



2026 CDFW WOLF-LIVESTOCK DEPREDAATION INVESTIGATIONS AND DETERMINATIONS

Updated: 2/3/2026

This document summarizes livestock depredation investigations (LDIs) and determinations completed in 2026. It is updated periodically to include recent LDIs.

Livestock Depredation Investigations:

If a livestock owner (or owner's agent) discovers deceased or injured livestock and suspects wolf depredation, they may request a Livestock Depredation Investigation (LDI). CDFW staff, USDA Wildlife Services, and/or county agricultural staff (in some counties) will work together to respond to each investigation request. Investigations are conducted as soon as practical, to gather the most accurate information and evidence. Ideally, an investigation occurs within hours of the request.

The goal of LDIs is to determine the cause of the animal's injury or death. LDIs involve assessment of physical and circumstantial evidence. Trained investigators examine the carcass or injured animal and search for signs of an attack (e.g., premortem bites and tissue hemorrhage, evidence of a chase and struggle, etc.), as well as conditions potentially unrelated to predation, such as disease or prior injury. Investigators normally collect genetic evidence for analysis at the CDFW Wildlife Forensic Laboratory. Genetic evidence can establish the presence of certain species, and even certain individuals, at a carcass—but critically, such evidence does not determine cause of death. Evidence like animal tracks or scats can also help establish the presence of certain species at or near a carcass. Investigators document their observations on a mandatory field investigation form and take photographs as supportive evidence.

Determination:

Based on the completed LDI, CDFW makes a final determination based on the evidence collected. The field investigation form and photographs are reviewed and CDFW staff communicate with the field investigators (if CDFW staff were not present at the investigation). Genetic evidence and GPS data from collared wolves are considered when available. Determinations are classified as either **Confirmed Wolf**, **Probable Wolf**, **Possible Wolf**, **Non-Wolf Depredation**, **Non-Depredation**, and **Unknown**. A description of each category can be found at: [Considerations for Classification of Reported Wolf Depredation Incidents](#)

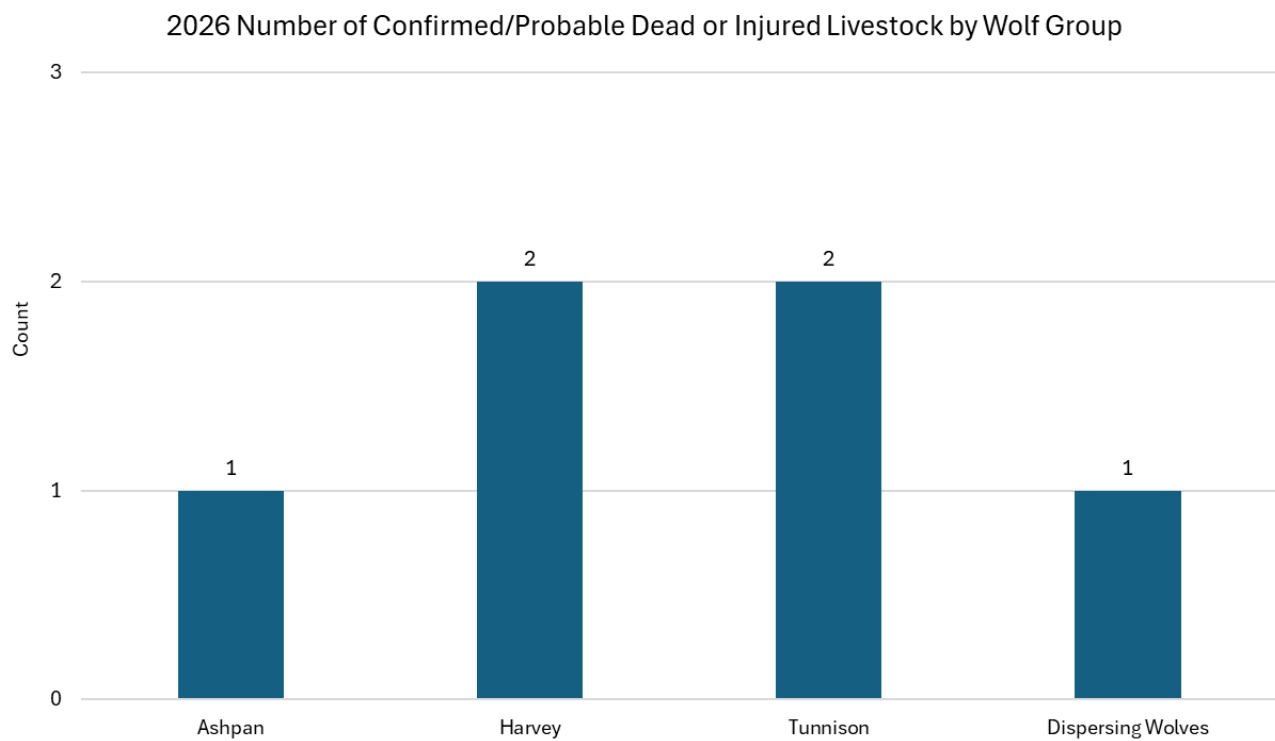
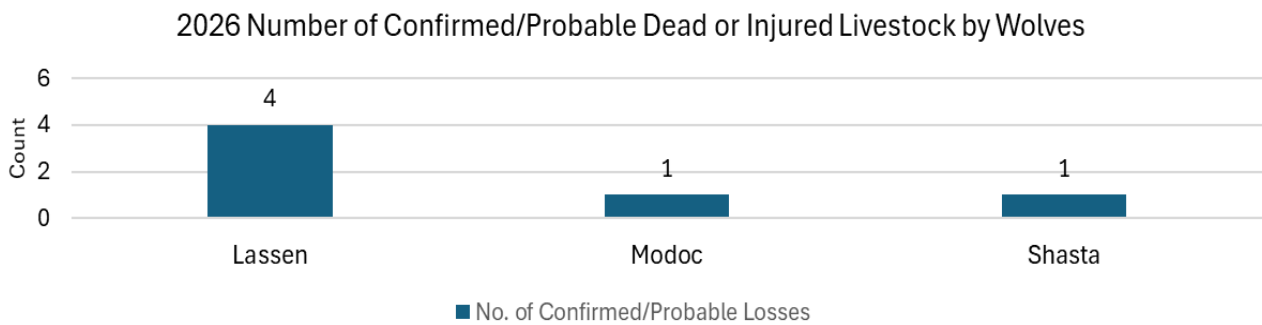
***Disclaimer:** Wolf-livestock depredation investigations involve coordination among multiple agencies and personnel across the state. The information provided here reflects the Department's knowledge as of the date of this document and may be updated as new information becomes available.*

Educational Resources:

*Information on livestock protection tools and how to minimize wolf presence: [Tools for California Livestock Producers to Discourage Wolf Presence, Guidance for Suspected Wolf Depredation, and Wolf Legal Status](#)
[Livestock Protection Tools for California Ranchers \(ucanr.edu\)](#)*

2026 Investigations

Total Investigations	Total Livestock Confirmed/Probable Killed or Injured by Wolves
9	6



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2026 Investigations & Determinations

9	012626-SHA	- Confirmed - Ashpan pack	- Shasta - Eastern Shasta - Private	1 Dead Heifer
8	012426-PLU	- Confirmed - <i>Dispersing Wolf</i>	- Plumas - Southern Plumas - Private	1 Dead Ewe
7	012226-LAS	- Confirmed - Harvey pack	- Lassen - Northern Lassen - Private	1 Dead Calf
6	011926-SIS	- Non-Depredation	- Siskiyou - Eastern Siskiyou - Private	1 Dead Calf
5	011726-SIS	- Non-Depredation (3)	- Siskiyou - Eastern Siskiyou - Private	3 Dead Calves
4	011326-LAS	- Confirmed - Harvey pack	- Lassen - Western Lassen - Private	1 Dead Yearling
3	010526-MOD	- Confirmed - <i>Dispersing Wolves</i>	- Modoc - Southern Modoc - Private	1 Dead Steer
2	010326-MOD	- Non-Depredation	- Modoc - Central Modoc - Private	1 Dead Calf
1	010126-LAS	- Confirmed (2) - Tunnison	- Lassen - Southern Lassen - Private	1 Dead Calf & 1 Injured (Euthanized) Horse

**Livestock age-class nomenclature is determined by the investigator and may vary across investigations (e.g., heifer vs yearling)*