

Wolves

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New administration and lawsuit

Mellgren said that both Democrat and Republican administrations have tried to delist wolves over the years, and they have failed every time. He said the most recent attempt to delist wolves came out during the Obama years.

"Even with the change in administration, we don't think there's going to be much of a change in policy as it relates to wolves," he said.

Mellgren said the group knows they have allies in Congress who are supportive of their efforts.

"We need the judge to resolve the case," he said. "We're not relying on any help."

Mellgren said his grandfather was a cattle rancher in Kansas and that he spent his summers on his cattle ranch helping out.

"I certainly appreciate what it's like to be a cattle producer and the impacts from having carnivores on the landscape," he said.

He said reimbursement programs pay for the value of lost livestock, and many programs exist to help livestock producers install deterrent measures.

"We're very supportive of the programs to reimburse livestock producers who have lost livestock and injured livestock and are very open to continuing those conversations," he said.

Mellgren said there is also a philosophical divide about whether or not the federal or state government should

reintroduce wolves. He said his group's perspective is that wolves are a natural part of the landscape, and they belong.

"We should find a way to coexist with them on the landscape," he said.

Livestock concerns

Oregon Cattlemen's Association Wolf Committee Co-Chair Roger Huffman said the toll on livestock producers is extreme, even if they do not have wolves killing one of their animals. In addition to the mental toll on producers, he said, there is a cost to set up the non-lethal protections.

He said producers still take a hit even if their cattle do not get killed. Huffman said cattle shed weight from being pushed around the pasture and trying to avoid

the wolves.

"Less healthy animals and less gain per day, which is a small incremental cost, but when you have a couple of hundred head of cattle, that's significant over that grazing period," Huffman said.

Huffman said, while the programs do help, more often than not, there is never enough, and those programs typically end up spreading themselves thin throughout the counties.

Huffman said, as far as deterrents, the most reliable are heavy-duty electric fences, which are incredibly costly. He said that the environmental groups should put money toward non-lethal deterrents as the association has.

"All of the non-lethal measures costs money and time," he said. "And every one of

the producers would certainly not like to have that stress and that cost, but they're here."

Nash said he took part in setting up some of the compensation programs, and they are not as "onerous" to apply for as some might think. However, he told the Eagle the state does require additional forms that are more "burdensome." He said that was disappointing.

The compensation programs, he said, are managed at the county level, and those committees should have more autonomy to work through those processes.

"The state has decided to get involved in a larger way," he said. "And so it's going to be tougher than it has been in the past, but I would encourage people to hang in there and apply for those losses."

Police

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ways with everything we're talking about," Councilor Gregg Habberly said, referring to other city projects.

Green said in an interview on Jan. 22 that the best way to pay for services is to have the city healthy and growing with new development. This would add more money to the general fund through the state shared revenue and property tax increases.

"We're just now seeing the benefits of that, but it's coming at the end of 30 years of decline," Green said.

Green said there are Department of Homeland Security grants that could help offset the costs, but the money is not guaranteed every year. He added that this is not an easy conversation to have because the department is always busy and does a lot in the community.

"They're busy all the time," Green said. "It's tough because you want the officers to know how much you value them. Just having a conversation about how we budget appropriately, you want to make sure they know how meaningful they are to the city and the residents."

This council discussed making this a temporary option while the economy in the city continues to rebound with the completion of projects and growth in residents.

The council made no decision on Jan. 22, and council members said it was important to get feedback from the community, through a survey or questionnaire from the city, regarding the future structure of the department.

"Give people the information and allow them to speak their mind and see where that starts us," Councilor Elliot Sky said.

Smith

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Tyler Smith."

In a Dec. 4, 2019, letter to Olson, Carpenter said he looked at the contents of the extraction but "was not willing to provide the flash drive to the Sheriff or any other local agency" and deleted the contents.

Smith claims in the lawsuit that Carpenter provided access to, or described the contents of, the extraction — including sexual content and Smith's intent to report Abigail Mobley to the DOJ — to others, including Palmer.

"Carpenter provided access to Screenshots of portions of Olson's phone to Palmer," the suit states. "Sheriff Palmer showed intimate pictures of (Smith) and Olson to members of the community. The Mobley Defendants likewise obtained access to intimate

photos of (Smith) and Olson from Palmer and/or Carpenter's copy of the phone."

Olson has also filed a federal lawsuit against Grant County, Palmer and Carpenter that is pending. Carpenter did not respond to emailed questions about that lawsuit, but his attorney has filed a motion to dismiss the lawsuit on procedural grounds. Palmer's attorney said the sheriff "never possessed or reviewed any of the material" Olson alleges, and he has filed a counterclaim for slander against her. Grant County's attorney said "the County Court had no involvement with any of the salacious allegations at issue in the lawsuit."

The arrest

Smith claims in the new lawsuit that Palmer informed him he was being investigated in late March 2019 because his business card was found in Olson's vehicle and that it could lead to his termination.

In late March or early April 2019, Smith said he told Carpenter he wished to speak with DOJ regarding the criminal investigation of Abigail Mobley, and Carpenter told Smith he would have DOJ contact him, according to the suit.

Several weeks later, in April or May 2019, Smith claims in the suit, Carpenter told Smith to be patient when Smith informed him again that he had information to report regarding Abigail Mobley.

Smith claims Palmer learned he was going to report Abigail Mobley before June 2019.

"On June 20, 2019, Defendant Palmer met with (Smith) and berated him for his plan to discuss Deputy (Abigail) Mobley with DOJ," the suit states. "...Defendant Palmer asked (Smith) if he was running his own drug team or actively investigating Deputy (Abigail) Mobley. Deputy Smith said he was doing neither."

Palmer met with Zach and

Abigail Mobley in June 2020, Smith claims in the suit.

"Defendant Palmer instructed (the Mobleys) to destroy all evidence they had in their possession regarding Olson or regarding Deputy (Abigail) Mobley's misconduct and that they were 'on their own' regarding her conduct," the suit states. On July 29, 2019, Smith again told Carpenter he needed to speak to DOJ regarding Abigail Mobley, and he was finally interviewed July 31, 2019, and provided "information regarding Deputy (Abigail) Mobley's criminal activities," according to the suit.

On Aug. 9, 2019, Smith was placed on administrative leave "for unidentified 'policy violations involving ethical issues,'" according to the suit. Carpenter said Smith had been placed on leave "for issues related to the performance of his duties as a sheriff's deputy."

Smith remained on admin-

istrative leave until he was discharged. Smith claims in the suit that Palmer and the Mobleys "orchestrated" a plan around August 2019 to get him arrested and forced out of the sheriff's office.

"The Mobley Defendants told (Smith's spouse), falsely, that (Smith) was going to try to get full custody of their children if she didn't do something about it immediately," the suit states. "In response, his wife promptly filed for divorce, emptied her and (Smith's) joint bank account and, in early September 2019, lodged a criminal complaint against (Smith) for attempted rape. Both the lodging of the criminal complaint and the draining of the bank accounts was done at the recommendation of Grant County employees, including the Mobleys."

On Sept. 9, Smith was arrested based on his wife's complaint. The trial is set to begin April 5.

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