

# ODFW: Wolves active in Murderers Creek

By STEVEN MITCHELL  
Blue Mountain Eagle

**MURDERERS CREEK** — The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife has identified a new area of known wolf activity in the West Murderers Creek Wildlife Unit.

While the state agency has not completed its official annual wolf count, Ryan Torland, an ODFW district wildlife biologist, said in a Tuesday, March 1, interview that it is believed that there is a combined total of six wolves in the East and West Units of Murderers Creek.

Torland said the agency is still gathering information, but he is “fairly certain” that is the minimum number of wolves in the area.

He said there are at least two in West Murderers Creek and probably four in East Murderers Creek. The current wolf activity is concentrated south of Canyon City on either side of Highway 395, which separates the two wildlife units.

While there have not been any confirmed depredations in the area recently, a wolf did bite a calf in Grant County in 2018.

An investigator from ODFW was unable to determine whether a pair of

wolves seen feeding on a dead cow in a pasture near Izee on Feb. 3 caused that cow’s death, according to the agency’s investigative summary.

Torland said the notification is primarily to let livestock producers know that there is evidence of recent wolf activity via confirmed pictures and tracks taken from various sites in the two wildlife units.

The confirmation of two additional wolves in the area comes on the heels of a federal judge’s decision to renew endangered species protections for some gray wolves.

The ruling does not cover wolves in Eastern Oregon, where most of the state’s wolves are. Therefore, state wildlife officials will continue to manage wolves east of highways 395, 78 and 95.

What that means for ranchers west of 395, where the two additional wolves are located, is that ranchers can no longer take lethal action in defense of livestock, Torland said.

Torland encouraged livestock producers to sign up to receive email updates regarding areas of known wolf activity, livestock depredations, and any other wolf-related happenings, by going to: [dfw.state.or.us/wolves/wolf\\_livestock\\_updates.asp](http://dfw.state.or.us/wolves/wolf_livestock_updates.asp)



Contributed Photo  
A wolf on the move in an unidentified area of Grant County.

## Reward of \$22,500 in killing of wolf in Union County

By STEVEN MITCHELL  
Blue Mountain Eagle

**COVE** — Environmental groups have raised more than \$20,000 as a reward for information leading to the arrest of the person or people responsible for killing a wolf found shot dead in Union County on Feb. 15.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife believes the black female wolf was between a year and 2 years old, according to a Wednesday, March 2, press release.

Oregon State Police forest and wildlife troopers responded to a call from ODFW of a mortality signal from a wolf collar near the town of Cove and came across the wolf’s carcass. Investigators believe the wolf died the morning of Feb 15.

According to the press release, while there were no apparent signs

of injury, wildlife veterinarians discovered a bullet, which they said was the cause of death.

The latest in a string of wolf killings in the state, the death of this wolf, which ODFW referred to as OR109, prompted a slate of conservation groups, including the Center for Biological Diversity, Cascadia Wildlands and Defenders of Wildlife, to put up a total of \$22,500 in reward money.

In early January, a 2-year-old wolf was found shot and killed in a suspected poaching incident in Wallowa County.

The press release noted that anyone with information regarding this case can contact OSP through a tip line dedicated to reporting poachers at 800-452-7888, via text by dialing \*OSP (\*677), or by email at [TIP@osp.oregon.gov](mailto:TIP@osp.oregon.gov). When reporting, reference case No. SP22039030.

## County plans combined emergency ops center

By STEVEN MITCHELL  
Blue Mountain Eagle

**CANYON CITY** — Grant County’s Emergency Management Office will have a new home later this year with Search and Rescue at the county’s former shop on Humbolt Street in Canyon City.

Last month, the Grant County Court approved emergency manager Eric Bush’s request for \$123,740 in American Rescue Plan Act funds to renovate and retrofit four shipping containers at the site.

According to Bush, the units will house emergency management supplies, including personal protective equipment and other supplies for working in environments where exposure to COVID-19 could be a risk. The supplies, he said, are currently spread across three locations.

Bush said in a Friday, March 4, phone interview that the project would be completed in two phases and he hoped to kick it off within a month. He hopes to operate at the location in an initial capacity by July.

The first phase, he said, would entail getting the county’s emergency management items into the four containers,



Bush

Currently, Bush noted, SAR is occupying a significant amount of space at the county road department.

Bush said the focus is to house the county’s “like” departments that have similar functions together.

Having the two departments closer together or in a shared space puts staff in a better position to pull together and operate more smoothly.

The county needs more funds to get beyond the conceptual phase, Bush said. He declined to comment on how much the county would need altogether to complete the project.

In other action, the court approved moving \$96,531.15 in federal coronavirus relief funds to the county’s general fund. The money is to reimburse the county for subsidizing county employees who were quarantined or contracted COVID-19.

Bush told the court that the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act legally requires employers to subsidize employees who were quarantined or came down with COVID-19 with up to 80 hours of full pay and benefits.

County Judge Scott Myers noted that the county’s legal counsel reviewed this request.

which does not involve SAR directly. It does, however, “shape things” in shifting to the second phase and allows for SAR to begin moving to the Humbolt location.

Bush said SAR and emergency management sharing a location would allow “like” operations to function more efficiently.

Bush said he has a design concept prepared and would like to identify resources, such as grants, to construct a building to house both SAR and emergency management under one roof.



The Eagle/Steven Mitchell

A vendor paints faces Saturday at Canyon City’s 100th ‘62 Days Celebration.

## ’62 Days Celebration set for June 10-11

By STEVEN MITCHELL  
Blue Mountain Eagle

**CANYON CITY** — After commemorating the event’s 100th year in 2021, organizers of Grant County’s ‘62 Days Celebration announced that this year’s two-day festival will kick off on June 10.

The event’s organizers, the Whiskey Gulch Gang, announced that weekly planning meetings will begin Fri-

day, March 11, at Sel’s Brewery, 113 Washington St. in Canyon City. The meetings start at 7 p.m., and everyone is welcome.

Organizer Colby Farrell said the annual Demolition Derby at the Grant County Fairgrounds is set for July 23 at 6 p.m.

Farrell added that the Whiskey Gulch Gang is looking for new members and volunteers to help plan the event.

### WHAT’S HAPPENING

#### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9

##### Lenten luncheon

• 11:30 a.m., Nazarene Church, 521 E. Main St., John Day

Part of a series of lunchtime services during Lent sponsored by the John Day Ministerial Association. Lunch includes choice of soup, bread and beverage, followed by a worship service at 12:15 p.m. For more information, call 541-575-5840.

#### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9

##### Jam session

• 6 p.m., Country Preferred Realtors, 121 E. Main St, John Day

The Grant County Jammers will host a jam session every Wednesday starting at 6 p.m. All instruments welcome. The group plays mostly traditional old-time music, including bluegrass, country-western, folk, gospel and pop tunes of the 1920-40s. The office will open at 5 for tuneup and setup. For more information, call Ron Phillips at 541-575-1927.



#### FRIDAY, MARCH 11

##### Bingo night

• 6 p.m., John Day Elks Lodge, 140 NE Dayton St., John Day

A night of fun and games to raise money for the Grant Union High School Class of 2026. Dinner provided by the Elks Club at 6 p.m., with bingo starting at 6:30. The cost to play is \$5 a card.

#### FRIDAY, MARCH 11

##### ’62 Days planning meeting

• 7 p.m., Sel’s Brewery, 113 Washington St., Canyon City

Regular weekly meeting of the Whiskey Gulch Gang to plan this year’s ‘62 Days festivities. Anyone who wants to help is welcome. For more information, call Colby Farrell at 541-620-0874.

#### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16

##### Lenten luncheon

• 11:30 a.m., Redeemer Lutheran Church, 627 SE Hillcrest Road, John Day

Part of a series of lunchtime services during Lent sponsored by the John Day Ministerial Association. Lunch includes choice of soup, bread and beverage, followed by a worship service at 12:15 p.m.

For more information, call 541-575-5840.

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*Do you have a community event in Grant County you’d like to publicize? Email information to editor@bmeagle.com. The deadline is noon Friday for publication the following Wednesday.*

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