

OSP says 8 wolves poisoned

By DICK MASON
The Observer

UNION COUNTY — Police are asking for the public's help in identifying individuals responsible for the poisoning of the wolves in the Catherine Pack earlier this year in Eastern Oregon.

Oregon State Police in a press release reported Fish and Wildlife Division troopers received information in February from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife about a dead collared wolf. Troopers responded to the area and found five dead wolves — three males and two females. It was later determined the wolves were from the Catherine Pack, with all known members present and deceased.

The wolves were southeast of Mount Harris, within Union County. Troopers and ODFW personnel with the assistance of a helicopter searched the area for any-

thing of evidentiary value and found a dead magpie in the vicinity of the dead wolves.

The five wolves and magpie were collected and transported to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Forensics Lab in Ashland to determine the cause of death.

Fish and Wildlife troopers in March again received information from ODFW personnel of an additional wolf collar emitting a mortality signal in the same general location. A search of the area located a deceased female wolf, plus a skunk and a magpie close to the scene. All animals were collected and immediately submitted to the USFWS lab for testing. The female wolf was dispersing from the Keating Pack.

Fish and Wildlife Troopers were initially hampered in investigating the scene due to snow levels and inclement weather. Troopers contin-



Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife/Contributed Photo, File
The Oregon State Police is seeking the public's help in an investigation into the poisoning of eight wolves in Eastern Oregon.

ued searching over the next few weeks as snow melted and found evidence of suspected poisoning. The evidence was submitted for testing and analysis.

In April, the USFWS submitted its examination reports with findings consistent with poisoning as the cause of death for all six wolves, the skunk and two magpies. Lab results also indicated the suspected evidence confirmed a poisonous substance.

were found dead in Union County after the initial incidents. In April a deceased adult male wolf from the Five Points Pack was located west of Elgin, and in July a young female wolf from the Clark Creek Pack was discovered in northeast of La Grande.

In both cases, the cause of death was not readily apparent. Toxicology reports confirmed the presence of poison in each wolf.

Based on the type of poison and the locations, the death of the young female wolf may be related to the earlier six poisonings, according to OSP.

Bigman said the wolf from the Five Points Pack died from a poison not similar to the type that killed the seven other wolves.

"It is different enough that it could be a different incident," she said.

ODFW spokesperson Michelle Denney said the poisonings are "terrible news," and the agency hopes

someone from the public will come forward with information to help solve the case.

"The poisoning of an entire pack is significant," she said. "We'll have a clearer picture on how that affects the overall (wolf) population after we complete our winter surveys this year."

There were 173 known wolves in Oregon at the end of 2020. In addition to the eight poisonings, another wolf was poached in September in the Skull Creek drainage of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest in Eastern Oregon.

ODFW also culled six wolves from the Look-out Mountain Pack over the summer in Baker County. The wolves had repeatedly attacked livestock.

Anyone with information about the poisonings is asked to contact OSP through the Turn-In Poachers Hotline at 1-800-452-7888, or email TIP@state.or.us, referencing case number SP21-033033.

COPS AND COURTS

Arrests and citations in the Blue Mountain Eagle are taken from the logs of law enforcement agencies. Every effort is made to report the court disposition of arrest cases.

Grant County Circuit Court

Nov. 18: Kevin Shawn Chamberlain, 31, of Pendleton pleaded guilty to a charge of second-degree failure to appear in court. He was sentenced to 18 months of bench probation, 10 days in jail with credit for time served and 40 hours of community service or work crew time. He was also fined \$100 and ordered not to possess or use intoxicants. In a separate case, Chamberlain pleaded guilty to giving false information to a peace officer in connection with a citation or warrant. He was sentenced to 18 months of bench probation and 10 days in jail with credit for time served, with that sentence to be served consecutively to the sentence in the failure to appear case. He was also fined \$100. Additional charges of methamphetamine possession, criminal driving while suspended or revoked and failure to carry or present a driver's license were dismissed.

Grant County Sheriff

The Grant County Sheriff's Office reported the following for the week ending Nov. 1:
Concealed carry permits: 2
Average inmates: 12
Bookings: 3
Releases: 5
Arrests: 0
Citations: 1
Fingerprints: 1
Civil papers: 9
Warrants processed: 4
Asst./welfare check: 1
Search and rescue: 2

Justice Court

The Grant County Justice Court reported the following activity for the week ending Dec. 1:
Traffic citations filed: 23
Violations filed: 1
Misdemeanors filed: 0
Small claims/civil filings: 1
Hearings held: 12
Persons on probation: 41
License suspensions: 8

Small claims judgments in favor of plaintiff: 1

- Exceeding speed limit: Nathan Thomas Hillestad, 40, Reno, Nevada, Oct. 24, 61/45 zone, fined \$165.

- No operator's license: Brian Keith Deel, 51, Twin Falls, Idaho, Oct. 27, fined \$265.

- Driving uninsured: Joseph Michael Warren, 37, Canyon City, Oct. 28, fined \$265; David Edwin Hall, 27, John Day, Oct. 29, fined \$265.

- Driving while suspended: Joseph Michael Warren, 37, Canyon City, Oct. 28, fined \$440; David Edwin Hall, 27, John Day, Oct. 29, fined \$440.

Nov. 1: Kelly R. Olson, 61, pleaded no contest to violating the Mt. Vernon municipal code regarding nuisance abatement and was fined \$100. The fine was suspended until Dec. 31 pending cleanup of the property.

Nov. 29: Spencer Edward Liefheit III, 45, was convicted of violating the Mt. Vernon municipal code regarding residential use of a recreational vehicle and fined \$500 after failing to appear in court.

Nov. 29: Shawn James Solar, 49, of Prineville was convicted of criminal driving while suspended. Solar was fined \$500 and ordered to serve 45 days in the Crook County Jail.

Oregon State Police

Nov. 28: A hunter mistook a rafter elk for a cow and shot it. The hunter self-reported the illegal kill and prepared the carcass for processing. The elk was seized and delivered to Beurman's for processing. Dell Hackett, 70, of Eugene was issued a warning citation.

Nov. 28: A fish and wildlife trooper responded to a residence on Trafton Lane for an injured deer. The deer apparently jumped into a fenced yard, where it was severely injured by the reporting party's dogs. The deer was put down.

Nov. 30: At 10:04 p.m. a trooper stopped a vehicle for multiple traffic violations on Highway 26 in John Day. The trooper recognized the female passenger, who was visi-

bly intoxicated, as a 42-year-old John Day resident with a no-alcohol clause as a condition of probation. The woman, who is on a medical release from jail, reportedly admitted to having a drink of whiskey at a bar and a beer at home. The case was referred to the district attorney for consideration of contempt charges.

Dispatch

Grant County dispatch worked 141 calls during the week ending Dec. 3, including:

- **Oregon State Police**

Nov. 28: Responded to Highway 395 near milepost 1C for an injured deer.

- **Grant County Sheriff's Office**

Nov. 26: Responded to South Bridge Street and Overholt Street in Prairie City for a criminal mischief complaint.

Nov. 26: Responded to Westside Lane in John Day for a criminal mischief complaint.

Nov. 26: Responded to Main Street and South Canyon Boulevard in John Day for a report of two children left unattended.

Nov. 27: Responded to Riverside Mobile Home Park in John Day for a civil issue.

Nov. 27: Responded to West Bench Road in John Day for an elder abuse complaint. Complaint was unfounded.

Nov. 27: Responded with Oregon State Police to search for an overdue hunter in the Murderers Creek unit.

Nov. 27: Advised of a report of shots fired on Ingle Street in Mt. Vernon.

Nov. 27: Responded to Fifth and Main Street in Prairie City for a report of an elderly person sitting in the road.

Nov. 27: Responded to Dog Creek Road near John Day for a report of an intoxicated subject harassing people by phone.

Nov. 28: Responded to Ingle Street in Mt. Vernon for a report of shots fired.

Nov. 28: Stopped a motorist on Highway 26 near milepost 139. Driver warned for speeding.

Nov. 28: Advised of an injured deer on Trafton Avenue in John Day.

Nov. 28: Stopped a motorist on Highway 26 near milepost

147. Efrain Gary Camacho, 33, of Portland cited for driving while suspended.

Nov. 29: Dispatched to Prairie City School for a report of criminal mischief.

Nov. 29: Responded to Copper Creek Road near Monument for a suspicious circumstances report.

Nov. 29: Responded to South Bridge and Overholt streets in Prairie City for a criminal mischief complaint.

Nov. 29: Responded with Oregon State Police to Highway 19 near milepost 21 for a possible stolen vehicle.

Nov. 29: Responded to Monument for an unattended death.

Nov. 30: Responded to Len's Drug in John Day for a theft report.

Nov. 30: Responded to Riverside Mobile Home Park in John Day for a trespassing complaint.

Nov. 30: Responded to Hillcrest Road in John Day for a driving complaint.

Nov. 30: Responded to Mt. Vernon for a theft report.

Nov. 30: Advised of suspicious vehicle on East Ninth Street in Prairie City. Occupants shining lights in windows of homes.

Nov. 30: Traffic stop on Highway 26 near milepost 162. Driver warned for failure to maintain lane.

Dec. 1: Responded to

Southwest First Avenue, John Day, for a possible cybercrime.

Dec. 1: Dispatched to Park Avenue, Mt. Vernon, for a barking dog complaint.

Dec. 1: Responded with Oregon State Police to Main Street and Canyon Boulevard, John Day, for a possible drunk driver.

Dec. 1: Responded to East Ninth Street, Prairie City, for a suspicious person report.

Dec. 1: Responded to a commercial alarm on Highway 26 west of John Day.

Dec. 2: Responded to the Grant County Fairgrounds in John Day for a suspicious circumstances report.

Dec. 2: Responded to East main Street, John Day, for an animal complaint.

Dec. 2: Responded to West Main Street, John Day, for a report of a fight.

Dec. 3: Responded to Chester's Market, John Day, for a theft report.

Dec. 3: Responded to Riverside Mobile Home Park, John Day, for an animal complaint.

- **John Day Ambulance**

Nov. 27: Patient transport to St. Charles Medical Center, Bend.

Nov. 27: Responded to Highway 26 in Bates for a 33-year-old man convulsing.

Nov. 28: Responded to Highway 26 west of John Day

for a woman with a fall injury.

Nov. 29: Responded to Marysville Lane for an elderly man with a medical issue.

Nov. 30: Responded to Best Western Motel, John Day, for a 75-year-old man having seizures.

Nov. 30: Dispatched to Meadowbrook Apartments, John Day, for a 34-year-old man who had lost feeling.

Nov. 30: Dispatched to Southwest First Street, John Day, for a 77-year-old female with a fall injury.

Dec. 1: Dispatched to East main Street, John Day, for a 71-year-old male throwing up blood.

Dec. 2: Dispatched to Riverside Mobile Home Park, John Day, for a 78-year-old man with a fall injury.

Dec. 3: Dispatched to Adam Road, Canyon City, for a baby who wasn't breathing.

Dec. 3: Dispatched to Southwest First Avenue, John Day, for a 77-year-old female with a medical issue.

- **John Day Fire**

Nov. 27: Responded to Southwest Second Avenue and Brent Drive with Sheriff's Office for a report of downed power lines.

- **Monument Ambulance**

Nov. 28: Responded to Copper Creek Road in Kimberly with Monument Fire and John Day Ambulance for an unresponsive male.

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- 1188 Brewing Co.
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- Best Western Inn
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- John Day Dairy Queen
- John Day Elk's Lodge
- John Day Figaro's
- John Day Sunset Inn
- Fish House Inn and RV Park
- Grant County Fairgrounds RV Park
- Grant County Senior Center
- The Grubsteak Mining Company

- Hillcrest Cottage
- Hotel Prairie
- Java Jungle
- John Day Motel
- John Day Valley Rentals
- Lands Inn
- Log Cabin Espresso
- Long Creek Lodge
- Monument Motel & RV Park
- The Outpost Pizza, Pub & Grill
- Pine Shadows Resort
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- Silvies Valley Links & Retreat
- Squeeze Inn Restaurant & Deck
- Subway of John Day
- Ugly Truth Bar & Grill
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