

LIVESTOCK LOSS DETERMINATION

California Department of Fish and Wildlife



Investigation ID: 081619-PLU

Date Investigated: 8/16/19

Cause of Death/Injury:

- 2 Confirmed Wolf (1 injured and 1 dead)
- Probable Wolf
- Possible Wolf
- Non-Wolf Depredation
- Non-Depredation
- 1 Unknown (1 carcass)

General Area: Plumas County, public land

General situation and animal information: On 8/16, a ranch hand was checking on cattle on horseback when he heard a calf in distress. He then observed a wolf attacking a two-month old, <200 lb. calf (Animal A). He chased the animal away from the injured calf. That incident was reported to a USDA Wildlife Services (WS) specialist who reported it to CDFW.

The same day the WS specialist and a CDFW wildlife officer investigated the attack site and injured calf. The wolf OR-54 was confirmed in the area via GPS collar locations. The WS specialist then investigated nearby clusters of OR54's GPS points from 8/13-8/14. During this survey, the agent discovered two calf carcasses (each about 2-3 days old). One carcass (A) was only half consumed with external tooth scrapes and punctures to the throat and left side. The second carcass (B) was approximately 95% consumed.

Physical evidence of attack by a predator: Injured calf had rakes on throat and left foreshank along with some subcutaneous punctures. Carcass A had subcutaneous punctures and muscle hemorrhaging on its left side and on back associated with external tooth scrapes indicating the animal was alive when bitten. There was not enough carcass B left to conduct a thorough evaluation.

Evidence that the predator was a wolf: The ranch hand reported observing, from very close proximity, a wolf attacking a calf. The injured calf had injuries on the throat and left foreshank. Carcass A had tooth scrapes and associated hemorrhaging on left side behind the front leg, throat and on the back. The right flank between front and rear leg had subcutaneous and muscular hemorrhaging.

Evidence of wolf presence near the time of the animal(s) death/injury: Wolf tracks were observed near both the injured calf attack, and the calf carcasses. GPS locations from OR-54's satellite collar indicated she was near carcasses 8/13-8/14 and in the injured calf area on 8/16.

Summary: A ranch hand disrupted an apparent wolf attack on a calf on the morning of August 16, and the investigator confirmed that the injuries were consistent with wolf attack. Two other calf carcasses were discovered near a cluster of satellite collar locations 8/13-8/14. One of those carcasses, Animal A, was intact –and the wounds were consistent with a wolf attack. The other carcass, Animal B, was too consumed to determine the cause of death.