

LIVESTOCK LOSS DETERMINATION

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Investigation ID: 040318-PLU

Date Investigated: 4/3/2018 and 4/4/2018

General Area: Northern Plumas County, private land

General situation and animal information: On the evening of 4/1/2018, a cattle owner's neighbors heard a commotion amongst the owner's cattle. The neighbors and additional neighbors responded to the commotion, which included the sounds of a calf bawling loudly. Using spotlights, the responders observed three wolves in the pasture and found the cattle tightly grouped together. The responders honked a vehicle horn and shined a light on the wolves until they fled the pasture.

On 4/2, one of the responders located an injured calf in the pasture and contacted CDFW staff. The calf was approximately one month old and weighed approximately 200 pounds. The calf was captured and held in a stock trailer, and CDFW staff and a USDA Wildlife Services specialist investigated its injuries and the site on 4/3. Due to the extent of its injuries, the calf was euthanized on the evening of 4/3. CDFW and Wildlife Services staff returned on 4/4 to further assess its wounds and tissues.

Physical evidence of attack by a predator: Subcutaneous hemorrhaging on the upper parts of both hind legs, the side of the right front leg, and on the right side of the neck/throat indicated extensive premortem wounds consistent with a predator attack.

Evidence that the predator was a wolf: The extensive hemorrhaging observed on the legs, particularly the hind legs, is typical of canid attacks. Wolves were observed in the pasture at the same time the calf was bawling.

Evidence of wolf presence near the time of the animal(s) death/injury: Multiple witnesses reported seeing three wolves in the pasture after hearing the initial cattle commotion at approximately 9:00 PM on 4/1/2018. A GPS point from the collar of wolf LAS01 indicated she was in the pasture at 9:00 PM on 4/1.

Recent wolf depredation in the same or nearby area: None

Cause of death/injury:

Confirmed Wolf

Probable Wolf

Possible/Unknown

Other

Summary: The calf's injuries were consistent with that of a wolf attack, and both eyewitness accounts and GPS collar data indicate that wolves were present in the pasture during the cattle commotion and where the calf was located.