

# Study puts numbers on cost of wolves

Below is a “snap shot”, simplistic view of the economic impact of wolves on rural communities based upon a six year, ongoing study conducted by Dr. Doug Johnson, OSU, Dr. Larry Larson, OSU, and John Williams, OSU – Beef Extension specialist – Wallowa County. Specific details are available through these individuals.

Economic Impact on a 100 cow/calf pair operation in forested grazing areas:

1. 8-12 fewer calves come off of grazing due to wolf predation... \$13,000
  2. Calves average 30-50 lbs. less at weaning due to harassment by wolves... \$7,000
  3. All cows come off of the range thinner... \$5,000
- It takes 5-10 lbs. of extra energy and protein per cow

per day to restore her to adequate shape to calf properly, provide sufficient milk for the baby calf for the winter and breed back.

4. Fewer cows breed back while under harassment on the range... \$5,600

These un-bred cows must be sold in the fall and replaced with either young heifers from the herd, which reduces calves available to sell, or replacement cows purchased to maintain an effective herd size.

5. Management costs increase due to supervision and preventative measures while cattle are on large, forested range plot and in winter calving areas. (Range riders, vet treatment of injured calves, various preventative measures, etc.)... \$9,000

Total lost income on 100

## ANALYSIS

Doug Johnson  
Larry Larson  
John Williams

cow/calf pairs based on January 2015 cattle prices: \$39,600

Related important data based on the 2013 State of Oregon Agriculture census:

Wallowa County: Cows 38,500, Calves 21,500  
Union County: Cows 33,500, Calves 19,100

The above data is not meant to reflect \$39,600 for every 100 cows in each county, as the wolf density presently varies by area; however the potential exists if wolf numbers ever approach the density of the forested populations in Idaho, Montana and Wyo-

ming. Presently almost all of the forested range area in Wallowa and Union counties have identified packs. Harassment and depredation are greatest in the portions of Wallowa County nearest the Idaho border. Umatilla and Baker counties both have packs and two more known packs exist, one in the Desolation area and one in SW Oregon.

Agriculture economists fundamentally agree that it takes a herd of between 350 and 400 head to provide a middle income living for a family of four. The loss of about \$140,000 for such a family trickles down into all of the fabric of these rural communities. Fewer dollars are available for local businesses and services, such as schools, health care and law enforce-

ment. These losses in natural resource based counties further increase the economic disparities that exist between the rural and urban Oregon economies. Ranchers in north-east Oregon have proven over the last 5 years that they understand that the presence of wolves is a reality and have worked tirelessly within the law to survive, but further expansion of wolves beyond the minimum number listed in the Oregon wolf plan is not acceptable. While the State has made an honest attempt to help reduce the economic impact, the dollars available are so limited and the reimbursement areas so narrow (1 in 7 of the animals killed by wolves are ever found — 2003 study) that these, although well meaning, are not close

to meeting the real economic impact of high wolf populations. Cattle populations are much larger in Malheur and Harney counties with similar range grazing operations on more open country. Presently we do not have sufficient data to predict if the impact of wolves in areas such as these will be greater or less than the more forested area. Ranchers in Wallowa, Union, Umatilla, and Baker counties are suffering from wolf harassment and predation in varying degrees and this problem will get worse as wolf numbers increase and expansion moves to far more rural counties.

*Note: This analysis was originally published in “Oregon Beef Producer” magazine, published by the Oregon Cattlemen’s Association.*

## JABBERWOCK: Dam crumbling, needs repair

Continued from Page A4

One day, a bicycle trail will circle Wallowa Lake and the jury is still out if the proposed 63-mile rail-and-trail between Joseph and Elgin is feasible, and if so, if it will be built. But the bountiful future of Wallowa County doesn’t stop there.

There remains the matter of privately owned Wallowa Lake Dam, described by some as the most important asset in the valley. Were that crumbling structure visible from the highway, it’s likely more urgency would be placed on its repair. In fact, it’s unconscionable that so much water, without compensation, is

“dumped” over the dam because that dam is too unsafe to hold more than 72 percent of the water it was designed to hold.

Growers in the Umatilla Basin, insistent their interests only include excess water and not that needed in Wallowa County, appear willing to pay for dam repairs in return for a long-term guarantee of water from the lake. But who would broker this deal? The dam owners are farmers, not contract negotiators.

Hm-m-m, Mike, Susan, and Paul, you willing to give it a shot?

*Jabberwock II columnist Rocky Wilson is a reporter for the Chieftain.*

## RESPONSE: Local food indeed better

Continued from Page A4

workers on those huge farms are treated like slaves.

Yes, you can’t get a local strawberry in January, as the unnamed author of this (Capital Press) piece brilliantly pointed out. But the non-local strawberry you can get? Do you know how whoever picked it was being treated? And does that non-local strawberry even taste good? Or was it picked nearly green so that it tastes like a mildly-sweet-kind-of-strawberry?

Because taste is the most fun part of eating local food. Try it for yourself: try a strawberry from the Wallowa County Farmers Market this summer, in Enterprise Thursday 4-7 and Joseph Saturdays 10-2, and compare it to a strawberry from Mexico in January, and tell me that they aren’t two entirely different animals. The local strawberry will be smaller, sweeter, full of complex flavors and ex-

tremely nutritious. The strawberry from Mexico will be large and Styrofoam-like.

Right now, the Lower Valley Farmers Market is open in Wallowa Fridays 12-6 and Saturdays 11-4. It is open year-round, and in the winter offers a variety of canned and frozen local produce, processed at the peak of its nutritional content. At Lower Valley Farmers Market, Bear Creek Gardens has the most delightful bags of spring lettuces, mixed with micro greens. The mix is full of flavor, nearly the same price as the stuff from Mexico, and packs a nutritional punch that would knock-out those sad little plastic clam-

shells. And, might I mention, 100% listeria free?

Cited: (<http://graphics.latimes.com/product-of-mexico-camps/>)

*Lauren Johnson, a Resource Assistance for Rural Environ-*

*ments (RARE) Americorps volunteer, serves as community food systems coordinator in Wallowa County. She’s based in Enterprise, at the Northeast Oregon Economic Development District office.*

## LETTERS: Plato not wise

Continued from Page A4

As the present state of the world attests, not only has Plato not been much of an antidote, he has been an advance carrier of the plague for which an antidote is required. With particular regard to the world’s present state, Mr. McColgan should be congratulated for limiting himself, now, to wreathing Plato for having predicted it. The philosopher did have the mind to do himself proud there — if we allow for his dismal failure to predict (let alone sire or inspire) the birth of an actual republic in another partial age of enlightenment. Above all, however, let us concede Mr. McColgan’s new and more gingerly thesis — Plato’s relevance to what we see all

around us. No doubt about that humble little matter.

Tom Anderson  
Wallowa



Are you overwhelmed with the stress?  
Do you feel hopeless or has the joy gone out of your life?  
Are you struggling to keep your family together?

**I can help!**  
A few sessions can make a big difference.


**Jeff Harman, MA., LPC**  
Professional Counseling In A Private Setting  
To schedule an appointment call Jeff Harman • (541) 426-3067  
Preferred Provider for Regence Blue Cross, ODS, Cascade Centers and many other private insurance and employee assistance programs.  
[www.jharmancounseling.com](http://www.jharmancounseling.com)

**Wallowa County Cruisers**

Join us on this  
12 night Mediterranean cruise  
planned for October 2016.  
\$400.00 pp refundable deposit  
confirms your cabin on  
the NCL SPIRIT.

For info contact  
Larry Wagner 541-215-0309  
or Jim Clegg 541-398-1333

**Winding Waters Clinic**



**OHSU Resident  
Alison Herson, MD**  
3/11/15-4/11/15

Hours:  
Monday - Friday  
7:00am to 7:00pm  
Saturday  
9:00am to 1:00pm

603 Medical Parkway  
Enterprise, OR 97828

*Winding Waters Clinic*  
P.C. Physicians & Surgeons  
Improving the Health of Our Community

Seniors, people with disabilities, families and caregivers...

## Know your options.



Looking for information and services can be frustrating.

Your Aging and Disability Resource Connection counselor will make it easy for you to access local caregiving, Medicare counseling — whatever you need.

Knowing your options will help empower you to live as independently as possible while getting the help you need.

Don’t miss out. The service is **free** and available to all seniors and people with disabilities, as well as their families and caregivers.

Get in touch with your local  
ADRC options counselor today at:

**1-855-ORE-ADRC**  
(673-2372)

[www.ADRCoforegon.org](http://www.ADRCoforegon.org)

**ADRC**  
Aging and Disability  
Resource Connection  
of OREGON

**DHS**  
Oregon Department  
of Human Services

## THEY KNOW what’s going on in state government



### Isn’t it time YOU did?

Oregon Capital Insider is concise original reporting on state government activity, people and trends delivered weekly via e-mail

**FREE THREE-WEEK sample subscription**

[OregonCapitalInsider.com](http://OregonCapitalInsider.com) • 844-297-8634



**OREGON CAPITAL INSIDER**

ACCESS • INSIGHT • ACCOUNTABILITY