

OUR VIEW

Let the states manage own wolf populations

For all of the gnashing of teeth and worries about the impending decline of Idaho's wolves, any predictions of their demise are greatly exaggerated.

Last year, the Idaho Legislature modified the law related to hunting and trapping wolves. Since it's the state's job to manage them, such laws were well within the purview of lawmakers.

Wolf advocates said the legislators were threatening the state's 1,500 wolves and any efforts to reduce that number would mark the beginning of the end for the predators.

In the year since the law was passed, not much has happened. The state's wildlife managers keep tabs on the wolves that have taken up residence in Idaho. What they found is — drum roll, please — the wolf population is about the same as before.

The wolf population peaks in the summer, after the pups are born. After that, any deaths are counted. The Idaho population's annual low point is about 900 in the early spring, before the next batch of pups is born.

State wildlife managers say that if for some reason the population began to decrease too far, they could make mid-course adjustments.

That's the sort of thing wildlife managers do.

Montana's Legislature passed similar legislation. For the vast majority of the state the new hunting and trapping rules had little impact on the overall wolf population. However, they found that some wolves from Yellowstone National Park had a tendency to drift outside the park and were killed by hunters and trappers.

When wildlife managers saw this, the hunts in that area were called off. The Yellowstone wolf packs will no doubt rebuild.

There is a concept that continues to be circulated about wolves: They are timid creatures that need the help of man to survive in the wild. Environmental groups use that concept to build a case for protecting wolves, and raising money.

Unfortunately for them, wolves are robust, smart and reproduce rapidly. Idaho started with 35 wolves imported from Canada in the mid-1990s. Now the population peaks at 1,500 each year, even with hunting, trapping and culling wolves that attack livestock.

Similarly, the wolf populations in Washington state and Oregon are healthy, yet the way they are managed has frustrated many ranchers.

Idaho and Montana have shouldered the responsibility of managing wolves in those states. They are held accountable and able to make changes as needed to maintain the health of the wolf populations without sacrificing the livelihoods of farmers and ranchers.

Our hope is that, someday, political leaders in the nation's capital will allow wildlife managers in the states of Oregon and Washington to do the same.

The last thing any of those states need is for the federal government to take over all management of wolves. Idaho and Montana have demonstrated that it's not needed, or wanted.



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FARMER'S FATE

The Ballad of Walter & Momma

Walter was a bummer lamb
his fleece was white as snow,
and everywhere his Momma went,
the lamb was sure to go.
He followed his Momma to the barn for
chores,
where he frolicked with his lambie pals
playing king of the hill, and prancing on all
four.
It was fun, but he had no plans to stay in those
corrals.
For Walter never thought himself a sheep;
instead, he thought his Momma just sheared and tall.
If she was in reach, he wouldn't make a peep,
but step out of the room, and boy would he squall!
Walter had nearly died in the cold,
it took the night to warm him through.
By the time that he was on his legs and bold
his mother had forgotten she'd had two.
He tromped through the house by day,
and participated in everything of interest.
At night he slept in a box of hay;
before the fireplace is where he rested.
He helped his Momma with the laundry one day
and sampled all the socks.
Then later assisted with a dinner saute
and tasted every piece of onion dropped.



Brianna Walker

At the end of the day, his Momma headed off
to shower
and poor Walter thought his heart would break.
The bathroom door seemed to be shut for an
hour;
Walter bawled and stomped and had started to
quake.
When his Momma opened up the door
Walter pushed past her and laid down on the
rug.
She hung up her towel, started her shower once more
with him happy at last she could scrub.
Walter laid at her feet while on the computer she
worked;
Her feet stayed warm and toasty, under the lamb, dog
and cat.
When Momma's husband saw them, he shook his
head and
smirked.
This life was often crazy, but he was proud to hang his
hat.
Why does Walter love his human Momma so?
her eager children cried.
Because his human Momma saved him from the snow.
"We all respond to love," was all she replied.
Brianna Walker occasionally writes about the Farmer's Fate for the Blue Mountain Eagle.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

City leaders ignore bridge safety issue

To the Editor:
I have brought this to the attention of the mayor and the city manager. With no response from either of them. Why?
The Third Avenue bridge and road has a sign that states No Trucks and has a 30,000-pound weight limit. Yet the city officials allow overweight trucks to cross that bridge on a daily basis with blatant disregard for the safety of the citizens of John Day.
The infrastructure of that bridge cannot carry an 80,000-pound load, let alone a 100,000-pound-plus load.
The concern is that the city manager refuses to address this issue with the citizens of Grant County. I have sent him several emails which he refuses to answer.
What kind of city officials do we have here? Public concern should be the No. 1 priority.

Jon Meiling
John Day

and the country can't handle them, not to mention the current administration doesn't seem to be able or willing to even handle one at a time.
As long as we allow these people to run the nation, the closer we all are to living in the same commune and fighting over the same bread crumb.
Signed: One Concerned American.

Eddy L. Negus
John Day

State should share wolf attack records

To the Editor:
The recent possible attack on livestock by wolves in the Izee area has, justifiably or otherwise, confirmed the suspicions of many Grant County producers that they are unlikely to receive equitable treatment when government decides predator depredations on livestock. Those decisions determine whether the property owner is entitled to the minimal compensation available and whether action can be taken against repeat-offending predators.
The Grant County Farm Bureau was among the first to receive the news of the reported attack, and we are diligently conducting our own inquiry into the protocols used to investigate and determine livestock depredations.
ODFW has requested that we ask for detailed information on their investigation through Oregon's public records law; we assert that every investigation report should be automatically filed with the respective county Wolf Depredation Advisory Committee and made readily available to all landowners. Regardless,

ODFW's published summary of the Izee incident raises serious questions with what appears to be significant differences between counties as to who participates in these inquests, such as independent parties like local veterinarians and county sheriffs, as well as possible deficiencies in the state's evidentiary standards — the Izee case summary contains no record that the eyewitnesses to the wolves seen feeding on the cow were ever interviewed.

Until we are able to review the complete case report, we recommend that all Grant County landowners remain extra vigilant against what is sure to be additional destruction of your private property and be fully aware of what your rights and responsibilities are when wolves enter your private lands and attack your livestock. We also ask that you seriously consider who is allowed to enter your property and for what purpose.

Grant County landowners and grazing permittees own and manage much of the critical habitats vital for both the wolves' survival and the big game upon which they depend, at little to no risk or cost to the state or wolf advocates. Our high-quality stewardship deserves and demands that deference be given to the private landowner when there is any purported uncertainty in mortality determinations — regardless of predator species.
Anything less than that, or any deviation from objectivity and fairness in these investigations, will all but guarantee the end of voluntary landowner cooperation ... with all state wildlife programs.
**Shaun W. Robertson, President
Grant County Farm Bureau**



MARGULIES

WHERE TO WRITE

- GRANT COUNTY**
 • **Grant County Courthouse** — 201 S. Humbolt St., Suite 280, Canyon City 97820. Phone: 541-575-0059. Fax: 541-575-2248.
 • **Canyon City** — P.O. Box 276, Canyon City 97820. Phone: 541-575-0509. Fax: 541-575-0515. Email: tocc1862@centurylink.net.
 • **Dayville** — P.O. Box 321, Dayville 97825. Phone: 541-987-2188. Fax: 541-987-2187. Email: dville@ortelco.net
 • **John Day** — 450 E. Main St, John Day, 97845. Phone: 541-575-0028. Fax: 541-575-1721. Email: cityjd@centurytel.net.
 • **Long Creek** — P.O. Box 489, Long Creek 97856. Phone: 541-421-3601. Fax: 541-421-3075. Email: info@cityoflongcreek.com.
 • **Monument** — P.O. Box 426, Monument 97864. Phone and fax: 541-934-2025. Email: cityofmonument@centurytel.net.
 • **Mt. Vernon** — P.O. Box 647, Mt. Vernon 97865. Phone: 541-932-4688. Fax: 541-932-4222. Email: cmtv@ortelco.net.
 • **Prairie City** — P.O. Box 370, Prairie City 97869. Phone: 541-820-3605. Fax: 820-3566. Email: pchall@ortelco.net.
 • **Seneca** — P.O. Box 208, Seneca 97873.
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SALEM
 • **Gov. Kate Brown, D** — 254 State Capitol, Salem 97310. Phone: 503-378-3111. Fax: 503-378-6827. Website: governor.state.or.us/governor.html.
 • **Oregon Legislature** — State Capitol, Salem, 97310. Phone: 503-986-1180. Website: leg.state.or.us (includes Oregon Constitution and Oregon Revised Statutes).
 • **Oregon Legislative Information** — (For updates on bills, services, capitol or messages for legislators) — 800-332-2313, oregonlegislature.gov.
 • **Sen. Lynn Findley, R-Vale** — 900 Court St. NE, S-301, Salem 97301. Phone: 503-986-1730. Website: oregonlegislature.gov/findley. Email: sen.lynnfindley@oregonlegislature.gov.
 • **Rep. Mark Owens, R-Crane** — 900 Court St. NE, H-475, Salem 97301. Phone: 503-986-1460. District address: 258 S. Oregon St., Ontario OR 97914. District phone: 541-889-8866. Website: oregonlegislature.gov/findley. Email: rep.markowens@oregonlegislature.gov.

Is the White House full of commies?

To the Editor:
Have the gods gone crazy or is the White House full of commies?
What else could explain all these issues we have — all at the same time?
To a layman like myself it appears that the United States of America is in one hell of a hurry to surrender to the New World Power with zero resistance.
It seems like a lot of these problems we face are intentional. Put them all together at the same time

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: Letters to the Editor is a forum for Blue Mountain Eagle readers to express themselves on local, state, national or world issues. Brevity is good, but longer letters will be asked to be contained to 350 words. No personal attacks; challenge the opinion, not the person. No thank-you letters. Submissions to this page become property of the Eagle. The Eagle reserves the right to edit letters for length and for content. Letters must be original and signed by the writer. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Writers should include a telephone number so they can be reached for questions. We must limit all contributors to one letter per person per month. Deadline is 5 p.m. Friday. Send letters to editor@bmeagle.com, or Blue Mountain Eagle, 195 N. Canyon Blvd., John Day, OR 97845; or fax to 541-575-1244.



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