

# LIVESTOCK LOSS DETERMINATION

## California Department of Fish and Wildlife



Investigation ID: 071519-LAS

Date Investigated: 07/15/19 – 7/18/19

### Cause of Death:

- Confirmed Wolf
- Probable Wolf
- Possible Wolf
- Non-Wolf Depredation
- Non-Depredation
- Unknown

**General Area:** Western Lassen County, private land

**General situation and animal information:** On July 14, CDFW staff discovered an approximately 600-pound yearling cow (hereafter animal “A”) in a pasture with open wounds in the abdominal area and rakes on the right rear leg. The injuries appeared consistent with a wolf attack, and the injured animal was reported to the livestock producer. On July 15, a ranch hand found the animal dead, and CDFW and WS staff investigated the carcass that evening.

On July 15, the ranch hand and USDA Wildlife Services (WS) staff also observed two additional injured yearlings (animals “B” and “C”) in the same pasture – both had apparently tooth scrapes on their right hind legs, and one also had scrapes on its right flank. Ranch employees assessed the wounds and determined the animals were better left alone without the further stress of capture and handling required to provide additional care. Therefore, their injuries could not be examined more closely by CDFW and WS staff.

On July 17, ranch employees discovered another injured yearling (animal “D”) in the same pasture. The animal could not be closely examined by CDFW and WS because of its location in a large pasture with many other cattle. However, a ranch hand took photographs showing swelling and apparent tooth scrapes/rakes on the front of its right hind leg.

The herd was moved to a pasture nearer the ranch headquarters to enable better assessment of the injured animals and increase protection for the herd. The injured animals will continue to be monitored by ranch employees to determine if additional care is needed. Potential actions to deter additional attacks are being explored, but options are limited in the immediate area due to pasture sizes and configuration.

**Physical evidence of attack by a predator:** The carcass of animal A had external scrapes and rakes with associated subcutaneous and muscular hemorrhage. The hemorrhage indicated the injuries occurred while the yearling was alive, and the wounds were consistent with a predator attack. From a distance, the external injuries observed on animals B and C appeared consistent with bite wounds. The photographs of animal D also indicated injuries consistent with bite wounds.

**Evidence that the predator was a wolf:** The location and nature of the wounds on the carcass and on the injured yearlings were consistent with those typically found when wolves attack livestock.

**Evidence of wolf presence near the time of the animal(s) death/injury:** The carcass and the injured animals were found in an area frequented by the Lassen Pack. In a separate incident two days earlier, a wolf or wolves

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killed another yearling approximately 600 yards away (incident 071319-LAS). Lassen Pack wolves were observed at that carcass on July 13 and 14.

**Summary:** Investigators conducted a thorough investigation of the carcass of animal A and found it to have wounds typical of those sustained in a wolf attack. Due to the nature of their injuries and the close spatial and temporal relationship to the two other yearlings killed by wolves (animal A and the animal killed in incident 071319-LAS), CDFW has concluded the three injured yearlings (animals B, C, and D) were also attacked by wolves.