

LIVESTOCK LOSS DETERMINATION
California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Investigation ID: 110217-LAS

Date Investigated: 11/2/2017

General Area: Western Lassen County, public land

General situation and animal information: On 10/26/17 a livestock producer reported discovering an injured adult cow while gathering stock from a grazing allotment at the end of the grazing season. The cow was shipped to a ranch, and a CDFW biologist examined it at the ranch on 11/2/17.

The cow had a four-inch long open wound on the inside of the rear hind leg, above the hock. It also had several longitudinal scrapes on the inside of the lower portion of the same leg. Those scrapes were scabbed over at the time of the investigation. Hair was also missing from the tip of the cow's tail.

Physical evidence of attack by a predator: There was no conclusive evidence of predator damage. The wounds to the inside of the leg did not appear to be predator bites due to their size, shape, and orientation on the leg. Further, there were no opposing wounds or marks on the other side of the leg indicative of grasping by a predator. However, it is possible that the bobbed tail tip is indicative of a wolf grasp.

Evidence that the predator was a wolf: It is possible that the bobbed tail could have been caused by a wolf grasp. Bobbed tails can be caused by other events (e.g. other cows stepping on tails), but wolves are known to sometimes bite and tear their prey's tail.

Evidence of wolf presence near the time of the animal(s) death/injury: Based on GPS-collar locations, wolf LAS01F was known to be in the general area 6 days prior to the report.

Recent wolf depredation in the same or nearby area: The Lassen Pack killed a cow approximately 6 miles away on 10/13/17 (see depredation investigation 101317-LAS).

Cause of death/injury:

Confirmed Wolf

Probable Wolf

Possible/Unknown

Other

Summary: The lacerations on the inside of right leg were likely caused by something other than a wolf or other predator (e.g., scrapped rolls of barbed wire, etc.). However, while a bobbed tail can result from other events, it can also be caused by wolves. Wolves generally attack large prey from behind while chasing, and sometimes damage or remove the tail during such attacks.