

## **Tools for California Livestock Producers to Discourage Wolf Presence, Guidance for Suspected Wolf Depredation, and Wolf Legal Status**

### ***Suggested Techniques for Discouraging Wolf Presence***

These techniques are generally more effective when used in combination. They may also discourage the presence of other potential livestock predators, such as coyotes and black bears.

### **Livestock and carcass management** – make pastures and other areas less attractive to wolves.

- Remove diseased, injured, or dying animals from pastures and open range areas.
- Dispose of carcasses where they are not readily accessible to wolves and other scavengers.
- Clean up/remove old carcass disposal areas (bone piles)

### **Placement of Barriers**

- Fence or pen livestock at night using permanent or portable fencing.
- Consider the use of fladry (a series of cloth or synthetic flags hung at a regular interval along a rope or fence line) – wolves can be reluctant to cross fladry lines for 30-60 days.
- Fladry can be used alone or in conjunction with existing fences.
- Fladry can also be electrified (“turbo-fladry”) for added effectiveness.

### **Electronic predator aversion devices**

- Install flashing lights and/or sirens around the perimeter of pastures, calving areas, and other sensitive sites.
- Some predator aversion devices are triggered by motion, while others turn on at random intervals (e.g., “Foxlights”).
- Move/relocate devices regularly to reduce the potential for wolf habituation.

### **Livestock protection dogs and guard animals**

- The presence of livestock protection dogs can reduce wolf visitation to livestock pastures.
- The effectiveness of livestock protection dogs depends on breeding and training, and their utility may be limited in large areas with dispersed livestock.
- Multiple livestock protection dogs accompanied by herders offer greater livestock protection.
- Wolves have sometimes killed livestock protection dogs (generally when the dogs were outweighed and/or outnumbered).

### **Human presence**

- Increase the frequency of human presence in localized areas.
- Consider the use of trained “range riders” or herders for open range livestock occur.

**Hazing (non-injurious harassment)**

- If a wolf is near, approaching, or chasing livestock, *confront the wolf or otherwise scare it off*.
- Techniques for non-injurious harassment include approaching the wolf (on foot, on horseback, or with a motorized vehicle), making loud noises (yelling, gunshots directed away from the wolf, cracker shells, air horns, etc.), and spotlights.
- *Non-injurious harassment is allowed when wolves are within 0.25 mile of livestock, or within 100 yards of a dwelling, agricultural structure, campsite, or commercial facility.*
- Injurious harassment (physically contacting a wolf, firing bullets or nonlethal ammunition at a wolf, pursuing a wolf with a motorized vehicle, etc.) is prohibited.

**Suspected Wolf Depredation on Livestock**

Please report possible wolf depredation on livestock, livestock guarding and herding dogs, or other domestic animals to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and/or USDA/APHIS Wildlife Services (contacts below). To protect the scene prior to agency response, please:

- Avoid walking in and around the area.
- Keep dogs and other animals away to avoid disturbance to the area.
- Place a tarp or other cover over the carcass.
- Preserve potential tracks and scats left by the depredating animal(s) by covering them with cans, buckets, or similar items.

**Gray Wolf Status**

Gray wolves are listed as an endangered species under both the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) and as such, there are prohibitions against “taking” wolves. The ESA defines “take” as “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.” Harass is further defined as “an intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding or sheltering” (50 CFR 17.3). Under CESA, “take” is defined as “hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill” and is prohibited with limited exceptions (FGC sections 2080.1, 2081 and 2800).

**Contacts****California Department of Fish and Wildlife**

- Redding Office (530-225-2300)
- Kent Laudon (530-225-2186) or Pete Figura (530-225-3224 office, 530-227-3980 cell)

**USDA/APHIS Wildlife Services**

- Jim Shuler (530-336-5623)

**US Fish and Wildlife Service**

- Elizabeth Willy (541-885-2525)