Wolf Livestock Coalition

Guide & Resources

Conflict Mitigation

Why It Happens and What You Can Do

Effective wolf-livestock conflict mitigation starts by understanding why conflict happens in the first place. This section provides a simplified overview of the dynamics behind wolf-livestock conflict, including two key concepts: 1) how wolves hunt and 2) what makes livestock vulnerable. It also covers the key pieces of an effective conflict mitigation plan – a combination of long-term practices that reduce livestock vulnerability, paired with targeted supplemental tools, tailored to the landscape, livestock, and goals of each ranch.

Understanding how wolves hunt + **Understanding livestock vulnerability** = **Wolf livestock conflict mitigation**

Understanding How Wolves Hunt

As with all predators, wolves kill to survive. But hunting is no easy task that takes a tremendous amount of energy, and most hunting attempts end in failure. To succeed, wolves look for vulnerable prey they can take down with the least amount of danger and effort.

Wolves are strategic and cautious predators with a strong sense of self-preservation. Every hunt is a calculated risk. Wolves have been injured or even killed by prey, including seemingly easy prey like white-tailed deer. Because hunting is dangerous, wolves minimize risk by targeting the most vulnerable or accessible animals.

Wolves don't target livestock at random. In fact, research shows that wolves prefer native prey, such as elk and deer, over livestock. However, when livestock become more vulnerable due to illness, injury, or isolation, or are more accessible due to terrain features, they can become a target.

Wolves apply pressure to test how animals respond. If the herd scatters or an individual flees, wolves quickly single out the most vulnerable animal and hunt as a pack. However, if the prey stay in herds or stand their ground (like bison), the risk to the wolves increases. In many cases, if they can't trigger a flight response, they will abandon their hunt.

Wolves rely on persistence, testing, and teamwork, using a predictable hunting strategy that minimizes their own risk. Wolves typically attack from behind – at the flanks, hindquarters, or underbelly – minimizing the chance of injury from hooves or antlers.

By understanding how wolves hunt and how conflicts arise, producers can address the root causes of conflicts and keep the focus on the ranch, not on controlling wild wolves.

Understanding Livestock Vulnerability

Every predation event happens for a reason. By identifying the factors that contributed to a specific incident, ranchers can take proactive steps to reduce future risk and better protect their livestock.

Prey vulnerability plays a major role in wolf hunting success. As wolves travel through their territory, they continuously look for signs of weakness or opportunity in the prey they encounter. Through trial and error, wolves

end up with whichever prey they can capture.

Livestock, much like wild prey, can display certain vulnerabilities that increase their risk of being targeted by wolves. Many factors lead to livestock vulnerability. Some examples include:

1. Behavioral & Herding Vulnerabilities

There is a direct correlation between how humans handle cattle and how cattle respond to predator pressure. Conventional handling methods can cause stress, making livestock more reactive and more likely to trigger a predator response. How livestock behave under pressure – whether they stay calm and cohesive or panic and flee – plays a major role in whether wolves see them as vulnerable.

- Response to predator pressure
  - Stand vs. Flee: Livestock that stand their ground are less likely to be chased. Panicked animals that run are more likely to be singled out.
  - Group vs. Scatter: Animals that stay in a group are safer. Scattered animals are easier to isolate.
  - Mothering Up vs. Abandoning Calves: Good maternal instincts reduce calf losses. Poor maternal behavior (e.g., abandoning calves) increases the risk.
- Herd cohesion & movement
  - Scattered herds are easier for wolves to break apart
  - Lone animals or "bunch quitters" are prime targets
  - Fast-moving or poorly managed herd movement can lead to separation, especially between mothers and calves

2. Health & Physiological Vulnerabilities

- Sick, lame, or injured animals
- Very young calves or older cattle
- Livestock in late gestation (slower, less mobile)
- Nutritional deficiencies (e.g., cobalt, copper, selenium)
- Parasites or illnesses that compromise strength

3. Situational & Environmental Vulnerabilities

- Difficult terrain that limits escape routes
  - Bogs
  - Deep snow
  - Creek beds
  - Woody areas
  - Fringe territory (cattle gathered in an open pasture against dense woods)
  - Fencing
- Poor visibility
  - Dense shrubs
  - Wooded areas
- Encounter rate
  - Can be increased by deadstock left on the landscape
  - Can be increased by pasture proximity to wolf activity
  - Can be increased by proximity to wild prey location or migration routes
- Calving areas with minimal protection
- Predictable grazing or movement patterns

> **"If you're raising prey in predator country, make sure your cattle are the least vulnerable prey on the landscape."**
>
> Whit Hibbard
> Fourth Generation Montana Rancher & Stockmanship Expert

Conflict Mitigation Strategies

There are two key categories of strategies:

1. **Ranch Management Practices**: These are the daily and long-term methods you use to manage your livestock and land. Practices such as stockmanship, herd nutrition, and calving management help build resilience and reduce vulnerability over time.

2. **Supplemental Tools**: These are situational, short-term deterrents, such as fladry, lights, or noise devices. When used strategically – especially during high-risk periods like calving – they can reinforce your management practices and provide added protection.

Together, these approaches create a ranching operation that is more resilient to wolf-livestock conflicts. The most successful operations focus on strengthening the ranch itself, rather than trying to control wolves.

Working Circle offers clinics, free resources, and on-site support for ranchers interested in learning more about these strategies.

Ranch Management Practices

Long-term success in reducing wolf-livestock conflict stems from building a stronger, more resilient ranch, rather than attempting to control wild predators. The most effective strategies are those that reduce livestock vulnerability to predation. These practices not only reduce vulnerability to wolves but also improve animal health, boost productivity, and add value to your operation overall.

This section focuses on proactive solutions: the things within your control that make the biggest difference. Whether it's how cattle are handled, a nutrition plan, or a calving plan, each element contributes to a more resilient ranch.

Key Principles

- Focus on what's in your control – your cattle – not what isn't – wild wolves.
- Be proactive, not reactive.

Stockmanship

There is a direct correlation between how cattle are handled by humans and how cattle respond to predator pressure. Handling methods that cause stress can make cattle more reactive, less confident, and ultimately more vulnerable to predation. Conversely, certain stockmanship practices can be used to enhance cattle tolerance to predator pressure and rekindle the overall herd instinct.

In particular, Bud Williams' Low-Stress Livestock Handling – now known as Effective Stockmanship – has demonstrated significant success in protecting cattle from wolves.[1] Cattle handled in this way are more likely to:

- Stand their ground confidently, rather than flee.
- The herd will come together, rather than scatter.
- Mother cows will stay with their calves, rather than leave them behind.

These behaviors make cattle more resilient at all times – even when they are turned out on open range, where constant monitoring isn't possible. Working with cattle at home prepares them for pressure from wolves and other predators on the range, so they can protect themselves when you can't.

Stress, in general, and particularly from wolves, is a significant concern when ranching in wolf country. Elevated psychological or physical stress levels can lead to weight loss, reduced conception and embryonic survival, lower milk production, poor carcass quality, immune suppression, reduced effectiveness of vaccines, and ultimately, increased vulnerability to predation. The same stockmanship practices that increase livestock resilience to wolves also reduce stress in livestock, improving weight gain, conception rates, and overall ranch

[1] Louchouarn NX, Treves A. Low-stress livestock handling protects cattle in a five-predator habitat. PeerJ. 2023;11:e14788. doi:10.7717/peerj.14788

productivity while lowering predation loss.

Stockmanship is a critical tool for addressing a root cause of vulnerability by fostering herds of cattle that are calmer, healthier, and better able to defend themselves, while resulting in better economic returns – helping ranches withstand wolf presence and better absorb the cost of losses if predation occurs.

Ranch Management Practices

Herd Health and Nutrition

Keeping livestock healthy is one of the most effective ways to reduce vulnerability to predators. Wolves are opportunistic hunters that target sick, weak, old, or very young animals. While this is part of their natural role in the ecosystem, on a working ranch, it means that compromised livestock are at a greater risk of predation.

Nutrition plays a key role in herd health. Mineral deficiencies are a widespread challenge, especially minor, subclinical deficiencies, which can be difficult to spot. These deficiencies can cause fatigue and impair immune function, exacerbating common health problems such as bovine respiratory disease, footrot, or mastitis.[2] Such ailments not only reduce ranch productivity, but they can also make animals more likely to be singled out by predators. Ranchers with decades of experience in wolf country have observed that cattle with deficiencies – particularly copper, cobalt, and selenium – are particularly susceptible to predation.

A robust, consistent mineral program can strengthen immune systems, support overall herd health, and build resilience against predators. Prioritizing nutrition keeps cattle in good condition year-round, improves weight gain, reduces veterinary costs, and helps prevent avoidable losses to wolves.

Ranch Management Practices

Calving Management

Calves are among the most vulnerable livestock; targeted efforts at this young age can be critical.

One effective approach is to synchronize breeding so that most calves are born within a tight time frame. A shorter calving window minimizes the period when wolves have access to vulnerable calves, concentrating the time when extra vigilance is needed, including close monitoring and targeted use of deterrents.[3,4] This focused approach also helps prevent wolves from becoming habituated to deterrents. This increases the overall herd resilience, as wolves often target the most vulnerable livestock, which are often the youngest calves in the herd.[4,5] Once calves are older and stronger and out in the pasture, rotating pastures can help prevent wolves from associating one location with calves.

Some producers in the West also synchronize calving with the time when native ungulates give birth. Research has shown that wolves tend to select wild prey over livestock.[6] When wild newborns are abundant, there is less predation pressure on calves. Spring calving may also help reduce hypothermia losses and lower supplemental hay costs, which can offset lower weaning weights in the fall. Shifting calving timing does require an initial investment of time and effort, and it may not be the best option for every ranch. However, the long-term benefits can make it a worthwhile investment for long-term conflict mitigation.

Supplemental Tools

While strategies that build long-term resilience, such as stockmanship, herd nutrition, and calving management, are the most effective at addressing the root cause of conflict by preventing conflicts before they happen, there are many tools that can play an important role in a comprehensive ranch conflict mitigation plan. Supplemental tools can provide short-term reinforcement when livestock are most vulnerable or can be used

[2] Kegley EB, Ball JJ, Beck PA. BILL E. KUNKLE INTERDISCIPLINARY BEEF SYMPOSIUM: Impact of mineral and vitamin status on beef cattle immune function and health. J Anim Sci. 2016;94(12):5401-5413. doi:10.2527/jas.2016-0720

[3] Bruns A, Waltert M, Khorozyan I. The effectiveness of livestock protection measures against wolves (Canis lupus) and implications for their coexistence with humans. Glob Ecol Conserv. 2020;21:e00868. doi:10.1016/j.gecco.2019.e00868

[4] Breck SW, Kluever BM, Panasci M, et al. Domestic calf mortality and producer detection rates in the Mexican wolf recovery area: implications for livestock management and carnivore compensation schemes. US Department of Agriculture: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. 2011. Accessed August 11, 2025. https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/icwdm_usdanwrc/1025

[5] Oakleaf JK, Mack C, Murray DL. Effects of wolves on livestock calf survival and movements in central Idaho. J Wildl Manag. 2003;67(2):299-306. doi:10.2307/3802771

[6] Janeiro-Otero A, Newsome TM, Van Eeden LM, Ripple WJ, Dormann CF. Grey wolf (Canis lupus) predation on livestock in relation to prey availability. Biol Conserv. 2020;243:108433. doi:10.1016/j.biocon.2020.108433

as an emergency response to conflicts. These tools are often most suitable for small areas that can be easily monitored, such as calving lots, night pens, or small pastures. Used strategically, they can help reduce conflict risk and protect livestock during high-risk periods, complementing strong herd management practices.

Supplemental Tools

Deterrents

Deterrents, also called disruptive stimuli, are physical tools designed to actively discourage wolves from approaching livestock. They work by taking advantage of wolves' natural caution toward anything new or unfamiliar to interrupt their behavior. However, once wolves realize a deterrent poses no real threat, it loses its effectiveness – a process called habituation.

Deterrents are often best suited for short periods during high-risk times such as calving or lambing. When deployed strategically, they can temporarily reduce the likelihood of wolf-livestock interactions and provide valuable protection when livestock are most vulnerable.

Visual Deterrents

- Fladry: A rope with evenly spaced red flags that flutter in the wind to protect an area.
- Turbo fladry: Fladry combined with an electrified wire. Electric shocks can condition wolves to avoid the fence.
- Lights: Motion-detecting floodlights, strobe lights, or flashing lights to startle predators at night.

Auditory Deterrents

- Speakers: Motion-activated to play loud noises, music, or human voices.
- Radios: Play continuously to mimic human presence.
- Propane cannons: Emit loud blasts at set intervals to cover multiple acres.
- Sound makers: Safety whistles, blank pistols, or air horns can be used to haze wolves seen near herds.

While these tools can be effective when used appropriately, success varies widely depending on context. What works well on one ranch may not be effective on another. Most evidence comes from field experience and case studies rather than large-scale, peer-reviewed trials, so trial and error is often necessary to determine the best fit for each operation.

Supplemental Tools

Livestock Guardian Dogs

Livestock guardian dogs have been used to protect livestock from predators for centuries. Breeds such as the Great Pyrenees, Anatolian Shepherd, Akbash, Kangal, and Maremma are common guardian dogs well-known for their intelligence, attentiveness, and protectiveness. Livestock guardian dogs can deter predators both through their presence alone and active defense – barking to alert ranchers or confronting predators.

For operations where fences and other barriers are impractical, livestock guardian dogs may be particularly useful. These dogs are often most effective in open pastures, particularly when guarding sheep and goats in compact flocks. However, their effectiveness is highly dependent on proper training and ongoing care. These dogs tend to work best in larger groups, where at least two dogs are recommended for adequate protection.

While livestock guardian dogs can be a valuable addition to a ranch's conflict mitigation plan, they come with significant costs and risks:

- Expense: Initial purchase, veterinary care, feeding, and training can be significant.
- Mortality risk: Dogs can be injured or killed by predators, including wolves.
- Limitations: A single dog cannot physically overpower a wolf without great risk, so their primary function should be deterrence and alerting.
- Management needs: Without proper oversight, dogs can create challenges such as roaming, injury, or unintended harm to livestock.
- Not short-term: Dogs require a long-term commitment to their care.

When well-trained and properly managed, livestock guardian dogs can play a crucial role in protecting livestock. However, they are most effective when used in conjunction with other tools and strong herd management practices, rather than as a standalone solution.

Supplemental Tools

Electric Fencing

Electric fencing can be an effective tool for deterring wolves, particularly in smaller areas such as calving lots, night pens, or temporary pastures. The shock delivered by the fence conditions wolves to avoid the area, creating a longer-lasting deterrent effect than visual or auditory tools alone.

Best Practices:

- 3-6 electrified wires.
- Place a low hot wire (less than 12 inches above the ground) to prevent wolves from digging underneath.
- Ensure proper grounding for consistent voltage – dry soils may require extra grounding rods or moisture management.
- Maintain vegetation control along fence lines to prevent grounding out the current.

Limitations:

- Most effective in smaller, contained areas where maintenance and voltage can be monitored.
- Requires regular inspection to ensure there are no weak points for wolves to exploit.
- Heavy snow or frozen ground may reduce the effectiveness of the fence unless the height and grounding are adjusted.

Supplemental Tools

Range Riding

Range riding can be a useful tool for ranchers living with wolves. There are many state and community programs in which trained riders patrol grazing areas, monitor livestock, watch for predator activity, and coordinate with neighbors, agencies, and wildlife managers. Riders may remove sick, injured, or dead animals that could attract predators and alert ranchers quickly when action is needed to prevent or respond to a depredation event.

While range riding can be helpful, passively monitoring livestock or human presence alone may not be enough to deter wolves, and it simply is not possible to monitor livestock 24/7. However, when used to implement long-term conflict mitigation strategies, such as Effective Stockmanship, range riding is a great way to make livestock more resilient to predators – even when people aren't present. Like many supplemental tools, range riding is most effective when used as part of a broader ranch conflict mitigation plan.

Supplemental Tools

New Technology

Some conflict prevention techniques like guardian dogs and fladry have long been used to protect livestock from wolves for thousands of years. Luckily, modern producers have access to more technology and information than any previous generation, which can aid and expedite conflict prevention. Below are some of the latest innovations and technological tools to support your ranching efforts.

- **Drones**: In areas with clear visibility, drones can be used to monitor herd health remotely. Drones can rapidly spot vulnerable livestock or carcasses. Some producers have fitted drones with lights and speakers to haze wolves away from herds. It's important to recognize that while drones can assist, active human presence is still vital for conflict prevention.

- **Geofences**: Companies like Gallagher and Vence Fence utilize shock collars to prevent cattle from entering certain areas, such as those near wolf dens or known wolf activity zones.

Resources

Find compensation program details, where to get help, and recommended reading – with links and contacts.

Compensation Programs

There are two primary options for wolf depredation compensation: the federal Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and state compensation programs. To increase the likelihood of reimbursement, producers are encouraged to apply to both programs, though they cannot receive payment from both.

If you suspect a wolf depredation and would like to apply for compensation:

1. Immediately call your local state wildlife agency office to report the suspected depredation and request an investigation.
2. Document potential evidence by photographing things like tracks or bite marks (be sure to include an item for scale in pictures for easier identification).
3. Preserve potential evidence by protecting the carcass from scavenging with fladry or electric wire.
4. Protect livestock by moving other animals to a safe location, like a different pasture.
5. After a depredation investigation, the Wildlife Services or state wildlife agency agent will typically complete a Depredation Report Form.
6. If the agent determines the injury or death was a probable or confirmed wolf depredation, submit a claim with all relevant paperwork to your state's compensation program or local Farm Service Agency office.
7. If you have any questions, contact your state compensation program or Farm Service Agency. Below are details of your state's compensation program and their contact information.

Federal Compensation

USDA Farm Service Agency's Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)

The LIP offers compensation to ranchers for livestock losses beyond average mortality, including losses caused by animals reintroduced or protected by the Federal Government. It covers:

- Livestock Death Losses: Pays 75% of the average fair market value.
- Injured Livestock: For animals sold at reduced prices due to injury from depredation, LIP pays the difference between the sale price and 75% of the average fair market value of the livestock.

Application Requirements

- You must submit a Notice of Loss and an Application for Payment to the Farm Service Agency office in the county where the loss occurred.

Deadlines

- Notice of Loss: Within 30 calendar days of when the loss is first apparent.
- Application for Payment: Within 60 days of the calendar year in which the loss occurred.

More Information

- USDA LIP fact sheet – https://www.fsa.usda.gov/tools/informational/fact-sheets/livestock-indemnity-program-lip

Farm Service Agency State Office Contacts

- Arizona: (602) 285-6300
- California: (530) 792-5520
- Colorado: (720) 544-2876
- Idaho: (208) 378-5650
- Michigan: (517) 324-5110
- Minnesota: (651) 602-7700
- Montana: (406) 587-6872
- New Mexico: (505) 761-4900
- Oregon: (503) 692-3688
- Washington: (509) 323-3000
- Wisconsin: (888) 361-2000
- Wyoming: (307) 261-5231

State Compensation

While state compensation programs vary, most offer compensation for depredations, and many offer compensation for conflict prevention. Conflict prevention measures such as range riding, fencing, physical deterrents, carcass removal, or livestock guardian animals may be eligible for compensation. The table below provides an overview of the programs offered by each state:

State	Depredation	Conflict Prevention	Additional Programs
Arizona	Yes	Yes	Carcass Removal, Pay for Presence (pending funding)
California	Yes	Yes	Pay for Presence (pending funding)
Colorado	Yes	Yes	No
Idaho	Yes	Yes	No
Michigan	Yes	Yes	No
Minnesota	Yes	Yes	No
Montana	Yes	Yes	No
New Mexico	Yes	Yes	Pay for Presence
Oregon	Yes	Yes	Missing Livestock
Washington	Yes	Yes	Community-based Conflict Prevention
Wisconsin	Yes	No	No
Wyoming	Yes	No	No

Arizona | Arizona Livestock Loss Board

Programs

- Depredation: Covers the fair market value of confirmed and probable depredations.
- Depredation Prevention: Covers the cost of nonlethal conflict prevention measures.
- Carcass Removal: Covers the removal cost to prevent conflict.
- Pay for Presence (pending eligible funding): Covers additional costs of wolf presence on ranches like decreases in conception rates, weight loss, or extra costs of preventative measures.

Application Forms

- Request for Depredation Compensation – https://live-azlivestocklossboard.pantheonsite.io/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Request-for-Depredation-Compensation-1-1-2023.pdf
- Application for Depredation Prevention Grant – https://live-azlivestocklossboard.pantheonsite.io/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Application-for-Depredation-Prevention-Grant-1-1-2023.pdf
- Request for Compensation for Carcass Removal – https://live-azlivestocklossboard.pantheonsite.io/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Request-for-Compensation-for-Carcass-Removal_rev2_7.2023.pdf

For More Information

- See the Arizona Livestock Loss Board – https://live-azlivestocklossboard.pantheonsite.io/
- Contact the Arizona Livestock Loss Board at (623) 236-7279
- If you suspect a depredation, contact the Interagency Field Team at (928) 339-4329 (after-hours and weekends (623) 236-7201)

California | CDFW Wolf Livestock Compensation Grants

Programs

- Depredation: Covers the fair market value of confirmed and probable depredations.
- Non-lethal Deterrents: Covers the cost of nonlethal conflict prevention measures.

- Pay for Presence (pending funding): Covers additional costs of wolf presence on ranches like decreases in conception rates, weight loss, or extra costs of preventative measures. Producers who reside in established wolf pack territory can apply.

Application Forms

- CDFW Depredation Determination Form – https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=213090&inline
- Nonlethal Deterrents Application Form – https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=213093&inline
- Pay for Presence Application Form – https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Mammals/Gray-Wolf/Grants#592541287-pay-for-presence-prong-3

For More Information

- Contact the CDFW Wolf-Livestock Compensation Pilot Program at (530) 225-2300 or wolfprogram@wildlife.ca.gov

Colorado | Colorado Parks and Wildlife Wolf-Livestock Compensation Program

Programs

- Depredation: Covers 100% fair market value for confirmed death or injury, up to $15,000 per animal. Conflict prevention measures are not required for reimbursement.
- Conflict Prevention: Provides nonlethal deterrents and offers reimbursement funding for nonlethal methods deployed by ranchers.

For More Information

- See the Colorado Parks & Wildlife - Wolves in Colorado – https://cpw.state.co.us/learn/Pages/Wolves-Stay-Informed.aspx
- Contact Colorado Parks and Wildlife at (303) 297-1192

Idaho | Idaho Governor's Office of Species Conservation: Wolf Conflict Funding

Programs

- Depredation: Covers the fair market value of confirmed depredations.
- Conflict Prevention: Covers the cost of nonlethal conflict prevention measures.

For More Information

- See the Idaho Governor's Office of Species Conservation Wolf Conflict Funding – https://species.idaho.gov/programs/wolf-conflict-funding/
- Contact the Idaho Governor's Office of Species Conservation at (208) 334-2189
- Contact the Idaho Fish and Game Headquarters Office at (208) 334-3700

Michigan | Wildlife Depredations Indemnification Act

Programs

- Depredation: Reimburses livestock producers for 100% of the fair market value of livestock lost.

For More Information

- See the Wildlife Depredations Indemnification Act – http://www.legislature.mi.gov/(S(gsar0lkmui0ml02sj3ungeqq))/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-Act-487-of-2012.pdf
- If you suspect a depredation, contact the USFWS Michigan Department of Natural Resources at (800) 292-7800
- Contact the MI DNR Wolf Coordinator at (906) 228-6561

Minnesota | Minnesota Department of Agriculture: Wolf Damage Compensation Program

Programs

- Depredation: Covers the fair market value of confirmed depredations.
- Conflict Prevention: Provides funding for conflict prevention measures, including but not limited to livestock guardian animals, veterinary costs for guard animals, fencing, fladry, and calving or lambing shelters.

Application Forms

- Depredation Compensation Form – https://www.mda.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/docs/2022-01/AG00706%20Compensation%20Claim%20for%20Livestock%20Destroyed%20by%20Wolf02_0.pdf
- Producers can apply for conflict prevention grants on the Minnesota Department of Agriculture website – https://www.mda.state.mn.us/wolf-livestock-conflict-prevention-grants

For More Information

- See the Wolf Depredation Compensation | Minnesota Department of Agriculture – https://www.mda.state.mn.us/business-dev-loans-grants/wolf-depredation-compensation
- Contact the Minnesota Department of Agriculture Wolf Claims at (651) 201-6020 or MN_MDA_elkandwolf@state.mn.us
- Contact the Minnesota Department of Agriculture Wolf-Livestock Conflict Prevention Grants at (651) 201-6095 or NiCole.Rawski@state.mn.us

Montana | Montana Department of Livestock Montana Livestock Loss Board

Programs

- Livestock Loss: Covers confirmed and probable depredations.
- Conflict Prevention: Matches funds for nonlethal conflict prevention projects.

For More Information

- See the Montana Livestock Loss Board – https://liv.mt.gov/Attached-Agency-Boards/Livestock-Loss-Board/index
- Information on the depredation compensation process – https://liv.mt.gov/Attached-Agency-Boards/Livestock-Loss-Board/Request-an-Investigation
- Contact the Montana Livestock Loss Board at (406) 444-5609

New Mexico | County Livestock Loss Authority

Programs

- Livestock Loss: Covers losses from wolf conflicts.
- Conflict Prevention: Provides funding for proactive, non-lethal methods.
- Pay for Presence: Covers additional costs of wolf presence on ranches like decreases in conception rates, weight loss, extra costs of preventative measures, or missing livestock.

Application Forms

- Livestock Loss Application Form – https://cllanm.org/file-a-claim/
- Conflict Prevention Application Form – https://cllanm.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/CLLA-Application-for-Wolf-Depredation-Prevention-Grant_pdf.pdf
- Pay for Presence Application Form – https://cllanm.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/CLLA-Application-for-Pay-for-Presence_pdf.pdf

For More Information

- See the County Livestock Loss Authority – https://cllanm.org/
- Contact the County Livestock Loss Authority at (575)894-6215
- If you suspect a depredation, contact the Interagency Field Team at (928) 339-4329 (after-hours and weekends (623) 236-7201)

Oregon | Oregon Department of Agriculture: Wolf Depredation Compensation Program

Programs

- Depredation: Provides compensation for confirmed wolf depredations.
- Conflict Prevention: Offers compensation for implementing conflict prevention measures.
- Missing Livestock: Offers compensation for missing livestock.

For More Information

- See the State of Oregon: Animal Health, Feeds, and Livestock ID - Wolf Depredation Grant – https://www.oregon.gov/oda/animal-health-feeds-livestock-id/Pages/wolf-depredation.aspx

- Contact the Oregon Department of Agriculture Wolf Depredation Compensation Program at (503) 986-4550

Washington | Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife: Gray Wolf Conservation and Management

Programs

- Livestock Loss Compensation: Reimburses for wolf depredations on a sliding scale based on acreage. Confirmed wolf depredations are reimbursed for 100% of losses on less than 100 acres and 200% on more than 100 acres. Probable depredations are reimbursed for 100% of losses for any acreage.
- Conflict Prevention: Landowners and WDFW can enter damage prevention cooperative agreements to prevent wolf-livestock conflict. This agreement offers funding for conflict prevention methods, information about wolf locations, and payment for unconfirmed livestock losses.

For More Information

- Depredation Compensation Process – https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/at-risk/species-recovery/gray-wolf/compensation
- Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreement Information – https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/at-risk/species-recovery/gray-wolf/agreements

Contacts

- See the Wolves and livestock | Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife – https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/at-risk/species-recovery/gray-wolf/wolves-livestock
- Contact the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife at (877) 933-9847

Wisconsin | Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources: Wildlife Damage Program

Programs

- Livestock Loss Compensation: Covers probable and confirmed depredations above the normal loss rate for ranching operations. Veterinary costs resulting from injury are eligible for reimbursement. Wildlife Services specialists will conduct an investigation, and if confirmed, the specialist will provide an application for compensation.

For More Information

- See the Nuisance, Urban And Damaging Wildlife | Wisconsin DNR – https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/WildlifeHabitat/damage
- Contact the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources at (888) 936-7463

Wyoming | Wyoming Game and Fish Commission Chapter 28: Regulation Governing Big or Trophy Game Animal or Game Bird or Gray Wolf Damage Claims

Programs

- Livestock Loss Compensation: Provides compensation for confirmed wolf depredations. Confirmed sheep and calf depredations are reimbursed using a 7:1 multiplier.

For More Information

- See the Gray Wolf Damage Claims Regulations – https://wgfd.wyo.gov/wyoming-wildlife/large-carnivore/wolves-wyoming
- Contact Wyoming Fish & Game at (307) 777-4600

Support Directory

This directory points to agencies and organizations offering conflict prevention support and on-ranch guidance.

USDA APHIS | Wildlife Services – Nonlethal Initiative

- What they offer: Technical assistance with implementing conflict-prevention measures tailored to your operation (e.g., electric fencing, fladry, range riding, livestock guardian dogs).
- Where they work: AZ, CA, CO, ID, MI, MN, MT, NM, NV, OR, WA, WI, WY.

- Learn more: USDA APHIS Wildlife Services – Nonlethal Initiative
- Find your state office: State Office Directory

USDA WS State Office Contacts

- Arizona: (602) 870-2081
- California: (916) 979-2675
- Colorado: (303) 328-9041
- Idaho: (208) 373-1630
- Michigan: (517) 336-1928
- Minnesota: (651) 224-6027
- Montana: (406) 657-6464
- New Mexico: (505) 346-2640
- Oregon: (503) 326-2346
- Washington: (360) 753-9884
- Wisconsin: (608) 837-2727
- Wyoming: (307) 261-5336

Organizations

Independent organizations that offer resources and assistance to ranchers in wolf country.

Blackfoot Challenge

- What they offer: Community-led conflict mitigation programs in Montana's Blackfoot watershed, including electric/turbo fladry loans, carcass removal, and range riders.
- Where they work: Montana – Blackfoot Valley.
- Website: https://blackfootchallenge.org/
- Contact: info@blackfootchallenge.org / (406) 793-3900

Bud Williams Stockmanship

- What they offer: Training materials and instruction in low-stress livestock handling (aka "Effective Stockmanship"). Courses are available in person and online through the family and approved instructors.
- Website: https://stockmanship.com/
- Contact: eunice@stockmanship.com / (417) 719-4910

Cattle Up Stockmanship

- What they offer: Clinics and consulting in low-stress livestock handling to build herd cohesion, reduce stress, and improve responsiveness to handlers.
- Where they work: Clinics offered across the West.
- Website: https://www.cattleupstockmanship.com/
- Contact: info@cattleupstockmanship.com / (940) 841-9591

Defenders of Wildlife

- What they offer: On-the-ground support to producers (turbo fladry, lights, radios/foxlights, trail cameras, range-rider support, vulnerability reduction and husbandry practices), workshops, and policy support. Active field assistance for producers in wolf country.
- Where they work: Across the West; actively assisting producers in Colorado and other wolf states.
- Website: https://defenders.org/coexisting-gray-wolves
- Contact: (800) 385-9712

Lightning S Livestock Solutions

- What they offer: Ranch consulting focused on regenerative grazing and stockmanship to strengthen herd performance and reduce predator conflict risk.
- Where they work: Intermountain West.
- Website: https://lslivestocksolutions.com/
- Contact: chris@lslivestocksolutions.com / (541) 969-2300

People and Carnivores

- What they offer: On-the-ground conflict mitigation projects with ranchers (adaptive grazing, carcass management, fladry/electric fencing, community collaboration).

- Where they work: Northern Rockies (MT/WY and nearby landscapes).
- Website: https://peopleandcarnivores.org/
- Contact: info@peopleandcarnivores.org

Southwest Colorado Wolf Cooperative

- What they offer: Outreach, education, and resources to support ranchers as wolves return to Colorado.
- Where they work: Southwest Colorado.
- Website: https://www.swcoloradowolfcoop.org/
- Contact: swcowolfcoopinfo@gmail.com

Tom Miner Basin Association

- What they offer: Community-based efforts in Paradise Valley, including conflict mitigation support like electric fencing.
- Where they work: Paradise Valley, Montana (Tom Miner Basin / northern Greater Yellowstone).
- Website: https://tomminerbasinassociation.org/
- Contact: info@tomminerbasinassociation.org / (406) 579-1956

Western Landowners Alliance

- What they offer: Working Wild Challenge and other programs providing tools, funding opportunities, and policy guidance for landowners on predators and rangeland stewardship.
- Where they work: Western U.S. (AZ, CA, CO, ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, UT, WA, WY).
- Website: https://westernlandowners.org/
- Contact: info@westernlandowners.org / (505) 466-1495

Working Circle

- What they offer: Free workshops and ranch consultations. Hands-on, ranch-based support to proactively prevent wolf-livestock conflict: strategic stockmanship, range riding, herd health & grazing plans.
- Where they work: Western states, including CA/CO/WA/OR.
- Website: https://www.workingcircle.org/
- Contact: (949) 429-9950 / 24/7 Producer Emergency Support Line: (530) 488-8438

University Cooperative Extension Services

Extension brings research to the ranch: grazing plans, herd health/nutrition, or nonlethal deterrents. Your local university extension office may be able to help create a tailored wolf-livestock conflict mitigation plan. Services vary by county and program.

- Arizona | University of Arizona Cooperative Extension – https://extension.arizona.edu/local-offices
- California | UC Cooperative Extension (ANR) – https://ucanr.edu/site/division-agriculture-and-natural-resources/locations
- Colorado | CSU Extension – https://extension.colostate.edu/directory/?order=ASC&orderBy=relevance&perPage=9&currentPage=1&postType=staff-cpt
- Idaho | University of Idaho Extension – https://www.uidaho.edu/extension/county
- Michigan | MSU Extension – https://www.canr.msu.edu/outreach/county
- Minnesota | UMN Extension – https://extension.umn.edu/local
- Montana | MSU Extension – https://www.montana.edu/extension/localoffices.html
- New Mexico | NMSU Cooperative Extension Service – https://extension.nmsu.edu/about/location.html
- Oregon | OSU Extension Service – https://extension.oregonstate.edu/find-us
- Washington | WSU Extension – https://extension.wsu.edu/locations/
- Wisconsin | UW–Madison Division of Extension – https://counties.extension.wisc.edu/
- Wyoming | UW Extension – https://www.uwyo.edu/uwe/uwe-county-offices.html

Learn More

Looking to dig deeper on a specific technique? Start here. This is a curated, non-exhaustive list.

Recommended Reads

- Western Landowners Alliance, Reducing Conflict with Grizzly Bears, Wolves & Elk: A Western Landowners' Guide (PDF) – https://westernlandowners.org/publication/reducing-conflict-with-grizzly-bears-wolves-and-elk/
- Western Landowners Alliance, Range Riding Producer Tool Kit – https://westernlandowners.org/publication/range-riding-toolkit/
- Western Landowners Alliance, Electric Fencing Producer Toolkit – https://westernlandowners.org/publication/electric-fencing-toolkit/
- Western Landowners Alliance, Carcass Management Producer Tool Kit – https://westernlandowners.org/publication/carcass-management-toolkit/
- Working Circle, Resources – https://www.workingcircle.org/resources.html
- Defenders of Wildlife, Livestock and Wolves (PDF), https://defenders.org/sites/default/files/publications/livestock_and_wolves.pdf
- UC Rangelands, Livestock–Predator Hub – https://rangelands.ucdavis.edu/predator-hub

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