



PRESS STATEMENT

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Taxpayers Subsidize Wolf Killing

Republic, WA - The killing of two members of the Profanity Peak wolf pack this week in the Kettle River Mountains of north-central Washington, including its breeding alpha female mothering a litter of pups and a second female, is a tragedy that continues to unfold.

The Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (DFW) had earlier determined after four confirmed wolf depredations of cattle that a “partial pack removal” was warranted. DFW said its operations are “continuing. “This is a tragedy that could have been avoided,” said Timothy Coleman, director of the Kettle Range Conservation Group.

For years the Profanity wolves have lived through summer heat and winter cold in the Kettle Crest, a high elevation wild mountainous area of the Colville National Forest in northeast Washington state. The Forest Service leases several national forest cattle grazing allotments in this same area.

Wolves are an endangered species and Washington has a plan for their recovery. However, this is the third incident where wolves that have naturally recolonized northeast Washington have been killed by DFW due to depredations of livestock. In each incident, livestock were widely dispersed over rugged, heavily forested terrain, making it almost impossible to protect them from predators.

In June, ranchers released cows & calves at lower elevation on the west slope of the Kettle Mountains. From years of experience they knew cows would wander to higher ground and eventually cross paths with Profanity’s wolves - that occurred around July 1. This is the second time losses to the Diamond M Ranch have caused wolves to be killed by DFW in the Colville National Forest. The Wedge pack was entirely exterminated in 2012. However, for the most part wolf recovery in the state has continued to flourish and ranchers have adopted innovative strategies to protect their livestock from predators.

Wolves catch and eat whatever they can. There is no evidence they prefer a specific diet. For instance, Teannaway wolves eat wild turkeys. That’s why moving cows away from depredating wolves is an important deterrence tool. The Forest Service was asked but



Kettle Range CONSERVATION GROUP

was unwilling to have cows moved to other areas outside of where radio telemetry data showed Profanity wolves were gathering on a regular basis to feed pups and socialize.

“Cows died, now wolves and We the People pay for it. Where’s the personal responsibility in that?” Coleman said.

“As a member of the Wolf Advisory Group that advises DFW on wolf recovery protocols, I have asked that livestock producers grazing on our National Forests be held to a higher standard that ensures other mutual benefits, such as water, recreation and wildlife, are not diminished,” Coleman said.

“Where else than the highlands of the Colville National Forest can gray wolves raise a family and live out their lives? The taxpayers pay tens of thousands of dollars to kill a few wolves that most people want left alone. It’s about ethical treatment of wildlife and livestock. The costs and benefits don’t match up,” Coleman said.

“I and other conservationist in eastern Washington remain hopeful that collaborative problem-solving can help avoid this situation from occurring again,” said Coleman