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Dillon SW YMCA

Realistic Wolf Management on Both Public and Private Property

Mr./Madame chair and members of this committee, I am Taylor Staudenmeyer with the SW Montana Livestock Producers which represents 12,500 member families from all over Montana.

I represent ranchers all over southwest Montana. Agriculture is the leading economic industry in Montana, according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) totals nearly \$2 billion in annual sales. We are quite concerned with the rapid growing population of wolves and its effect on livestock.

In Montana, wolves killed 112 cattle, 498 sheep, and 388 dogs in the last year. However, it is not so much the killing that the wolves do. One of the primary instincts of cattle is when there are predators around them as they become stressed and panicked. With wolves around, the cattle tend not to eat and by not eating they lose weight so the ranchers question what is happening. They question why some cattle weigh less than what their other cattle do. This is an example of predators such as wolves negatively impacting a rancher's income without actually killing cattle. Sometimes these same cattle may not even have calves because of the stress the wolves put on the cattle by being around. I am asking that FWP allow ranchers to shoot wolves on sight without permit.

The emphasis here is that the FWP does not fully realize all the implications that wolves put on our Agricultural Industry and the families involved in it. Ranchers are impacted both by livestock being killed as well as by lost revenue from stress related problems caused by predators such as wolves. Ranchers must be able to protect their investment.

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