

# State kills three Baker County wolves

### Breeding male from Lookout Mountain Pack killed in Sept. 17

Baker City Herald

BAKER CITY — Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife employees, firing from a helicopter, shot and killed three wolves from the Lookout Mountain Pack in eastern Baker County Friday, Sept. 17, including the pack's breeding male.

In addition to the breeding male, ODFW employees killed a yearling male, born in the spring of 2020, and a 5-month-old pup from the pack's spring 2021 litter of seven.

The wolves were killed the day after ODFW announced that the agency intended to kill up to four wolves from the pack, which has killed at least six head of cattle, and injured two others, since mid July.

According to a press release from ODFW, agency employees saw six wolves during the Friday helicopter flight.

The three wolves that were killed were near a dead calf, and on private land. ODFW biologists are investigating to determine whether wolves killed the calf.

"Initial indications point



A trail cam photo from May 30 of one of the two yearling wolves in the Lookout Mountain pack.

Contributed photo/Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

to another depredation" by wolves, according to the press release.

ODFW announced on Sept. 16 that agency workers intended to kill up to four wolves from pack, including the breeding male. ODFW is not targeting the pack's breeding female. In addition, four ranchers who have lost cattle to the pack are authorized

to kill up to two other wolves total.

ODFW estimates the pack consisted of nine wolves, a count prior to the Sept. 17 killing of three wolves.

ODFW employees killed two other pups from the 2021 litter on Aug. 1.

By targeting the breeding male, ODFW hopes to still allow the breeding female to

raise any remaining juveniles. Reducing the number of juveniles the breeding female will need to feed increases the likelihood that some will survive, according to a press release from the agency.

The group Defenders of Wildlife criticized ODFW's decision to kill the wolves.

"Whenever wolves are put on the chopping block, it is a

tragedy," said Sristi Kamal, senior northwest representative for Defenders of Wildlife. "Lethal control is never a long-term solution and any pups that will be killed under these permits did not even participate in the hunts. There are better solutions than just killing wolves to cultivate social acceptance. Investments in proactive non-lethal efforts

can do much more for promoting coexistence."

Baker County Sheriff Travis Ash sent a letter to ODFW Director Curt Melcher on Sept. 13 asking the state to kill the entire Lookout Mountain Pack and relieve the burden on ranchers in the area.

Four ranchers have lost cattle to the Lookout Mountain pack.

"The financial burden, physical strain and exhaustion they are going through in what has become a fruitless effort to keep the Lookout Mountain Pack from killing their animals is extreme," Ash wrote. "I believe the most humane way of dealing with this problem wolf pack is to remove the adult breeding pair that are teaching the negative learned behavior of targeting cattle to their offspring."

Roblyn Brown, ODFW's state wolf coordinator, agreed with Ash that the Lookout Mountain wolves have shown a preference for cattle over elk and deer.

"This pack has made a shift in their behavior," Brown said in a press release. "Instead of the occasional opportunistic killing of a vulnerable calf, now they are targeting livestock despite the high numbers of elk and deer in the area where the depredations have occurred and extensive human presence to haze wolves."

# Survey: Politics plays role in vaccination rates

### One in five Oregonians not planning to get vaccinated against COVID-19, according to new survey

By ALEXANDRA SKORES  
The Oregonian

PORTLAND — One in five Oregon adults say they are not planning to get vaccinated against COVID-19, according to a new survey of Oregonians by the Oregon Values and Beliefs Center.

This population tends to be under the age of 55, socially and ideologically conservative, with no college degree and living in rural or rural-to-suburban parts of the state.

The survey underscores how politics has become one of the leading indicators of vaccination rates in a highly polarized environment. Just one in 25 registered Democrats reported that the vaccine was "not for me," according to the survey of 1,154 Oregon adults, versus more than one in three Republicans and more than one in four independent or other voters.

The Oregon Values and Belief Center, an independent, nonprofit research firm, conducted the polling Aug. 9-17, before full approval to the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine and

Gov. Kate Brown's outdoor masking requirement. The survey found that the most-trusted source of information no matter political affiliation was scientists and doctors.

"We hope that it will help inform Oregonians about how other people that live in their state feel, but that most of them are not so different from you and have a lot of the same thoughts, feelings and concerns that you do," Amaury Vogel, associate executive director of the Oregon Values and Beliefs Center, said of the survey.

"It's helpful for Oregonians to know what else other people are thinking too, because sometimes the loudest voices are the ones that dominate the conversation," Vogel added.

Few Oregonians expressed initial hesitancy with wanting to get the vaccine, with 62% of respondents saying they got vaccinated as soon they could. An additional 17% said they were initially skeptical but have or will soon get vaccinated, while 21% said vaccination was not for them.

Oregon respondents younger than 45 are the most



Alex Wittwer/The Observer, File

Shannon White, regional testing liason for Grand Ronde Hospital gives directions to Doug Ross for a self-administered COVID-19 test in the Bi-Mart parking lot in La Grande on Friday, Aug. 27, 2021.

likely to report warming to vaccinations, alongside people of color, social moderates and people with a high school degree or less.

A majority of Oregon adults support employers being able to require vaccinations among employees. Fully 70% of respondents said they think medical facilities, including nursing homes and assisted living facilities, should be allowed to require employee vaccinations. For

all employers, the rate of support for allowing required employee vaccinations was slightly lower, at 66%.

COVID-19 vaccinations are not yet available for children 11 and younger, but 56% of surveyed parents with kids in that age group said they would have their child inoculated if a federally approved vaccine was available today. One third of respondents said they would not. Parents with college degrees were far more

likely to say they would vaccinate their children.

The survey also looked at where Oregonians get vital information about things such as COVID-19. The No. 1 trusted source? The front-line workers relaying the information.

Some 80% of respondents said they trusted scientists and doctors, far higher than the 60% rate for science agencies.

Below scientists and agencies, media organizations

came into play for varying demographics of respondents. Roughly half of college-educated respondents trusted National Public Radio or similar programming, while roughly half of people with high school educations or less trusted family and friends.

Meanwhile, respondents were asked to categorize COVID-19 as a fact, belief, concept or fiction. Fully 6% of respondents said it was fiction, with nearly all of those people lacking a college degree.

Five out of six Oregonians have experienced negative physical or emotional impacts of COVID-19. Fully 40% said those impacts were slight, 27% said they were significant and 17% said they were dramatic.

Compared to problems of the day — such as climate change, racial discrimination and forest fires — respondents expressed optimism that humans will solve communicable diseases such as COVID-19. Just over half said there's a good chance or certainty it can be solved, roughly equal to the other most optimistic view, on voting rights and secure elections.

Oregonians wanting to participate in a September survey can sign up to join the Oregon Values and Beliefs Center panel.

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