

LIVESTOCK LOSS DETERMINATION

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Investigation ID: 092117-LAS

Date Investigated: 9/21/2017

General Area: Western Lassen County, Private Land

General situation and animal information: On the morning of 9/19/2017 CDFW staff left a message with a livestock producer regarding a cluster of GPS-collar locations from the female wolf LAS01F that were in close proximity to an area of concentrated cattle use. The producer called back in the early afternoon and reported a dead calf near the location of the collar points. The producer stated that the calf was approximately 500 pounds and was approximately 10% consumed at that time. He stated the carcass was not present when he had checked cattle in the area on 9/18. CDFW staff offered to investigate the carcass that afternoon, but the producer was not available to investigate until 9/21.

On 9/19 the producer dragged the carcass approximately 400 yards toward the center of the meadow in order to move it further from a cattle feeding area. CDFW and USDA Wildlife Services staff investigated the carcass on 9/21. The cattle owner was present during the investigation.

By the time of the investigation, the carcass had been approximately 60% consumed, including much of the rear left leg and all of the internal organs. However, the head, neck, much of the front legs, and approximately one-half of the rear right leg (including much of the hide) were largely intact. Investigators spent nearly four hours at the site, which included searching the general area for predator sign and evidence of a struggle/kill, and closely examining the carcass. The head, neck, chest, front legs, rear right leg, and the remaining portion of the rear left leg were skinned to facilitate assessment of pre-mortem wounds and hemorrhaging.

Physical evidence of attack by a predator: No evidence of a chase or kill scene was observed. Examination of the hide and tissue beneath it did not reveal wounds consistent with predation by wolves or another carnivore (i.e., bite marks or scrapes, punctures, pre-mortem hemorrhaging, etc.).

Evidence that the predator was a wolf: N/A

Evidence of wolf presence near the time of the animal(s) death/injury: Based on GPS-collar locations, LAS01F was first recorded at the site at 9:00 PM on 9/18.

Recent wolf depredation in the same or nearby area: None. However, on the afternoon of 9/19 the livestock producer mentioned to DFW staff that he is missing several newborn calves in the area.

Cause of death/injury:

Confirmed Wolf

Probable Wolf

Possible/Unknown

Other

Summary: Although the cause of death is unknown, there was no evidence the calf was killed by wolves or another carnivore. At the time of investigation, the carcass was sufficiently intact that evidence of death by predation would have been apparent. The calf had died from causes other than a predator.

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Wolf, coyote, and mountain lion tracks were observed near the carcass, and available evidence suggests wolves (including two adults and at least one pup) fed extensively on the carcass between the time of death and the time of the investigation.