

Predator Deterrence Ranch Management Plan Lassen County

Section 1: Immediate Actions

The first priority for ranches facing potential or ongoing wolf depredation is to become familiar with relevant laws and resources. Ranchers should review the legal framework under both the Federal Endangered Species Act and the California Endangered Species Act to ensure all deterrence actions remain within the boundaries of the law. Staff working on the ranch should also be briefed on these legal restrictions, especially concerning non-lethal hazing techniques and what constitutes lawful self-defense.

Ranchers should register for the California Cattlemen's Association (CCA) daily text alerts, which share GPS collar data and wolf activity clusters.

Ranchers are also urged to regularly check CDFW's Wolf Tracker automated mapping system for updated GPS data to help anticipate wolf movements and protect their livestock.

All potential wolf attractants on the ranch, such as bone piles, old carcass pits, and carcasses should be identified and addressed. A clear and consistent carcass removal plan must be established, preferably in coordination with county officials, the Sheriff's Office or CDFW. This includes daily scanning of pastures for downed livestock and the safe removal and disposal of carcasses to prevent attracting predators.

Finally, ranchers should notify their neighbors and form communication networks to share real-time information about wolf sightings, losses, and effective deterrent practices.

Section 2: Predator Deterrent's

After the initial assessment, ranchers should begin installing predator deterrents around livestock areas. Fladry, nylon or plastic flags strung on fencing should be deployed around calving pastures or night enclosures. For greater effectiveness, turbo-fladry (electrified fladry) can be used. These should be rotated at minimum every 30 to 45 days to maintain their effectiveness and prevent predator habituation. Carcass burial sites and old buried bone piles should have fladry surrounding the sight.

Additional deterrents should include the installation of lights and sound devices. Motion-triggered strobes, Foxlights, and sirens can disrupt wolf activity and should be strategically placed near high-risk areas. Placement should be varied to reduce the chance of wolves becoming desensitized.

Livestock guardian animals, such as trained livestock guardian dogs (LGDs) and guard donkeys, should be incorporated into herd protection plans when practical. LGDs are

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effective at deterring predators through their territorial behavior and constant presence with the herd, while donkeys offer an additional layer of defense by using their natural aggression toward canines to drive off potential threats.

Section 3: Daily and Weekly Protocols

Once deterrent systems are in place, ranchers should establish a consistent monitoring and maintenance schedule. Daily visual patrols should be conducted, either on foot, horseback, or by vehicle, and patrol routes should vary to create an unpredictable human presence.

Deterrent tools such as lights, sirens, and fladry should be moved or adjusted on a regular basis to avoid predators from becoming familiar with their patterns. Any sightings of predators, tracks, scat, or predation evidence should be logged in a physical or digital record book. This documentation may be necessary for compensation claims or for guiding CDFW's response strategies.

Fencing and deterrents must be regularly checked and maintained. Batteries should be recharged or replaced, fladry inspected, and damage repaired. Livestock should be checked daily for injuries or signs of predator interaction, and any carcasses must be removed immediately.

Section 4: Response Planning

Each ranch should designate a primary response coordinator who can act as the point of contact during a depredation event or predator sighting. Legal hazing training provided by CDFW or the Sheriff's Office should be documented and retained in the ranch plan.

Ranchers should keep an evidence collection kit readily available. This should include a camera or smartphone, markers or flagging, and forms to document depredation sites quickly and thoroughly.

If a livestock loss occurs, ranchers should gather all required documentation and submit it to CDFW's compensation program as soon as possible. Accurate and timely documentation will increase the likelihood of successful reimbursement.

Ranch Plan Implementation Outline

- Contact CDFW, enroll in the strike team program, and register for daily text messages with current GPS collar information.

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- Cleanup of carcasses and attractants, assess pasture layout, and communicate with neighboring ranches.
- Install deterrents, including fladry, lights, and livestock guardian dogs or donkeys when practical.
- Train ranch staff in identifying predator sign and in using legal hazing methods effectively.
- Coordinate with other ranchers to review predator activity and discuss shared deterrence strategies.
- Maintain deterrents, rotate systems regularly, continue documentation, and communicate with CDFW and the Sheriff's Office as needed.