

LIVESTOCK LOSS DETERMINATION

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Investigation ID: 101617-LAS

Date Investigated: 10/16/2017

General Area: Western Lassen County, private land

General situation and animal information: On October 16, a CDFW biologist, a CDFW Game Warden, a Wildlife Services specialist, and a livestock producer found the remains of a dead cow while conducting a routine investigation of clustered GPS locations from the wolf LAS01F's satellite collar. All of the cow's muscle and edible organs (aside from the rumen) had been consumed, and only bones and portions of the hide were present. The rumen was located approximately 19 yards from the rest of the carcass. The cow was estimated to be approximately 650 lbs. live weight.

Physical evidence of attack by a predator: There was evidence of both a chase and a struggle area. The chase area was characterized by trees and small-diameter logs with recently broken branches. Multiple logs and rocks were marked with blood. The struggle area was adjacent to the chase area and was characterized by uniquely disturbed duff (similarly disturbed duff was not located anywhere else in the surrounding area). The cow's rumen was located adjacent to the struggle area.

Evidence that the predator was a wolf: The carcass was approximately 22 days old at the time of discovery. All of its muscle and edible organs were consumed, and its remaining hide was very dry. It was not possible to identify wounds and bite patterns typical of a wolf attack.

Evidence of wolf presence near the time of the animal(s) death/injury: Based on GPS-collar locations, wolf LAS01F was present at or near the site on multiple occasions (ten specific GPS points) from September 24 to September 26, 2017.

Recent wolf depredation in the same or nearby area: The Lassen Pack killed a cow approximately 11 miles away on 10/13/17 (see depredation investigation 101317-LAS).

Cause of death/injury:

Confirmed Wolf

Probable Wolf

Possible/Unknown Other

Summary: The chase and struggle areas indicated that the cause of the cow's death was most likely predation. Because of the age of the carcass, it was not possible to identify injuries on the carcass consistent with wolf depredation. However, the wolf LAS01F was located at or near the site ten times from September 24-26. This period was consistent with the approximate age of the carcass. The carcass was located in an area regularly used by the Lassen Pack, and was 11 miles from another cow the pack killed on 10/13/17. Together these factors are sufficient to classify the cow's death as a probable wolf depredation.