

Siskiyou County Livestock & Natural Resources

Fall 2021 - Update



3 Steps to Take When Finding a Livestock Predator Kill

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Predation is a growing concern across rural counties with mountain lions, bears, coyotes, and now wolves on the landscape. When you encounter a livestock kill at your home ranch, on leased pasture or out on a wide open allotment, it is important to take critical steps to preserve the site so a formal investigation can take place.

If you find a dead animal that you suspect was killed by a predator (or even if the cause of death is not readily apparent) follow the three steps outlined below:

1. *Preserve evidence*

When initially inspecting the site of a suspected/possible depredation, be sure to:

- **Minimize your own impacts**
 - The fewer steps you make the better!
 - Be careful to not step on tracks. If you discover tracks, cover them with a can, pot, bucket, etc. to protect them.
- **Protect the carcass + scene**
 - The carcass should be protected by covering with a tarp to restrict further feeding on the carcass by the predator, scavengers, etc.
 - Protect the scene by restricting people, dogs, and livestock from disturbing evidence.
- **Document the carcass + scene**
 - Take a picture of the carcass and surrounding area.
 - Mark location with camera picture, flagging, or GPS - this can be helpful for investigators to find the site.

2. *Call the appropriate investigator*

CDFW staff must be contacted to investigate potential livestock depredations as they have the authority to issue depredation permits for cases involving bears, bobcats and mountain lions. CDFW staff have also been identified as the lead investigators for suspected wolf depredations.

Siskiyou Department of Agriculture Wildlife Specialists (trappers) are often able to investigate suspected depredations immediately, which is important due to the time-sensitive nature of depredation investigations— they will work closely with CDFW staff to identify depredations. For cases involving coyotes, Siskiyou County Wildlife Specialists take the lead—contact them directly for assistance.

Investigators will examine the site and surrounding area for predator signs, including tracks, hair, and scat, and will examine the carcass for injuries, bite marks, and tissue damage patterns. The investigation can be conducted either in-person or virtually (i.e., via text/email) depending on circumstances. Therefore, it is important to preserve the site with the steps listed above.

Below, we have outlined who to call in Siskiyou county based on the predators they are authorized to investigate:

For suspected depredation by **bear**, **bobcat** or **mountain lion**:

Siskiyou Unit Biologist, California Department of Fish and Wildlife

- Axel Hunnicutt: 530-598-6820

*Note: Axel must be notified of the first suspected mountain lion depredation in order to: 1) confirm the depredation, and; 2) if confirmed, issue a take permit after the second depredation. See “Additional Information” section below for full protocol details.

Siskiyou County Department of Agriculture Wildlife Specialists

- Cody Von Saltza, South Shasta Valley, Butte Valley and McCloud: 530-340-0489
- Dennis Moyles, Northern Shasta Valley and Klamath River: 530-598-0676

For suspected depredation by **coyote**, contact Siskiyou Department of Agriculture Wildlife Specialists Cody Von Saltza or Dennis Moyles (contact information above).

For suspected depredation by **wolf**:

Wolf Specialist, California Department of Fish and Wildlife

- Kent Laudon: 530-215-0751

Siskiyou County Wolf Liaison

- Patrick Griffin: 530-598-6950

*Note: For suspected wolf depredations, once the investigation is complete a “Livestock Loss Determination” report will be completed.

If you can't get in touch with the above contacts, try the following:

Local CDFW Wildlife Management Supervisor

- Christine Found-Jackson, NE CA Wildlife Management Supervisor, 530-340-5977

Wildlife Services State Office: 916-979-2675

- Derek Milsaps, North District Supervisor, Wildlife Services: 530-708-0369
- Bill Watkins, Non-lethal Specialist, Wildlife Services: 530-616-5593

Game Warden Dispatch: 916-358-1312

- Steven McDonald, Lieutenant, western and central Siskiyou: 530-598-1709
- Jake Nicholas, Lieutenant, eastern Siskiyou: 530-339-0786

CA Department of Fish and Wildlife Northern Regional Office (Redding): 530-225-2300

3. Officially report incident to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife:

- Wildlife Incident Reporting System: <https://apps.wildlife.ca.gov/wir>.

This will provide a formal record of the incident. Such reports may result in the issuance of a depredation permit (i.e., permit to take animals creating property damage) for designated species requiring a depredation permit by California Codes and Regulations (this does **NOT** include wolves).

This resource is courtesy of University of CA Cooperative Extension. For questions contact:
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Additional Information:

If **wolves** are present, ranchers can non-injuriously haze wolves near livestock. “Techniques that aversively condition wolves without injuring them may be considered on a case-by-case basis if prohibited take can be avoided. Techniques for non-injurious harassment may include approaching the wolf (on foot, on horseback, or with a motorized vehicle), making loud noises (yelling, air horn, gunshot directed away from any wolves, etc.), and spotlights.”¹ Additionally, there are non-lethal deterrents that may work in certain circumstance to prevent further depredations of livestock by wolves. Reporting losses from wolves will help document impacts. For additional information, including tools to discourage wolf presence and legal protections visit <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=190291&inline>.

Policies have recently changed regarding **mountain lions** in California. Following an investigation that has confirmed a livestock loss or attack from a mountain lion, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife may first issue a non-lethal permit for the depredation event. This permit will allow for non-lethal measures only, which include the use non-lethal ammunition, pursuit with an ATV or vehicle, and also the additional implementation of preventative deterrents. **A second confirmed depredation event within the 28-day time frame of the non-lethal permit will allow the reporting party to request a lethal depredation permit for the lethal take of the offending animal (section 4802) given that all recommended non-lethal measures have been implemented.** Furthermore, Section 4807 of the Fish and Game Code states; “Any mountain lion that is encountered while in the act of pursuing, inflicting injury to, or killing livestock, or domestic animals, may be taken immediately by the owner of the property or the owner’s employee or agent. The taking shall be reported within 72 hours to the Department.” The Department will conduct an investigation of the depredation, including the circumstances and the entire mountain lion. Upon satisfactorily completing the investigation, the Department shall issue a permit confirming that the requirements of this section have been met with respect to the particular mountain lion taken under these circumstances. For more information on mountain lion depredation, visit - <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Mammals/Mountain-Lion/Depredation>. *Note: additional regulations apply in other regions of California

If a **bear** has been found to cause livestock depredation, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife can issue a depredation permit. Furthermore, Section 4181.1 of the Fish and Game Code states; “that any bear that is encountered while in the act of inflicting injury to, molesting, or killing, livestock may be taken immediately by the owner of the livestock or the owner’s employee if the taking is reported no later than the next working day to the department and the carcass is made available to the department.” For more information on Black Bear depredation visit <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Mammals/Black-Bear/Depredation>.

Bobcats that are harassing or killing pets and livestock, may be killed by the landowner or agent under the authority of a depredation permit. The killing of a bobcat in defense of property or self-defense, or defense of another, should be reasonable and justified. Bobcats are a native California species (classified as nongame) and as of January 1, 2020 may no longer be hunted in California.

If a **coyote** is actively harassing your livestock, you can take immediate lethal measures of protection. Per CFGC 4152, you do not need a hunting license or a depredation permit to remove a coyote that has injured or killed livestock. However, if you are trying to control the coyote population with hunting you will need a valid hunting license. There is no season or bag limit. If wolves are in the area, it is recommended you work with Wildlife Services on any efforts to control coyote populations.

Ravens prey on newborn livestock and can also impact farming operations. The species is protected by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. There are some management options that can reduce conflicts, including the removal of inactive nests, however lethal removal of ravens requires a USFWS depredation permit. Active nests may only be removed with a Special Purpose permit which is also obtained by the USFWS.