pick up carcasses for a price and would like to discuss what, practically, the committee could support for carcass removal or burial.

Emily mentioned that it is a misdemeanor to dump on federal lands and wolves do move through the southern part of the county. There is a potential for there to be benefits to sage grouse as an overlap in a carcass removal program for the intent of preventative measures with the committee.

Phil asked if we could send money to the landfill or buy vouchers from the landfill to distribute to producers for carcass disposal.

This discussion was intermixed with agenda item III and ultimately the committee voted on supplying grant funds for carcass removal through Wildlife Services.

VI. Volunteer Committees County Email Address

Jen Patterson reminded the committee members that all committee email communication will be done through the County assigned email addresses.

VII. Public Comments

No public comments.

VIII. Next Steps

Next meeting will take place in January, Jen will send around a doodle poll to determine meeting date and time. Next topics will include 2025 grants, disclosure of personal information, non-lethal wolf specialist (introduction and join the conversation).

IX. Wrap up and Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Jen Patterson, Strategic Initiatives Manager,
Deschutes County Administrative Services