

Calf’s death was wolf depredation

By Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

For the third time in less than a year, the Harl Butte wolf pack has been blamed for the death of a calf.

The livestock was on a public grazing allotment 15 miles east of Joseph.

A rancher moving a herd of cows July 21 noted injuries on the hindquarters of a 25-pound calf. The rancher removed the calf and its mother from the allotment and hauled the pair to the home ranch.

The rancher suspected a wolf depredation and called the Oregon Department of

Fish and Wildlife. Personnel arrived the next morning and determined the bites were around seven days old. Bite wounds to the right flank and above the calf’s hock were tell-tale. Further examination noting the size, location and direction of the wounds, teeth scrapes and tissue damage to the calf’s hindquarters indicated the damage was wolf-inflicted.

A GPS collar on wolf OR-50, a known member of the pack, showed it was in the grazing pasture around the time frame the calf had suffered its injuries.

The depredation is the third confirmed wolf attack

on Wallowa County livestock in 2017 and the second confirmed attack this calendar year by the Harl Butte pack.

In a separate confirmed attack, a rancher found a 400- to 500-pound calf dead on a U.S. Forest Service grazing allotment near Harl Butte on July 26.

The rancher suspected a wolf depredation and the Oregon department of Fish and Wildlife responded the same day.

The ODFW estimated the calf died July 20-22. The carcass was mostly consumed with only the skeleton and about half of the hide remaining. Bite marks were found

on the hide behind both front elbows and on the rear of both hind legs above the hocks, which officials said indicated a predator had attacked the calf. The length, width and locations of the bites are common attack points for wolves.

An investigation around the kill site found numerous fresh wolf tracks around the carcass and on a nearby cow trail. Again, a radio collar located OR-50 of the Harl Butte Pack within 200 yards of the carcass four times July 21-25. The Harl Butte Pack has chalked up six calf depredations July 15-22. All occurred within seven miles of the site.

LOSTINE

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thorough environmental analysis. Kelly said the exclusion was originally intended to create categories for projects that shouldn’t require environmental analysis.

“They don’t have to do an environmental analysis to cut down a dead tree leaning over the campsite in an established campground,” Kelly said, noting that is an obvious example where the exclusion is appropriate. Another issue, according to Kelly is commercial thinning and logging on 450 acres of classified moist or cold upland forest that contains a significant amount of old-growth or near old-growth timber.

“That’s where we feel the categorical exclusion is not appropriate,” he said.

Other concerns include the project being implemented in an area where the Lostine River has received Wild and Scenic designation.

“The Wild and Scenic River has its own management plan that is part of the Wallowa-Whitman Forest Plan, and that needs to be followed,” Kelly said. “That’s part of the concern that we feel makes this area inappropriate for a categorical exclusion for this current project.”

According to Kelly, the two groups laud the Forest Service’s intention to remove hazardous trees near the roadway, campgrounds or where they may fall and are likely to cause injury. However, they say that those trees account at most, for seven percent of the project’s total four million board feet of timber to be removed from the area, which the lawsuit calls “extensive logging.”

“We are very much in favor of the Forest Service taking reasonable measures to improve public safety, but we don’t believe that logging the last remaining old growth forests in the Lostine Canyon is justified,” Kelly said.

The council’s conservation director Veronica Warnock said that the lawsuit didn’t seek a preliminary injunction,

which would have halted the project in its tracks, because the hazard tree removal is underway. Both groups and the Forest Service believe that the judge will render a decision on the initial lawsuit before the commercial logging begins.

Warnock said that many of the parcels designated for commercial thinning in the 450 acres that are classified as moist and cold forests flies in the face of the best science.

“When you open up these high elevation moist closed canopy forests, you’re actually increasing the risk of fire,” she said. When light reaches the ground, fine fuels that grow, such as small trees that don’t grow because of the lack of sunlight, and things get drier. Because you have more light, you don’t have the wood holding in moisture as it currently does. You can actually increase the severity of fire with the intensive thinning approved for those stands.”

Sensitive plants are also a concern for Warnock.

“The canyon has the highest diversity of Moonwort of anywhere known in the United States,” she said.

Warnock added that the Forest Service once proposed the canyon as a research area to learn more about the species, and she is concerned that the impact of the approved activities on these sensitive plants is unknown.

“Botanically, it’s a unique and rare place,” she said. “It’s unfortunate that this project has been approved without any consideration of the impact into the incredible botanical resources in the corridor.”

Warnock reiterated that the two environmental groups are not entirely against the project.

“There are aspects of this project we support,” she said. “We really do believe there are actions to be taken that can improve public and firefighter safety in the corridor, but they don’t have to have them at the expense of the botanical, wildlife, fisheries and the old-growth forests. You can enhance public safety and protect the incredible treasure that is the Lostine Corridor.”

SUNRISE IRON



Courtesy photo

Erl McLaughlin, wheat farmer and ancient tractor museum owner, is gearing up for his 22nd annual show at his farm west of Enterprise at 8 a.m. Aug. 5 and continuing until the last visitor leaves. McLaughlin has dozens of vintage antique tractors and other farm equipment he has lovingly restored to pristine condition. Sunrise Iron is at 65708 Sunrise Road.

FOR THE RECORD

- Tuesday, July 25**
2:56 p.m. — A missing person from Enterprise was reported. The subject was located.
3:33 p.m. — Officers investigated a harassment and theft of services complaint in Enterprise.
- Wednesday, July 26**
9:42 p.m. — A 911 domestic disturbance call was received. David William Winger, 29, of Enterprise, was arrested on a probation violation, being intoxicated. Original charge was trespass. He was lodged in Wallowa County Jail overnight.
- Friday, July 28**
12:03 p.m. — A 911 caller reported a bear at Wallowa Lake.
4:30 p.m. — Lightning strike started a small fire in rural

- Wallowa.
4:54 p.m. — Parking complaint in Enterprise.
9:46 p.m. — A single-vehicle traffic crash was reported in rural Joseph. The vehicle was found unoccupied, and Oregon State Patrol was summoned.
- Saturday, July 29**
4:57 p.m. — Traffic crash reported at Joseph City Park.
5:19 p.m. — Parking complaint in Joseph.
11:39 p.m. — Victoria Marie Beauchamp, 19, of Dallas, Ore., was cited for minor in possession of alcohol by Wallowa County Sheriff’s Office.
- Sunday, July 30**
3:23 a.m. — 911 call reporting a trespasser.
6:45 a.m. — Report of an abandoned camp trailer full of garbage at Lower Bear Creek Campground.
12:29 p.m. — Complaint of violation of stalking order in Wallowa.

ABUSE

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was mostly hearsay about Garrett’s character before the events occurred for which prosecution was ongoing. West agreed.

When Wallace later called Christopher Garrett to the witness stand, he immediately attempted to bring his client’s military service into the tes-

timony. West sustained Frolander’s objection.

Garrett testified that several of the charges were complete fabrications.

Garrett also said the incident in which he had been accused of grabbing his wife by the mouth as she held their son resulted from his concern that Brittany Garrett’s screaming during the argument over the bowl of

cereal was disturbing their son. Under Frolander’s cross examination, he said he had only “very lightly” grabbed his wife’s mouth. He said the act left no marks.

Both sides made their final arguments, and West gave the jury his instructions. The jury took nearly 24 hours before returning with the verdicts Friday. Garrett was found guilty of felony assault in the

fourth degree, misdemeanor menacing, constituting domestic violence and felony unlawful use of a weapon.

The jury found Garrett not guilty on counts of assault, menacing and two counts of reckless endangerment. Over the protests of Garrett’s attorney, West remanded Christopher Garrett into custody to await sentencing.

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Event details and schedule

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T-SHIRTS WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR ENTRIES AFTER THIS DATE

Late registration ends August 27 at 12:01 am.

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